

## Metropolitan Briefs

### Willowbrook School Investigated on S.F. DND

A newly organized, volunteer group of lobbyists and concerned parents began an investigation yesterday into overcrowding and understaffing at the Willowbrook State School for the mentally retarded on Staten Island.

The Richmond County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children started its inquiry with a tour of a dimly lighted, foul-smelling room, where about 60 severely retarded boys, some partly clad and some moaning and drooling, sat crammed on wooden benches. The only attendants in the room were two women wearing slacks and sweaters.

The society received a charter last Friday under the state's nonprofit corporation law and is seeking subpoena powers from the State Legislature, according to Assemblyman Andrew J. Stein of Manhattan.

Mr. Stein, who heads the Assembly's Democratic Task Force on Health, helped organize yesterday's tour. During it he asserted that the recent state budget and job cuts had had a "catastrophic" effect on Willowbrook.

The investigation, which is to last for "weeks," is aimed primarily at "difficiencies in over-all services and allegations of physical abuse of patients—anything ranging from simple assault to criminal negligence," according to William Katz, the director of the society.