

# Willowbrook Staffers Are Upset Over Image

By FRANK McKEOWN

Whether the confrontations occurring at Willowbrook State School in Staten Island are political ploys, disagreement among doctors, or sincere efforts on the part of concerned parents for improvements at the understaffed school, the unsung heroes in the disputes are the employees who show up every day.

But the notoriety stirred up at the institution is upsetting their routines and interfering with their efforts to provide care for the brain damaged residents at the school, according to a union spokesman.

Irene Hillis, president of the Mental Hygiene Employees Association, in a letter to THE NEWS charged that the demonstrations at Willowbrook are causing

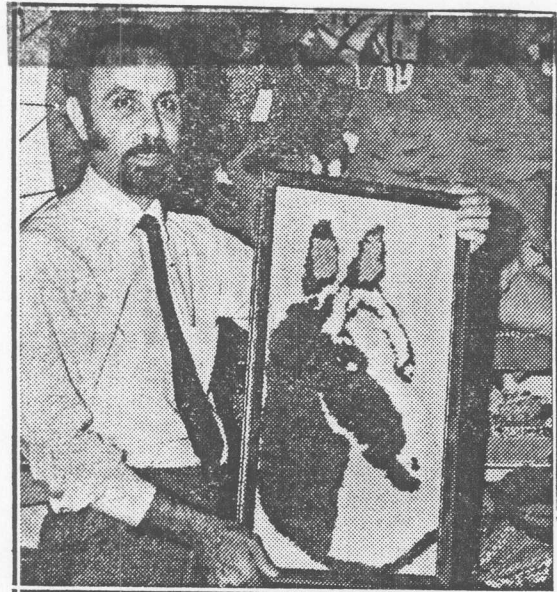
the public to look with almost sheer repulsion at the employes of Willowbrook."

She claimed that, "While it has not been said, the implications are there."

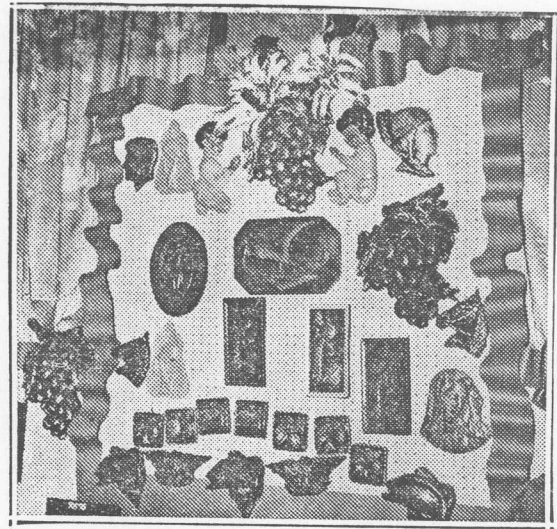
The union spokesman, who is also a rehabilitation therapist at the school, asserted that the public should be reminded that the employes are dedicated persons who give a good part of their lives to care for the retardates while receiving only a minimum salary.

They not only work at the school, she said, but also contribute much of their own time and money to provide items which would ordinarily be supplied by the parents.

Little noted in the recent furor at the state school are the almost unbelievable results that have been



John Mokbel, occupational therapist, exhibits handiwork turned out by his students.



Handpainted ceramics turned out by school residents.