

in child care and often in different to the pleas of such knowledgeable people as parents."

Max Schneier, chairman of the Federation of Parents Organizations for the New York State Mentally Retarded, zeroed in on the administration of the Department of Mental Hygiene.

"This bureaucracy," Schneier said, "has presided over the

most serious crimes against patients and parents and the current system of care for the retarded exists solely to perpetuate the bureaucracy."

Schneier read a six-point plan to improve the care of retarded patients, which include "the immediate dismissal of the leadership of the Department of Mental Hygiene and two-thirds of its employes exclusive of the department of research."

Calling for the immediate hiring of 4,400 employes in the area of custodial care in which the department is now short, Schneier concluded by demanding the appointment of a team of national and international experts — exclusive of the so-called experts in the Department of Hygiene — to present within six months a gradual plan of disengagement from our present methods of treating the retarded."

Schneier was followed by Manhattan Assemblyman Andrew Stein, who said that conditions at Willowbrook "are too painful to describe" and labeled the area of mental retardation as "the stepchild of the Department of Mental Hygiene."

"We must," Stein said, "be responsibly militant in our

demands that things be changed and, while we realize that change cannot come overnight, we also realize that it cannot wait."

Originally panel members consisted of Sens. Dalwin Niles, chairman, Sidney vonLuther, Edward Conklin and Douglas Barclay, and Assemblymen Edward J. Amann of Staten Island, Alvin Suchin, Anthony J. Stella and Martin Ginsberg.

But through the seven hours of hearings, new and frequently unidentified legislators replaced panel members, and at times the committee dwindled down to two or three members.

Today's hearings began an hour earlier and with a few less legislators scheduled to be on the dais.

First on the agenda were Dr. William Bronston, a ward physician at Willowbrook, and Dr. Michael Wilkins and Mrs. Elizabeth Lee, who were fired from their jobs at Willowbrook Jan. 5.

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