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## A Glimpse of Daylight

A sheaf of long overdue medical bills is apparently being audited in Albany this session; after months of accumulating costs, some legislative leaders may have concluded that the state can no longer afford not to pay them.

The obligations are to the state Department of Mental Hygiene—and to the tragically neglected patients at such facilities as Willowbrook State School. It may not be possible immediately to finance quality service everywhere, but further deterioration might be arrested and even some restorations accomplished if the legislature responds to some sound recommendations by Mental Hygiene Commissioner Miller.

The department expects \$600 mil-

lion in the coming year. With \$16 million more, new or reopened facilities could be made available to 1000 Willowbrook patients elsewhere and additional staff could be put on at all the state schools—thus improving the prospect for Medicaid matching funds. There would then have to be \$32 million additional in fiscal 1973.

Assembly Speaker Duryea (R-Montauk) was speaking last week of \$10 to \$20 million in extra aid. That offer indicates some movement, but the department's plan is clearly more comprehensive. It is well worth fighting for at a time when Willowbrook officials are redoubling efforts to limit unnecessary admissions to protect those who are most in need.