

# Willowbrook strike crisis nears

By JANE KURTIN

Emergency precautions are being taken to maintain patient care at Willowbrook State School in the event that the Civil Service Employees Association carries out its threat to strike tomorrow at midnight.

The CSEA, proceeding on a "no contract, no work" line, has promised to walk off the job at Willowbrook and other state institutions if "meaningful contract talks are not resumed."

Thomas Delaney, CSEA representative at Willowbrook,

explained that the union, which he claims has 2,200 of Willowbrook's 2,600 employees as members, is fighting for increased salaries, improved health care, pensions, vacations, sick leaves and grievance procedures.

Admitting that a walkout at Willowbrook would "jeopardize the lives of the patients," Delaney nevertheless maintained that the chances of a strike "are pretty excellent."

"All that we want," the union spokesman said, "is the resumption of meaningful talks between CSEA and the state. If they don't want to talk to

labor, the consequences will be up to them. They (the state) will have to bear the responsibility for whatever happens. CSEA representatives have been to 100 bargaining sessions and each time the answer to our demands has always been no."

Although his first wish is that the strike will not take place, Dr. Jack Hammond, director of Willowbrook, said that steps are being taken to protect patients if it does.

"We are notifying all parents and asking them if they will take their children home through a strike period if there

is one," Dr. Hammond said.

"We, of course, hope that the employees will bear in mind their responsibility to the patients; but if the strike threat becomes a reality, we will have to cancel all holiday passes, vacation days and personal leaves and will ask employees who are willing and able to work overtime to do so.

"In the event of a strike, sleeping accommodations will be provided for those employees who wish to stay for longer hours but have difficulty commuting.

"We will ask that parents who cannot take their children home

come into the institution to work as volunteers. Also, we will ask all volunteers we now have and all those who wish to volunteer, to come and help with the care of the helpless patients."

Asked if CSEA would have an emergency setup for care of patients, Delaney suggested that it "is up to the administration of Willowbrook to take care of that."

Delaney said that the strike would affect all aspects of operations at Willowbrook.

"Including," he warned, "the kitchens, the laundry and the attendant staff."