

SUNDAY NEWS, APRIL 2, 1972

# STRIKERS VOW CHAOS IN STATE

*Tieup Cripples Willowbrook*

# Strikers' Vow: State at a Standstill



NEWS photo by Jim Hughes  
Pickets mill about near entrance to Willoughby State School on Staten Island yesterday.

BY JERRY GREENE  
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## Troopers Are Sent To Auburn Prison

By ROBERT CRANE and HENRY LEE

As negotiators worked through the night to solve a public service employees strike that threatens to "tie up the state as tight as a whistle," Rockefeller administration authorities ordered state troopers into Auburn prison early today to replace exhausted and understaffed prison guards.

T.N. Hurd, director of state operations, sent 10 troopers to the facility to mount a perimeter defense because, he said, "many correctional officers refused to report for duty."

The reinforcements, he said, were requested by Department of Correctional Services Commissioner Russel G. Oswald.

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Although indirectly involved in the strike by the 40,000 member Civil Service Employees Association, prison guards are respecting picket lines at Auburn and other correctional facilities.

### New Money Offer

In Albany, administration mediators dropped a new money offer onto the negotiating table at the downtown DeWitt Clinton Hotel, which union officials said was "under advisement."

Neither side would disclose details of the latest offer. But it was learned that increases in employe pay formed the foundation of the proposal.

While talks pushed past midnight into the strike's second day, state officials said most institutions were functioning normally.

### "Some Difficulties"

State authorities also admitted that there had been reports of "some difficulties" at five of the state's 55 mental hygiene institutions and at three of the state's prisons, Attica, Auburn and Elmira.

Locally, New York City police reported that they have been unable to wire fingerprints to Albany for checking by state authorities and have had to send copies of the prints by messenger to the Bureau of Criminal Identification in Manhattan for verification.

"So far, this hasn't hampered us that much," a police spokesman in Brooklyn said. "But this is a weekend. I don't know what Monday will bring if the strike continues."

Union members man computers and other apparatus, among other jobs, and the union warned that such state offices as the Motor Vehicle Bureau, the Department of Social Services and the Law and Tax Departments could be crippled.

There were other indications that the impact of the strike had extended beyond the union's jurisdiction. Picket lines appeared at Attica, Auburn, Coxsackie and Eastern New York prisons and at the Reformatory and Reception Center in Elmira. Elmira guards on the night shift were ordered to stay in the prison overnight.

Frank Kelly, president of Local 1265 of Council 82, Prison Employees Security Union, authorized his membership to honor the association's picket lines at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility starting early today.

### Guards Respect Pickets

The guards' statewide union agreed Friday evening to a one-week postponement of a threatened strike. But spokesmen for locals said nonstriking guards were also honoring picket lines

at the Attica and Coxsackie prisons on the night shift.

Last night, Correctional Services officials said one lone guard passed the picket line at Attica to report for work. None crossed the line at Elmira, officials said, and others walked off the job from within the facility.

Spokesmen reported that all guards remaining on the job have

been put on rotating sleeping shifts inside the prisons. Some guards had been on continuous duty for more than 30 hours.

"We are building up to a crescendo," said William Farrell, the union's regional field supervisor. "By Monday or Tuesday, the state will be tied up as tight as a whistle."

The union represents clerical, professional, technical and maintenance personnel at 26 mental hospitals, 15 schools for the retarded and five children's psychiatric hospitals.

### Plight of Willowbrook

Asked about the plight of the helpless at Willowbrook—where the director said deaths might result in another 24 to 48 hours—Farrell retorted:

"Well, Gov. Rockefeller walked out on us and went to the Virgin Islands."

And Rockefeller's representatives in Albany, he charged, had told the union to "go to hell—go on strike. We don't care."

At Willowbrook, 161 of the scheduled 254 employes reported at midnight. While 86 nurses and attendants remained on overtime, many were in their second or third straight shift and near exhaustion. The institution reported the assignment of 59 volunteer workers to the new shift.

Jarvis Tabor, director of personnel, said the institution was "reaching the point where it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain safety — to feed, bathe and maintain supervision, to keep the patients from hurting themselves and each other."

The union had asked across-the-board raises of 15%, but the state's only known offer has been a 4% hike in the second year of a two-year contract, with no increase the first year.

### Salary Ranges

Union members work in 38 state pay grades and receive starting salaries ranging from \$4,595 to \$30,932. The bulk of the membership falls within the \$6,100-to-\$6,500 annual salary range.

Union officials ducked service of a show cause order prohibiting the strike, which was signed by Supreme Court Justice Edward Conway Friday night. Later, the order was amended to take effect when it was tacked on the door of union headquarters at 33 Oak St. in Albany.

"It was just pasted on the door," Farrell said. "It was never served."

Although the state's Taylor Law bans public employe walk-outs, another union spokesman asserted: "We have locked into this strike because it expressed the wishes of the members. The only thing that could sway us now would be a reasonable contract settlement."

At Willowbrook, four pickets were arrested and charged with

disorderly conduct and obstructing governmental administration. One was Thomas Delaney, president of the union's Willowbrook unit.

"It's the governor's turn now—we called his bluff," Delaney said.

Mayor Lindsay ordered the Health and Hospitals Corp. to make available 100,000 sheets, 50,000 diapers and 20,000 towels for Willowbrook. To avoid a direct confrontation with state pickets, city drivers dropped the linens off at Sea View Hospital on Staten Island. The supplies were then shuttled to Willowbrook by volunteers.

The mayor, who is campaigning in Wisconsin, also directed that the city's Emergency Control Board continue monitoring the crisis.

Max Schneier, chairman of the Federation of Parents Organizations for New York State Mental Institutions, accused Delaney of having "instructed the food handlers at Willowbrook not to go to work." That was the only institution "in the entire state" where food handlers stayed off the job, Schneier charged.

### Effects of Strike Vary Across State

From Pilgrim State Hospital in Brentwood, the largest psychiatric institution in the world, to St. Lawrence State Hospital up north in Ogdensburg, the walk-out of state employes varied sharply yesterday.

At Pilgrim State, Dr. Henry Brill, director, said 20% of the normally small weekend staff failed to show, but the hospital was not catastrophically below strength and "we can function."

But in Ogdensburg, only a third of the employes were reported at work.

By contrast, services were reported near normal at Gouverneur State School, 621 Water St., which has 188 bedridden mentally retarded young patients.

Members of the Civil Service Employees Association had been ordered to stay off the job. "but we just could not leave the patients without care," Ernest R. Randells, president of Gouverneur's chapter, said.

With half of the employes working, no reduction in service occurred at Central Islip State Hospital, and Creedmoor State Hospital in Queens said 95% of the staff had showed up.

Some hospitals were affected, notably State University Hospital of the Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn.

Despite "fantastic" cooperation from doctors, nurses and administrative personnel, a spokesman said, between 60 and 100 of the more than 200 patients were being evacuated to other hospitals because of the service workers' absence.