

For Willie Summers, the only home he knew

By JANE KURTIN

Andrew Stein, the Manhattan assemblyman who was the first politician last fall to speak out against conditions at Willowbrook State School, has committed himself to help a former patient of the institution.

Willie Summers, 20, was admitted to Willowbrook in 1953. His records described him as a problematic child. He was discharged in August 1970, when his IQ reached a level that disqualified him from residence. Since then, Summers has been trying to get re-admitted to the only real home he's ever known. He's been arrested at least five times for breaking into Willowbrook. He was charged with arson twice.

His last arrest was on Friday. He was on parole, as a result of an arson arrest Jan. 13. Then, he was accused of breaking into Willowbrook and setting fire to rags.

Because the structure of the building was not involved in the fire, Summers, who had undergone psychiatric tests and was declared competent to stand trial, was indicted by the grand jury for attempted arson.

The case was returned to Supreme Court May 30. Between the January arrest and the hearing, Summers remained in jail, unable to meet \$1,000 bail.

At the May 30 hearing, a representative of the New York

Urban League, Leonard Jones, appeared on Summers' behalf and told his lawyer, the assistant district attorney and the judge that he would be able to find a foster home for the youth.

Assistant District Attorney John Q. Adams explained the reasons for paroling Summers in Jones' custody.

"Willie doesn't have a really bad criminal record, and he's quite young with a lot of problems. His only close relative is a brother who is a resident at Willowbrook, and it seemed that everytime he went to visit him he got in trouble. It was decided that it was better to give him a chance to live in a home where people look after him than to send him to prison."

Summers' case was adjourned until Nov. 22. He will appear before the judge then, with a record of how he fared over the six-month parole period.

Jones explained that Summers had been living in a home at 261 Hamilton Ave., New Brighton, a semi-rooming house, semi-foster home for five former patients.

"When Willie was paroled," Jones said, "I asked the owner of the home if he could go back to live there. There were some problems, because all the rooms were taken, but he doubled up with another boarder until we could find him permanent lodging."

Despite the efforts that were

made on his behalf and admonitions by the Urban League and his attorney that Summers stay away from Willowbrook, he went back.

Because of his record, his history at Willowbrook and the arson charge, finding a job for Summers, was impossible, the league discovered.

He is in jail again on charges of burglary and arson at Willowbrook. This time he broke into the kitchen, police said, took \$6 and set fire to a wastepaper basket.

Criminal Court Judge Leon Becker set \$500 bail for him.

"There is no place he can stay," Becker said. "I am not going to send him out into the streets again. It will be an act of humanity at this time to set bail at \$500."

Howard Rintel, Summers' Legal Aid attorney in the case remarked "Willowbrook said to this man, 'Go take care of yourself.' It provided no training for him, no resources, no way of making a living, no place to live, no money. They kicked him out the front door."

Stein's office has been in contact with Summers' attorney, Willowbrook officials and security guards at the institution.

"It is our intention," a spokesman for Stein said, "to intercede as a friend of the court, to have bail reduced and explore alternative means of placing Willie Summers and others in similar situations. We are in the process of preparing legal papers to this effect."