

# Conditions at Willowbrook sickening to Rep. Chisholm

By SUSAN FRY

During a tour of Willowbrook State School yesterday, Rep. Shirley Chisholm became upset and stopped the tour after visiting only two buildings.

With members of the American Poor People's Youth Congress, Mrs. Chisholm spoke with Willowbrook attendants and shared smiles with patients in the spastic and infant units of buildings 23 and 27.

Overcome by the stench and shocked by over-crowded facilities, the congresswoman from Brooklyn said she could not continue the tour. She contended that "conditions had gotten worse" since her visit to Willowbrook three years ago.

Before leaving the school, Mrs. Chisholm pledged to patients, attendants, parents and APPYC members that she would get involved to "help solve the problems that exist at Willowbrook."

She said she will call special meetings with civic leaders in her Brooklyn community and with her political constituents in January when she will ask that federal sources for the mentally retarded be given "higher priorities."

"She called for a "mini-community revolution if state and federal legislatures fail to assist these institutions."

"Sen. Edward Kennedy, in a letter to the APPYC, expressed his regrets for not being able to attend the tour but indicated he would visit the institution in September when another APPYC tour will be scheduled.



Rep. Shirley Chisholm, left, greets a young resident of Willowbrook State School during a tour of the institution. With Mrs. Chisholm is Anthony Gaeta, administrative assistant to Congressman John M. Murphy.

S.I. Advance Photo by Tony Caronania