

Willowbrook doctor tells of treatment

Dr. William Bronston, a physician at Willowbrook State School for the past two years, testified yesterday in Brooklyn Supreme Court that he had treated Adrienne Renelli, a 22-year-old patient, for injuries on several occasions. He cited an infected black eye and multiple cuts, as among the injuries which demanded professional attention.

Miss Renelli's parents, represented by Congressman Mario Biaggi of the Bronx, have brought suit charging mistreatment and neglect against Willowbrook and seeking to compel the state commissioner of mental hygiene, Dr. Alan Miller, to provide proper care for the girl.

Dr. Bronston told Biaggi that he had treated Miss Renelli in late 1971, on Jan. 28, 1972, and again in March by prescribing various medications, among them, penicillin and thorazine.

HEAD-BANGING

At one point, Biaggi asked Dr. Bronston if he had been told that the girl was used to banging her head against a wall. Bronston said he had heard of this habit. The physician was then asked if he had ever been asked to prescribe a protective helmet for her, to which he answered that he had not.

Dr. Bronston did say he had recommended that Miss Renelli be transferred from the ward in Building 22 to the hospital, but that she had not been moved.

During the proceedings, Biaggi asked Justice Vito Titone to cite a Department of Health, Education and Welfare administrator, Morton Schalef, for contempt of court.

Schalef, also regional director of medical services, had been subpoenaed by the court but

had refused to appear, claiming sovereign immunity. (Sovereign immunity means that a member of the President's staff cannot be subpoenaed without executive permission. As a HEW official, Schalef is a federal, and thus presidential, employe.)

REQUEST WEIGHED

Biaggi sought the contempt citation on the ground that Schalef does not have such immunity. The court will consider the request after Assistant Attorney General Judith A. Gordon concludes her cross-examination of Dr. Bronston.

The trial of the mistreatment suit was moved to Brooklyn from Staten Island yesterday because Judge Titone has been transferred for a few days.

Stated to be called to the stand today after the conclusion

of Dr. Bronston's testimony is Irwin Bier, a member of the board of directors of the Benevolent Society for Retarded Children and the society's committee member for the Willowbrook Chapter of the New York State Association of Retarded Children. The Bronx resident is expected to testify on the conditions at Willowbrook.