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It may or may not be important that the state Dept. of Mental Hygiene lacks a "written plan" for substantially increasing staff at the monument to misery known officially as Willowbrook State School. What seems odd is that Albany is still unable to spell out a plausible program verbally.

The state is now in federal court as a defendant in the case brought by parents and two mental retardation groups who are seeking an order that "just minimally adequate care" be furnished by Willowbrook. It is a measure of the conditions prevailing in some sections of the facility that complying with such a directive would

necessitate a number of major reforms.

In any event, a state official testified during the proceedings this week that plans were made to hire 1000 more professionals, but that the details were not in writing. Furthermore, despite promises dating back 10 months, no program has been presented to bring Willowbrook up to generally accepted minimum standards of care.

Whatever the final court ruling, there seems no reason why the Albany Legislature should not look into the present situation again, early in the new session, with a view to more emergency financing. It has no more important health priority.