

Judge orders papers shown

By JOAN MOTYKA

With civil contempt proceedings scheduled to begin next Friday, lawyers for the defendants and plaintiffs in the Willowbrook State School case met yesterday in Brooklyn Federal Court to debate the taking of depositions and the delivery of special Willowbrook documents related to an April 10 court order.

As Robert Feldt, lawyer for the plaintiffs, made a motion requesting acceleration of the delivery of the documents and for depositions of two Willowbrook administrators, Brenda Soloff, representing the defendants, requested a delay in the production of the documents.

Judge Orrin G. Judd granted Feldt access to many of the documents, requesting that the state supply as many as possible "within reason."

The documents, in the form of letters, memorandums and reports, deal with the defendants' efforts in complying with Judge Judd's April 10 order requiring increased hiring and improved conditions at the state institution.

Judge Judd also ordered lawyers representing Willowbrook residents to take depositions Tuesday of Dr. Miodrag Ristich, Willowbrook director, and Harry Eliazarian deputy director.

The taking of depositions entails questioning both ad-

ministrators for an hour each in preparation for next Friday's civil contempt hearing. It is a means of "examining your adversary to be better prepared in court," Feldt claims.

Lawyers for the defendants opposed the taking of the depositions and the producing of documents. Brenda Soloff said, "We didn't think they were appropriate to the proceedings," but she refused to comment further.

On June 22, lawyers representing Willowbrook residents filed contempt of court charges against Dr. Ristich, Alan D. Miller, commissioner of the state Department of Mental Hygiene, and Robert W. Hayes, deputy commissioner for mental retardation and children's services of the department.

The contempt proceedings against the three men were brought as a result of the state's failure to meet court-ordered staff increases for attendants and recreation workers and to repair broken toilets.

NO CHANGE

In court yesterday, Feldt claimed he visited Willowbrook Wednesday and found that the supervision on the wards had not changed. The court-ordered ratio of one attendant for nine residents had not been met and

Feldt added that the hiring of students for the summer did not relieve the situation.

"We're very frustrated and very perplexed by the failure of the state to carry out the court's order," Feldt said.

He noted, however, that progress was being made in the repair of toilets.

Next Friday the defendants will appear in court to defend themselves against contempt charges. Judge Judd said the hearing will "improve things for the future," rather than review sins of the past.

In the affidavit calling for the beginning of contempt proceedings, the plaintiffs stated: "It is not our wish that the defendants be fined or imprisoned, although that too may be necessary. Rather, we are motivated to bring on this contempt proceeding by our honest belief that the defendants still do not understand, and have not adequately responded to, the urgency of the situation."