

Willowbrook crime rose last year, Queens legislator tells lawmakers

ALBANY, N.Y. (UPI)—Rapes, robberies, assaults, burglaries and auto thefts at Willowbrook State School increased last year, a state senator charged yesterday.

Sen. Frank Padavan, R-Queens, said the increased crime came in the wake of a report by state police recommending improved security. Some of the recommendations were put into effect, Padavan continued, but "some of the most critical ones" were not implemented.

According to Padavan, there

were four forcible rapes, 40 robberies and assaults, 214 burglaries and larcenies and 17 auto thefts at Willowbrook in 1973. In 1972, there was one rape, 27 robberies and assaults, 202 burglaries and larcenies and 5 auto thefts.

Padavan said the institution had failed to increase its security and provide additional patrol vehicles, provide vehicle identification stickers, perform spot checks of vehicles leaving the grounds, fence the perimeter and install close circuit television to monitor critical areas.

Reported thefts alone

amounted to losses estimated at \$350,000 a year and Padavan said officials told him that they estimated \$200,000 more was lost through unreported thefts.

The Queens senator said that, of Willowbrook's 4,000 employes, 225 had previous felony arrest records and that Willowbrook's employe screening process was not adequate.

"It is painfully evident that a complete overhauling of employe hiring practices of your department is called for," Padavan told Dr. Alan D. Miller, state mental hygiene commissioner, in a letter.