



Gov.-elect Carey (center) with tied down patient in Building 2 of Willowbrook yesterday. News photo by Tony Pescatore

Willowbrook a Shock to Carey

By MARY ENGELS

Gov.-elect Hugh Carey toured the Willowbrook Developmental Center for the mentally retarded yesterday to see firsthand conditions there and he was not pleased.

Calling the visit to the Staten Island center "no grandstand play on my part," Carey said: "It's an honest effort to learn and see what can be done, especially in view of legal proceedings pending against the state for conditions here."

He emphasized that he wasn't there to criticize but he did anyway. In Building 2 the governor-elect was shocked at the sight of one man tied to a bed because of his infirmity and unable to cope with a pair of flies buzzing around him.

"Doesn't anyone have a fly swatter to relieve this man?" Carey lashed out at the Willowbrook officials around him.

Led to Suit

It was the lack of such things as swatters, screens, plumbing facilities and the like that prompt-

ed the parents of Willowbrook residents to bring suit against the state demanding that poor conditions be improved.

This suit brought Carey to Willowbrook, since he will be called on by the judge in his first weeks in office to grant a consent decree, in effect acknowledging the justice of the complaints and settling out of court. Gov. Wilson has so far declined to sign the decree.

It is up to the state's Mental Health Task Force to first estimate the costs of fixing up the institution, Carey said, but he indicated that bonding money was available for the job. Priority would probably be given to the institution, he also indicated.

After touring Buildings 9, 2

and 29, Carey said "there was no question" but that some improvements had been made over the past few years, but there was need for further ones. "It will be up to us to see that they are carried out," he said.

He said he would like to see Willowbrook, now with 3,000 residents, compared with a high of 6,000 a decade ago, reduced in size even further.

Carey said the best way to care for the retarded might be in small installations such as the Garfield Manor Home in his own community in Brooklyn.

The home is a residence for 15 retarded people. It has workshop programs that enable the residents to go out and work in their own community.