

Miller resigns as boss of state mental hygiene

Dr. Alan D. Miller, the beleaguered commissioner of the state Department of Mental Hygiene, announced yesterday in Albany that he will resign his post as of Jan. 6.

Dr. Miller, who served as commissioner for the past eight years, will take a dual position as associate dean of the Albany Medical College and director of its Whitney M. Young Jr. Community Health Center.

The resignation of Miller came as no surprise in Albany. Governor-elect Hugh Carey has made clear his desire to clean house in the Department of Mental Hygiene.

Along with a major reorganization of the mental

hygiene operation, Carey has said that dismissal of top officials of the department would be necessary.

A spokesman in the governor-elect's office said yesterday that Dr. Miller had agreed to give "assistance and advice" to Dr. Kevin Cahill, who is presently serving as Carey's medical adviser. Dr. Cahill is also Carey's personal friend and physician.

Carey expressed his appreciation for Dr. Miller's "spirit of cooperation and his willingness to aid in the orderly transfer of the responsibilities in the

Mental Hygiene Department."

When Miller leaves his post, six days after Carey takes the oath of office, he will be responsible for activities in the area of inter-institutional education programs at Albany's medical college.

A spokesman in the Union University public relations office said that Dr. Miller's salary "would not be made available" to the press.

Miller joined the Department of Mental Hygiene in 1964 after a 20-year career in the United States Public Health Service system.

He was appointed commissioner in February 1966. He has repeatedly come under attack in recent years for alleged mismanagement of the Department of Mental Hygiene.

James A. Forde, acting director of Willowbrook Developmental Center, the institution that was a particular thorn in Miller's side, said yesterday that he "deeply regrets the resignation of Dr. Miller.

"I know from my personal experiences," he said, "that he has tried to advance the services for mentally retarded in New York State and has achieved remarkable success.

"There is still much to be done, and I hope that his successor will be able to build on the advances that Dr. Miller has made," Forde added.

The spokesman in Carey's office said yesterday that the governor-elect has "no idea" when he will announce his choice for a new commissioner.