



Dr. Levester Cannon, in striped shirt, informs his administrative staff of his intentions to resign as director of Willowbrook Developmental Center.

S.I. Advance Photo by Robert Parsons

Willowbrook boss quits for post in Ohio

By SYDNEY FREEDBERG

Willowbrook Developmental Center, the troubled institution for the retarded, yesterday lost its fifth director in three years when Dr. Levester Cannon resigned to become the first black commissioner of the Ohio mental health department.

But the departure of the 42-year-old educator, announced jointly by Ohio and New York State officials, came as no

surprise. For five months, rumors had been circulating that Dr. Cannon, hamstrung at Willowbrook, was looking for a job where he'd be allowed to manage and exercise control.

Cannon had complained privately on numerous occasions that he could do neither at the world's largest institution because Department of Mental Hygiene officials in Albany were bound to review his every move.

But, in announcing his resignation to his administrative staff yesterday, Cannon was at pains to avoid discussion of his relationship with Albany officials.

He told administrators that being director of Willowbrook was "very difficult," but contended he leaves with

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