

"With the onset of winter and cold weather, life threatening circumstances exist," Mrs. Connelly said.

After interviewing many of the building's 20 residents and persons familiar with its operation, the Advance found that:

¶ Food was being served illegally — prepared by the building's owner at his home and in the building without necessary city and state licenses.

¶ Residents are often paying for food and not receiving it.

¶ Only one shower-toilet facility operates at times and sometimes no toilets work.

¶ Often no clean linens are available and residents sleep on filthy sheets and soiled mattresses.

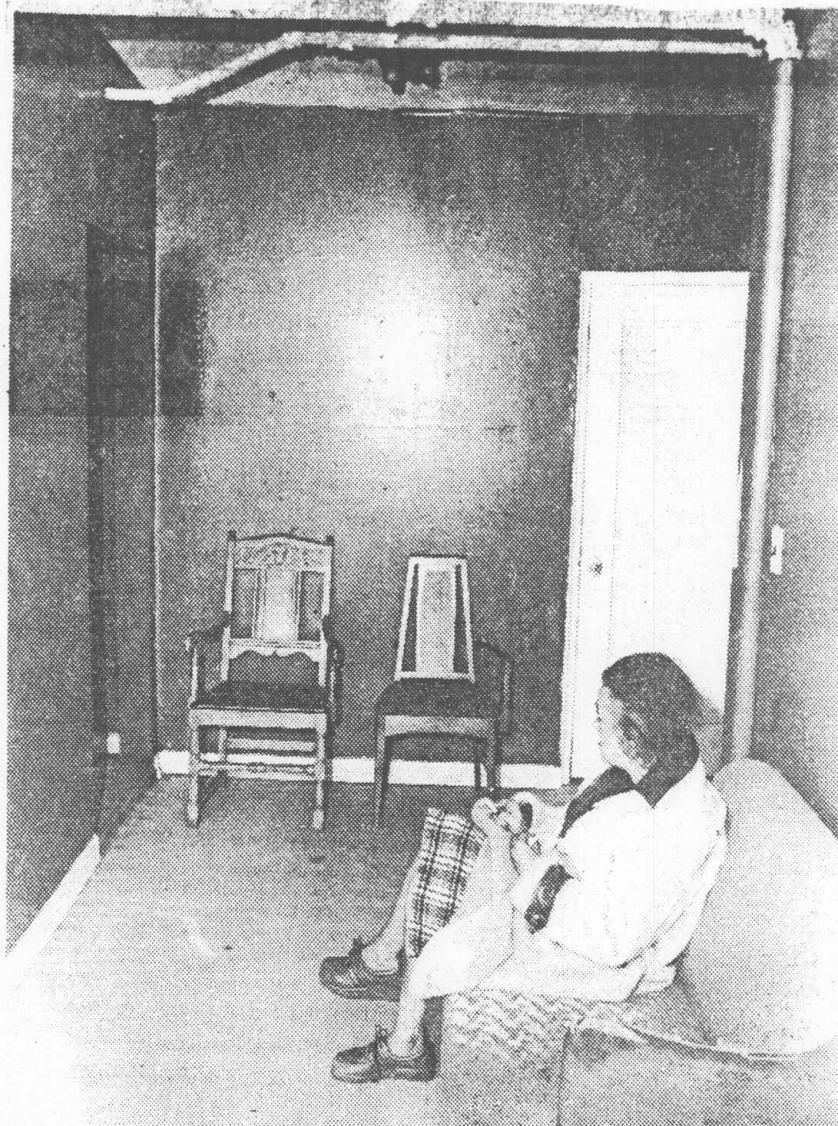
¶ The discharged psychiatric patients living in the building continue to need medical and social services they do not receive.

"From what I've been told," Mrs. Connelly said, echoing sentiments expressed by other city and state officials, "there is no way people should be living under those conditions." She particularly criticized the South Beach Psychiatric Center for placing former patients in the building.

One high-ranking city Department of Social Services official, who asked not to be identified, said: "We hate the damn place." He said the city was aware of some of Mrs. Connelly's allegations.

On numerous occasions during an Advance investigation, a reporter found there was no heat in the building during sub-freezing temperatures. Many sinks had no hot water and inoperable faucets. In the kitchen area, where some residents claim to cook, stoves, countertops and sinks were greasy and grimy.

Cat feces were seen in a kitchen sink;



This is the lobby of the former Christmas Tree Inn where a woman sat, huddled up in her coat, on a recent cold morning.

food cabinets were filled with paint cans and refrigerators were out of order.

According to Building Department records the former bar and grill has 32 existing violations, some dating back two years. The owner, Thomas Guddemi of 455 Seguire Ave., also Princes Bay, has never been fined for the violations which inspectors consider minor.

The violations include broken lights, windows, railings, and shutters; an inoperable boiler resulting from a fire; no fire exit signs; broken plasterboard on walls and ceilings; accumulated gar-

bage and trash in and around the building and water in the building's cellar.

Guddemi admits the building has had violations for a number of years but he maintains that city inspectors never explain to him what the violations are. "I'm cleaning the place up," Guddemi said in an interview. Asked if he would live in the building, Guddemi said: "The mental patients need a place to live. It's not bad."

In her telegram Mrs. Connelly also

(Continued on Page 9)