

vere behavior problems, at the time of the fall, Shea said.

Hollender is said to have tumbled over a three-foot-wide ledge behind a screen that is supposed to be locked at all times. Few employees are issued keys to the screen, which opens inward like a door, but Shea said he had heard of at least one mentally retarded resident who was able to jimmy the lock.

Shea conceded that faulty plumbing, peeling paint and leaking roofs plague the institution. Clothing distribution also tends to be haphazard, he said, since the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) has instructed facilities under its jurisdiction to eliminate through attrition the position of clothing clerks.

Maintenance, he said, has deteriorated because of chronic underbudgeting by the state. Since 1975, the budget has been pegged to a floundering plan to empty all but 250 residents from the institution by a court-imposed deadline of May 1981, Shea explained. Nine months before the deadline, about 1,100 residents remain — far more than the projected census.

State mental retardation Commissioner James E. Introne contended

yesterday that insufficient estimates of the Willowbrook institution's operating expenses have been compensated for by retrospective infusions of money in the state's annual supplemental budget.

Both Introne and Shea denied union charges that underbudgeting has caused staff shortages. Although the institution was funded for 1980-81 in the expectation that half the employees still there now would be transferred out, "This is an end of the year cash flow problem. It's not a factor now," Introne said.

"The system's very tight," he added. "Without action on the supplemental budget, we will have a very serious problem at this institution." The Legislature is expected to vote in September on requests from state agencies for supplemental budget funds.

"Introne has decided to run down this place whether the patients are here or not," King said yesterday. "All the state's energy is going into community-based programs. It is discriminating against patients remaining in the institution.

"You want to give decent care," he added. "But how can you give it when you don't have the tools?"

Page  
2 of 2