

# Agencies for retarded object to court order

By ANEMONA HARTOCOLLIS

Dr. Ella A. Curry, the director of the Staten Island Developmental Center, denounced yesterday as "devastating" and "inaccurate" a federal court ruling that New York State has failed to reform the institution for the mentally retarded in Willowbrook.

Dr. Curry led reporters on an hourlong tour of a gymnasium, sleeping cubicles, classrooms and other facilities in the Willowbrook complex, which the state pledged to clean up in a 1975 court consent decree.

Meanwhile, Paul R. Keitzman, an attorney for the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, said his agency is "inclined to appeal every semicolon and clause" of

the 70-page ruling issued Wednesday by U.S. District Judge John R. Bartels in Brooklyn.

Bartels said he would appoint an overseer of state institutions and group homes housing 3,156 mentally retarded patients, including 1,369 at Willowbrook.

Keitzman said the question of whether to appeal probably would not be resolved until next week, in consultation with Gov. Carey's legal staff and private attorneys.

Zygmund Slezak, state commissioner of mental retardation, and leaders of the unions that represent Willowbrook employees echoed Dr. Curry's disagreement with the court ruling.

"Our clients are getting good

care and are not in danger," Slezak said in a written statement. The commissioner said he was "appalled" by the language of the judge's ruling. "Such sensationalist rhetoric can only serve to undermine the morale of the employees," he said.

In a typically graphic passage, based on 25 days of trial testimony last December and January and on his own impromptu visit to Willowbrook, Bartels said:

"Unsanitary conditions permeate the residents' entire living space. Residents, many of whom are nonambulatory, must eat in dining rooms infested with insects and rodents, sit and lie on floors that are dirty, not uncommonly with human excrement, and sleep in bathrooms reeking of urine."

During the tour yesterday of three buildings led by Dr. Curry, only the stench of urine was obvious, which she attributed to the 50-year-old physical plant and to a cleaning solution containing ammonia.

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