

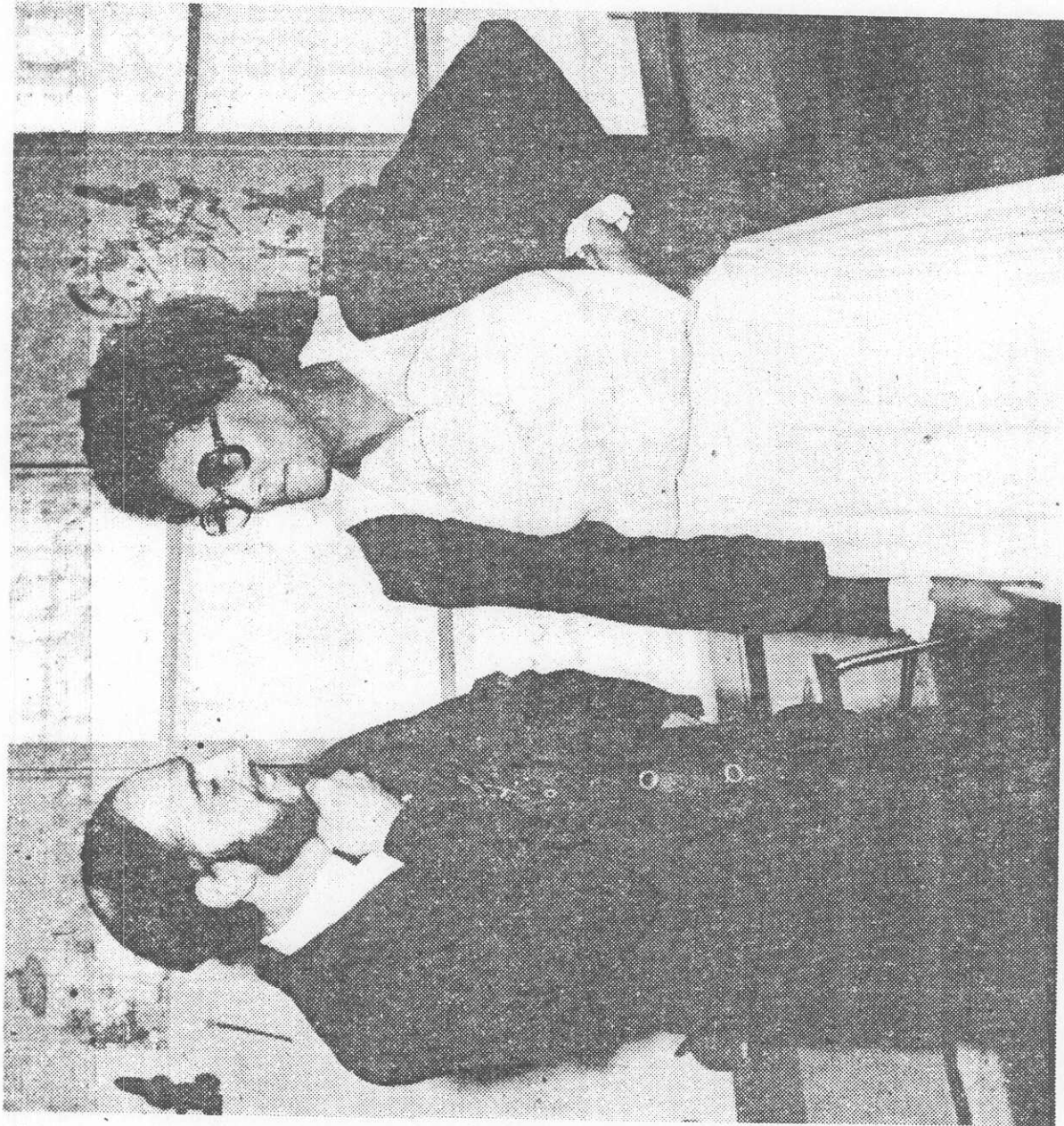
Male patients in wheelchairs surrounded her in a circle. Most of the patients looked middle-aged, some slumped listlessly, others gazed and grinned, and one let forth a wail that was ignored by everyone although it was amplified and echoed by the concrete ward.

"In certain buildings there is nothing you can do with these clients," Mrs. McNally said. "You have clients that urinate all the time, that rip their clothes off."

Nonetheless, she said, the institution was getting a bum rap. The food, in her opinion, was good and plentiful. The medical attention was enough to put ordinary parents "in the poorhouse paying doctor bills." The clothes were another matter, she readily conceded — scarce, flimsy and out of season. As for cleanliness, she said, "Well, it can be done."

The biggest problem with the way the state operates Willowbrook, Mrs. McNally said firmly, is that "We don't have the money, honey."

Asked whether she had been warned to expect a visit from reporters, Mrs. McNally shook her head, "No." "In fact," she belatedly enthused, "This is the first time I've had the pleasure to meet our director, Dr. Curry."



Dr. Ella A. Curry, director of the Staten Island Developmental Center, and Dr. Harold Brandweing, acting deputy director of treatment services, talk during a tour of the center.

S.I. Advance Photos by Irving Silverstein