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St. Paul 1

June 10, 1947

RECEIVED AT

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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Honorable Luther W. Youngdahl
Governor
State Capitol
St. Paul 1, Minnesota

Dear Governor Youngdahl:

Re: School for Feeble-minded, Faribault
Report by Committee of Minnesota
State Medical Association,
dated April 16, 1947

Charges of mismanagement of the School for the Feeble-minded and maltreatment of its patients were made against the administration in the state political campaign of 1946. At our request Governor Thye asked the Council of the Minnesota State Medical Association to appoint a committee to investigate those charges.

The committee reported, "The institution is being conducted as well as can be expected under the circumstances." The circumstances referred to were limited personnel, inadequate equipment, and insufficient operating funds. It pointed out several specific and general needs of the School. The committee's conclusions and recommendations are well founded. The Division of Public Institutions has been cognizant of the deficiencies cited in the report. The shortcomings and needs of the School, and also of the mental hospitals, were set forth in the 1940, 1942, 1944, and 1946 Biennial Reports of this Division.

Several of the buildings at the School are old and overcrowded. The equipment in general, including the kitchen and food service equipment, is worn and inadequate. The Division of Public Institutions has made repeated requests for such appropriations but little of those requests has finally been granted. For example, the budget requests submitted by this Division for the biennial period ending June 30, 1949, contained items of kitchen and bakery equipment amounting to \$36,534. The Department of Administration recommended it be reduced to \$11,250. The 1947 Legislature appropriated \$11,150 for that equipment.

Inventories of every sort were depleted during the war period. Supplies of clothing and bed linen were exhausted. The School and the mental hospitals as well operated on practically a week to week basis. Now supplies are slowly available and those items then will be corrected.

The main difficulty, as the committee report points out, has been and still is lack of medical, nursing, and attendant personnel. We are hopeful that, with the increase in salaries effective July first, the allotted attendant



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complement may be filled. Professional personnel are attracted to a medical organization by adequate salaries, good medical facilities, provisions for postgraduate study and research, and satisfactory housing. Until the budget approving and appropriating authorities recognize that fact, and act accordingly, medical care of patients at the School, and likewise at the state hospitals, cannot measure up to accepted standards. Urgent though the need for buildings to relieve overcrowding of patients, it is even more important that there be qualified and sufficient personnel to care for them.

I would like an opportunity to discuss this subject with you.

Sincerely yours,

DIVISION OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS
Carl H. Swanson, Director

By *Royal C. Gray*

Royal C. Gray, M.D.
Chief, Mental Health Unit

RCG:FA