



# Flay Nursing Home Chiefs

## Legislators Charge Lack of Standards

BY PAMELA ZEKMAN AND PHILIP CAPUTO

The Illinois Legislative Committee on Public Aid yesterday criticized the directors of three nursing home associations for failing to enforce standards in their industry, and charged that the director of one association had a "laissez-faire" attitude in permitting two of his officers to operate substandard homes for the elderly.

The directors testified before the committee's second hearing since THE TRIBUNE Task Force, acting in cooperation with the Better Government Association, exposed deplorable conditions in almost 20 nursing homes.

Those testifying were Rabbi Hillel Yampol, executive director of the Metropolitan Chicago Nursing Home Association; Ross A. Reardon, executive director of the Illinois Nursing Home Association; and Neil Gaynes, administrator of the Illinois Association of Homes for the Aging.

The Illinois Department of Registration and Education last week appointed Gaynes chairman of the Licensing Board for nursing home administrators.

### Considers Enforcement

Yampol told the committee that his association's purposes are "informative" and that it lacks the manpower and funds to maintain an enforcement procedure. However, he said, his association was "seriously considering getting into this area."

Yampol added that his association "still holds that licensing agencies are responsible for verifying that services are given."

This prompted an angry response from Rep. Robert Mann (D., Chicago), a committee member.

### Credibility Hampered

"You are not a newcomer to this committee," Mann said. "You have been before us on many occasions speaking out on nursing home matters. You are a lobbyist in Springfield, and yet you take a laissez-faire attitude toward activities of your own membership. In light of these disclosures your credibility before this committee is hampered. You cannot expect us to respect what you say."

Mann was referring to disclosures that Daniel Slader, treasurer of the association, and Joseph Bonnan, head of the association's labor relations committee, both operated substandard homes disclosed in THE TRIBUNE series.

Slader is operator of the Melbourne Nursing Center, 4821 N. Racine Av., and Bonnan is operator of a chain of homes, including the Monterey-Drexel Home, 4616 S. Drexel Blvd.

Replying to the charge, Yampol said, "I cannot take a back seat. We have led in care, but we have not led in enforcement."

### Charge Patient Abuse

"You say you lead in care," Mann said. "If you don't have enforcement, you don't have care. If you condone operations of substandard, inhuman homes your own officers are running, Finance Committee, said after your credibility is badly impaired."

Miss Eileen Rasulis, president of the Illinois Physical



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Sen. John Carroll (left) listens as Rabbi Hillel Yampol, executive director of Metropolitan Chicago Nursing Home Association, testifies before committee investigating nursing home conditions.

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# Legislators Assail Directors of 3 Nursing Home Groups

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Therapy Clinics, Inc., which services three nursing homes, testified that patients are used as "guinea pigs" for pharmaceutical companies testing new drugs in some nursing homes. She said she knew of three patients who died from improper use of medication.

Sen Egbert Groen [R., Pekin] said, "these are very serious charges and we would want documented evidence of this." Miss Rasulis said she did not have the names of the patients or the homes, but could get the information for the committee.

Miss Rasulis supplied the committee with a blank therapy form which she said had been signed by a doctor and was to be filled in at a later date by nurses. She charged this proved that nurses and nurse's aides actually performed physicians' functions in many homes.

Reardon, whose association comprises 305 homes, testified that "standard of our membership have always depended on licensure."

Rep. John W. Carroll [R., Park Ridge], committee chairman, said, "Your statewide organization should have some responsibility for seeing that these kinds of things don't happen."

Mann told Reardon that he was not a "bit impressed" by the association's dependence on licensure for membership.

"You have a responsibility to

the public to do your own enforcing," Mann said.

## Can't Police Itself

Reardon said that "business could not police itself," but agreed that enforcement of standards was the core of the problem. He said a reliable enforcement procedure should be created in the state.

Also testifying before the committee was Rep. Bruce Douglas [D., Chicago], who blamed politics, inadequate funding and inefficient administration of public funds for conditions in nursing homes.

Unless these factors are corrected, Douglas said, scandalous conditions in nursing homes will be a perennial problem.

Douglas said that "as long as the Chicago Board of Health is under political control . . . as

long as the Public Health-Department is impotent . . . as long as the state Mental Health Department continues to deposit discharged patients into profit-oriented, carelessly inspected nursing homes, and as long as the Public Aid Department continues to put inadequate funds into bottomless pits, the problem will be with us and continue to get worse."

Douglas condemned the state "point system" by which nursing home operators are paid according to the number of sick patients they have in their homes. This system, he said, "applies inadvertent pressure to encourage unscrupulous owners to keep the sick people sick and bring in more money at the end of the month."