State Rep. Rosalind Herman, D-29, said the legislators invited Supreme Court Justice John A. Spatale and Superior Court Judge Phillip K. Mancini Jr. to join them in the 9:30 a.m. tour of the facility. The center had been closed last September after state officials declared it unsafe.

Spatale is the chief administrator of the state's court system, while Mancini just completed a report lambasting the juvenile justice system. His report focused on problems at the New Haven center before it was closed.

She said today's tour follows a meeting last Friday in Hartford at which several of New Haven's legislative contingents discussed the problems in the juvenile system highlighted in Mancini's report.

She said the local legislators are considering what legislation might be needed to bring about changes in the juvenile system.

"I was a little disturbed when I read the governor's message," she said. "I would have thought one of the priorities would have been the overhaul of the juvenile justice system. But I want to reserve final judgment until I go over the entire budget package." 

Gov. Ella Grasso submitted to the General Assembly a $2.9 billion budget proposal on Wednesday. It was generally agreed by state capital observers that it was a "tightfisted" spending proposal which leaves little money for new projects.

Spatale also noted that the legislature's joint judiciary committee is creating copies of Mancini's 64-page report, before deciding whether to create a subcommittee to consider legislative remedies to juvenile system problems.

In a letter to State Sen. Joseph Lieberman, and State Rep. Irving Stulberg, Daniels said that use of the former jail site for that purpose will reduce the gradual blight of the vacant building in the neighborhood.

"I don't have to repeat the issues of problems we are having on Whalley Avenue. No. However, abandonment, crime and neglect are in evidence and I believe a building on this site would do wonders to turn Whalley Avenue around," Daniels said.

He said that there is already a jail on that street -- the new Whalley Avenue jail -- and the neighborhood, part of his ward, was not likely to be safe for any type of facility there.

Since businesses are moving away from Whalley Avenue, it is not likely a commercial enterprise would take over that site soon, he said.

Daniels said, however, that if one of the jail sites were not available, the site listed would probably be the best alternative.

**New Mural Depicts Poor**

The faces, aspirations and emotions of workers and clients of the Welfare Department on Basnett Street, were reflected in a mural unveiled Thursday.

The mural by Bill Lennox and Ruth Reiner, workers under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, was completed after a year's work.

Mayor Frank Logue commended the artists on the work and noted "through this mural, two women have displayed a tremendous sensitivity to the needs and hopes of the people of our city."

"The Manpower and Training Administration Thomas Corso Thursday said the mural reflects people's feelings and aspirations. "After the wind down, a mural will be lasting evidence of the work that was done," Corso said.

"It's a symbol of hope," is how Welfare Department Director Leola Tucker characterized the mural. "It portrays the problems urban dwellers face, but it also reflects the strength and dignity of people," the director said.
Murals

(Continued from Page 12)

sagging tenements—the first with windows all cracked; the second “CONDEMNED,” black inside; the last one flaming and smoking, leaned so far right it’s about to fall over. In the street in front of the buildings, a woman hangs out in a red midriff tube top. A man cruises up to her, open shirt, hat, shades, smoking a reefer. Three men crouch, poised, around three green billons on the pavement. One man holds another by the arms so his buddy can beat on him.

Then, in the center, an orange man—bare-chested, big as the tenements—pushes the ghetto away with one sweep of his muscular forearm.

A man and a woman reach across the right side to join hands. Above their arms are Eleanor Roosevelt, Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Harry Newton, Roberto Clemente and Aretha Franklin—all smiling. Below, kids of different races study together; a girl in a cap and gown flaunts her diploma in her outstretched black-power fist; youths wait in line to cast ballots; a young woman catches a book, a young man a hammer and pencil. To the far right, joyful citizens stream from their rainbow-capped neighborhood.

More to Come

Ruth and Terry are glad they’ve had CETA backing for summer projects like “Path of the World,” that give young city artists a chance to get paid while developing their skills. Sometimes CETA’s federal guidelines restrict them, though. Ruth says CETA policy stresses “punctuality, responsibility and always being occupied with a concrete task.” Ruth and Terry argue that fulfilling work needs a more flexible atmosphere.

CETA Arts Coordinator Ellen Payne agrees, and says her department plans to limit the size of the mural teams this summer to improve the creative conditions. This is one of the few ways the agency has begun to tailor its programs to the artists. Another is the special grant they gave to fund the Welfare mural.

The grant is good for three murals. Ruth and Terry hope to paint one in the city’s Unemployment Office next, but haven’t found a spot for the third yet. After only two years of painting, they are having trouble finding walls. New Haven redevelopment plans threaten a number of buildings, and many of the city’s older walls have the kinds of leaks that ruin out painting. The two hope they can start getting commissions for murals as new buildings are constructed. “If you could catch a building in the design stage and there’s the community upset to say, ‘We want our voice on the building,’ you could do it,” says Terry.

Ruth and Terry believe they can “do it.” They say murals are catching on in New Haven, that people are starting to see how art can speak for and move a community.

While murals are still fairly new to New Haven, city mural movements have been taking root for several years all over the country. In 1976, New York hosted the first National Convention of Muralists, where 200 painters came from as far as San Francisco to share techniques, problems and stories. This April, Ruth and Terry flew to Chicago to represent New Haven in the second convention.

Terry thinks that if the Welfare project works, other city institutions will want murals. And the Welfare project seems to be working. Now that they’ve had a hand in changing the drawing, nearly all the Welfare employees are pleased with the plans for the mural. Even the harshest critics have come to admire Ruth and Terry’s openness, skill and dedication, and look forward to seeing the drawing on the wall. Along with the early supporters, they watch from their desks as Ruth and Terry climb the scaffolds and paint the first strokes.

Working from a few of the photographs, using their grid transfer system, they sketch three large figures in a ring chugging beer. Workers perch on desks or cluster by the scaffold as their colleagues—Ronnie Wright, Julio Vidro and John Popolizio, who stand for uniting three races—take form. The likenesses are good ones, and a few workers surround Ronnie Wright, looking from her profile to the mural, shaking their heads and exclaiming.

The question remains whether the Welfare clients will like it, but the department’s new director, Dr. Leota Tucker, is optimistic. She says the mural will offer a dose message of hope. “It says that the people who come into Welfare aren’t to blame for their condition. It says they shouldn’t be afraid to seek help, to band together to move beyond poverty.”