

Hospital Cages

HARRISBURG, Pa.— Pennsylvania Welfare Secretary Helene Wohlgemuth has fired a hospital superintendent after retarded patients were found locked in 5-by-5 wooden cages at Polk State school and hospital.

Mrs. Wohlgemuth said the dismissal of Dr. James McClelland, 58, will be effective May 1. She took the action after an unannounced visit to the hospital in northwestern Pennsylvania last Saturday.

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SECRETARY'S OFFICE

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DEPT. OF ALTERN. WEL.
Ad. to

335 St. Andrews Lane
California, Md. 20619

April 19, 1973

Wohlgemuth
Harrisburg, Penna.

Dear Mrs. Wohlgemuth,

Reading this article in the Washington Post this morning was not a very pleasant way to begin the day, but to me it offered a ray of hope. Finally, it seems, someone cares enough to investigate and improve Pennsylvania's institutions for the mentally retarded.

I was born and raised in Pennsylvania. My brother is 23 years old and afflicted with Down's Syndrome. He lives at home and attends a sheltered workshop. Ever since I can remember our family has revolved around trying to make conditions better for the mentally retarded. I graduated from Penn State University in the field of mental retardation and taught educable and trainable mentally retarded children in Maryland until my own baby arrived. I have continued in graduate work at George Washington University. My parents are just as involved in their own way - so you see the problems of the state institutions have been a continuing nightmare for us for many years.

I realize there are some bright spots in the Penna. institutional set-up and this offers hope. But the most hope of all came this morning when I read that someone is finally DOING something about the negative conditions! Thank you!

Sincerely,

Janet L. Seale
Janet L. Seale
(Mrs. James R.)