

1678 Pittsburgh Road,
Franklin, Pa. 16323
April 24, 1973.

Received in
SECRETARY'S OFFICE

APR 26 1973

DEPT. OF HEALTH & WELFARE

Ref to

Hon. Milton H. Shapp,
Governor of Pennsylvania,
Harrisburg, Pa. 17100

Dear Sir:

As a retired employee of Polk State School and Hospital, I support Dr. Jas. H. McClelland Jr. in his administration at Polk. He is a man whose life has been devoted to Polk and a person who undoubtedly knows as much about mental retardation as any living person. He is not an exponent of barbaric and cruel treatment, but a well qualified head of a mental institution and must be reinstated as superintendent. No two hour or two visit exposure to Polk can qualify any person to be a judge of practices or persons.

Mrs. Elkin or any others with such pre-conceived ideas SHOULD WORK AS AN EMPLOYEE in one of the divisions where these retarded people live, for a period of JUST ONE MONTH. She could even volunteer her services. I'll wager she will be pulled, punched, bit, sworn at, spat upon--you name it and she will find it--.

These are not normal, educable, cooperative persons she SHOULD work with. They are people who at times have to be isolated, restrained or sedated, for their own good, as well as that of other patients who have to live in the surroundings.

Mrs. Wohlgemuth must have a very perceptive eye and mind, that in one TWO HOUR visit she can pass judgment on a dedicated doctor and superintendent with thirty-two years of experience. She apparently knows nothing about caring for these unfortunate people and must be relieved of her job. Anyone so ignorant of conditions in a mental hospital that she does not understand why restraints of many kinds, of necessity must be used, certainly should not use her power to fire someone who is qualified. What background in this field does she have and how is she so qualified? These baggage carts as she so rudely called them, are the one and only means of getting some patients out of bed and mixed with the population. They are carts but carts of mercy and until she has something much better to offer, she should be thankful Polk has them.

Take away the playpens, the carts and the restraints and sedatives as she demands and many will be maimed and perhaps even killed. These patients are not responsible for their actions, and do not have the mentality to know what they do. Mrs. Wohlgemuth made public statements that disgrace not only Dr. McClelland but every other person who now works or who has ever worked at Polk. Her statements are not true and she does not know whereof she speaks. She owes Dr. McClelland a public apology, and before she makes any more insane remarks she had better spend more than two hours at Polk. Anyone who publically makes statements as she has, about things and people of which she had no actual knowledge, is in no way fit to be Secretary of any Department.

I worked, as an attendant, at Polk for twelve years and know what goes on. The people who really know what Polk is all about, the behavior, attitudes, care and problems of these patients are the ones who really work with them. Certainly not some one behind a desk in a city miles away.

All these patients are exceptionally well fed, clean, well clothed and provided for. Their care is far superior to what many of them would have at home.

Trusting that you will take immediate action to relieve Mrs. Wohlgemuth of her duties and reinstate Dr. McClelland as Superintendent of Polk State School and Hospital,
I am

Very truly

Sentinel D. D. McClelland

(Mrs. S. Chas.)

In no way related to Dr. McClelland

*The original of this letter has been sent to
Gov. Shapp*