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SECRETARY'S OFFICE

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DEPT. OF PUBLIC WELFARE

Ref. to _____

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My Dear Mrs. Wolgemuth:

I have just finished reading the article in last night's paper broadcasting the front - page dismissal of Dr. James McClelland, Superintendent of Polk State School and Hospital. The conditions of this facility may be deplorable, but let's put the blame where it really lies, on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, not Dr. McClelland. How can one man make up for lack of funds, lack of help, lack of equipment, and overcrowded conditions? Without this institution, what would we do with these patients? Most of them can't even provide for their most basic needs, let alone function on the level of normal human beings.

I am a registered nurse employed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania also, in the Department of Health; however, this opinion expressed is my own personal opinion, and not that of the Health Department, or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. On frequent occasions, I have had to send patients to Polk Hospital for psychological evaluations, etc., and not one individual involved has had anything but praise for the personnel and services performed. I feel that this accusation is a reflection against the quality of care directed by Dr. McClelland and his Staff.

Do you really know what it is like to work in an institution such as this? How depressing it must be? It is hard enough for an understaffed institution such as this to work adequately and efficiently without building up public resentment and animosity by using such terms as "cages", "inhuman", etc. Every mother has at one time or another put her child in a "cage", ~~only~~ she calls it a playpen. She used this to prevent her child from injuring himself, which is the same reason such "cages" are used at Polk.

In conclusion, I would like to say on behalf of Dr. McClelland, "What can you hope to accomplish by "dehumanizing" a man who has devoted a lifetime toward caring for the severely retarded?" I feel that in the short span of two hours, you have tried to wipe out and overlook a reputation and the accomplishments that it took Dr. McClelland over thirty years to amass.

cc: Polk Board of Directors
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