

RECEIVED IN
SECRETARY'S OFFICE

APR 23 1973

DEPT. OF PUBLIC WELFARE

1336 Buffalo Street
Franklin, Pennsylvania 15323
20 April 1973

Rel. to

Dear Mrs. Wohlgemuth,

First of all, I realize what I am saying will fall on deaf ears. In fact, I doubt you care enough about Polk State School and Hospital to personally read this letter at all.

The reason you fired Dr. James H. McClelland, in the "inhumane, degrading, and demoralizing" manner you claim you detest, is to use him as a scapegoat for inefficiencies with in your own department in Harrisburg. Without ^{the} much needed money for employees and improvements which have been requested and turned down, we cannot work the miracles you want here at Polk. And neither could Dr. McClelland. Your PARC investigators spent too little time checking the facts and too much time jumping to the wrong conclusions.

The playpen (cage as PARC calls it) was far more humane than

allowing a patient to abuse others or to injure himself. I was placed in a playpen when I had the mental age of a two year old, and no doubt, so were you. Did you find it degrading or demoralizing? I didn't!

In fact, it gave me a feeling of security. The carts (luggage carts is the PARC term for them) are the only way bedridden children ever get to see anything other than the roof of the dormitory. What is inhumane about an invalid child being able to be out in the sunshine and fresh air?

Polk State School and Hospital is understaffed and over criticized. Do you have any "real" idea of what it is like for 2 or 3 Child Care Aides to take care of 80 children? Have you personally ever looked after 10 at one time and still gotten your housework done, without sacrificing even a moment of care of your charges? I sincerely doubt it. So why should we be expected to all be Superman while employees. You expect an awful lot without giving any consideration

To what is needed and refused
by your department.

I am a Child Care Aide I
on night duty. I have to care
for over 80 boys at one time - alone.
I will also be returning to college
this June. Although I cannot
change my major to Special Education
because I was not in the top 5%
of my graduating class, I believe
I will be better equipped to handle
my day to day duties because of
my education. Without Polk, I could
never achieve this goal. And I am
just one of many who are in this
situation. Contrary to popular
belief in Harrisburg, 90% of the
CCA's are a very dedicated group.

One place you were totally
wrong was when you told Dr
McClelland to leave 2 weeks earlier
than was first decreed because of
his part in organizing the rally.
I realize that I am probably
putting my job on the firing
line for saying this, but I

know for a fact he was as much
in the dark about this as you were,
because I was a member of the
committee that organized the rally.

This rally was to show how
much we cared for and respected
the man. In no way does it
mean that we had anything against
Dr White. I am convinced he
is a very qualified administrator,
and I will do everything I can
to support him. Everyone else will
too. Only time will tell what
changes will be made by this man.
What we object to was the the
firing of Dr McClelland was handled
without dignity exposing the man
to public ridicule.

Maybe the firing of Dr McClelland
was justifiable. But the charges of
cruelty and neglect were not. Why not
come back and take another longer,
closer look before making such
decisions

Sincerely yours
William E Collins