

Psychiatrist Says

Use of Wooden Pens 'Accepted' Treatment

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The use of wooden pens to confine acutely retarded patients who become aggressive is a common, accepted treatment, says the staff psychiatrist at Haverford State Hospital.

"When you don't have adequate personnel, you have to use some kind of restraint on unruly patients who can't control themselves," psychiatrist F. Lewis Bartlett said in an interview.

"It's common and accepted to use pens or cribs to confine aggressive retarded patients," he added. "To call them cages is a poor choice of words. Terms like that lend themselves to emotionalism."

State Welfare Secretary Helene Wohlgemuth fired Dr. James H. McClelland, 58, as superintendent of Polk State School and Hospital last week for allowing the use of such pens to confine some of that institution's 2,800 patients.

Dr. Bartlett, who is secretary of the Pennsylvania Association of State Mental Hospital Physicians, said other ways to restrain violent patients include straitjackets, padded cells and heavy sedation.

"Ideally these mechanisms could be modified by using additional personnel," Dr. Bartlett said. "But the personnel just isn't available. At Polk

State School and Hospital they have just three physicians to treat 2,800 patients. And they're occupied primarily with medical-surgical problems of the patients. I know the doctors there and feel they have nowhere the support service they need in attendants, nurses, occupational therapists and educators."

Dr. Bartlett said he feels Dr. McClelland "is a very humane and considerate man and it's very unfortunate that he was scapegoated and fired this way."

Dr. Bartlett said his association will meet this week and is expected to add its voice to the number of mental health and social care groups that have condemned the firing of Dr. McClelland.

Dr. McClelland has been superintendent at Polk since 1958. Mrs. Wohlgemuth fired him last Tuesday for permitting the use of wooden pens at the institution.

The hospital stopped using the pens, which vary in size from 12-by-12 feet to 5-by-5 feet, Monday, after Mrs. Wohlgemuth complained about them during a surprise weekend visit.

Mrs. Wohlgemuth subsequently said she fired Dr. McClelland because he wasn't being sufficiently innovative in treatment and educational programs.

Dr. McClelland has denied the state welfare secretary's charges and has said he will appeal his dismissal through Civil Service channels.

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BACKED BY FRAME

McClelland Given Pledge of Support

From The Patriot Wire Services
FRANKLIN — State Sen. Richard E. Frame, R-Venango, has pledged his "full support" to an effort to have Dr. James McClelland reinstated as superintendent at the Polk State School and Hospital for the mentally retarded.

"It is not Dr. McClelland's burden to prove his dismissal was warranted," Frame said. "It is up to state officials to prove just cause."

Frame said he was in charge of a task force presently investigating state institutions.

"On my return to Harrisburg

Monday I will ask the task force to expand their investigation to include Polk State School and Hospital," Frame said. "There is no better evidence of the programs and leadership directed by Dr. McClelland than the turnout Saturday in his behalf."

The senator was referring to a peaceful demonstration attended by about 350 persons.

Franklin Mayor Guy Mamolite told the crowd he had sent a letter to Gov. Milton J. Shapp protesting McClelland's dismissal. He said the letter stated:

"As a representative of the citizens of Franklin we wish to protest the absurd and unacceptable manner in which Dr. McClelland's dismissal was

Handled."

cc: Secretary
Carskadon
Klein
Hockendoner

	Ball
	Barker
	Beach
	Thompson
	Boyer
	Cubbler
X	Goldman
	Jones
	Leopold
	Little
	Lourie
X	Lt. Gov.
X	Delmuth