

May 16, 1973

Received in
SECRETARY'S OFFICE

MAY 30 1973

Mrs. Helene Woglemuth, President
Dept. of Public Welfare, Health & Welfare Bldg., Harpersburg, Pa. 17120
Dear Mrs. Woglemuth:

Yesterday, I stood on the back porch of my daughters' home with my small grand-daughter, age $1\frac{1}{2}$ years.

The porch is a "cage" with no entrance or exit, excepting the kitchen doorway. There, our lovely baby is safe from harm, where she can play, watch and enjoy the backyard activity.

As I stood there, I was thinking particularly of the verbal turmoil centering around the "cages" at Polk.

My grand-daughter is "caged" to keep her from harm while her mother is freed for short periods of time to go about other tasks. What difference is there really between the small child and the child of a larger growth with a brain of similar capacity and development?

This older child may need constant supervision to keep him from hurting himself or perhaps hurting others.

I know Dr. McClelland only slightly, through a brief correspondence and a friend who is a fellow doctor, plus parents who have family members at Polk.

I know only the best about Dr. McClelland's character and believe that he has been extremely maligned.

One mother who has had a son at Polk for many years asked that I use her name in favor of re-instatement. She is (Mrs.) Gertrude Murtaugh.

Personally, I am the mother of a 33 year old daughter who is mongoloid and I have worked in some area for the retarded, (including volunteer work at Western State School) since 1951.

I would recommend a 6 month (or longer) stint as a volunteer to Polk or any state school for the people who are judging Dr. McClelland so rashly.

How can any committee walk through an institution and become aware of all the facts, taking into consideration the biggest factors, overcrowding and understaffing?

We are told at Western State that no admissions are being considered.

Presently, I am working with the Homestead Hospital Catchment area, hoping to provide group homes for those people who can benefit from such placement.

Isn't it perhaps true that ^{you} Helene Woglemuth has been intimidated by opinions such as Mike Levine expresses, into such drastic action?

I recommend that after all the investigations are complete that Dr. McClelland be re-instated with a full apology from all who figured in his dismissal. Do place the blame where it belongs, overcrowding and lack of money.

I prefer not to place my daughter in an institution but when the day comes that I must depart this life, I would be thankful to place her in the care of Dr. McClelland.

Please remember that I am keenly concerned about all of these "special" people and what happens to them.

Yours sincerely,

Helen R. Cromie (Mrs James)
2717 Kingwood St.
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15234

Mrs. Richard C. Martin
2846 O'Neill Drive
Bethel Park, Pa. 15102

Mrs James L. Cray
2642 Ivy Glen St.
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15227

Dear Helene:

I believe you are doing a great job in your department, just mis-guided in this instance.

N.R.C.