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[REDACTED] file

May 14, 1973

Mr. Ralph H. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. H. [REDACTED]

I would like to start out by saying that you will continue to have my personal support in your efforts for Marty.

Seeking an answer to your question, I called the Chartiers MH/MR Center for suggestions of alternative residential schools which Marty could attend. Pressley House, as I am sure you have read, is in the midst of a very hot controversy and is not a likely placement now. St. Anthony's School for Exceptional Children is presently taking no more placements because they are filled to capacity. In addition, I am not sure St. Anthony's would have the sort of program Western State or Judge Tamilla would approve. St. Francis Hospital has a program, but it is limited to very short-term stays. I believe there is a similar situation concerning the Home for Crippled Children, I do not have enough information to advise you.

I believe that this would be the necessary first step to getting Marty out of Western State. You must be able to show the Court (Judge Tamilla) that there is ~~an equally appropriate program. Because of the limited number of facilities~~ serving emotionally disturbed children, you are going to have quite a problem.

There is always the possibility that if no program currently exists, then perhaps a group home or similar type of program should be created. To get more information and, probably, more accurate information on what currently exists, and what possibly could be created, I suggest you get in touch with the Administrator of either the Chartiers MH/MR Center or the Allegheny County MH/MR Program. At Chartiers that would be Mr. Gerald Vest, The Administrator, 561-7655; and in the County MH/MR Office, that would be Donald Rhinehart or Steve Lenhart, 355-4456.

In regard to your question whether your rights have been violated; that certainly is a possibility. You could check this out with your attorney, Mr. Senick, or with other attorneys if you are not satisfied with him, or with the American Civil Liberties Union, Mrs. Marian Damick - 521-3075. I imagine that an attorney might be able to prove that your rights have been violated and, therefore, gain an

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additional hearing or regain Marty's custody. I am not discouraging you from this legal course of action; however, you do run the risk of getting Child Welfare re-involved in the case.

If you continue to be dissatisfied, I see two general courses of action: (1) that you find an alternative placement and convince Judge Tamilla to try or (2) that you take some legal action to regain the custody of Marty (knowing of certain risks).

In any and all events, I would be happy to stand with you and behind you at any meetings or hearings.

Sincerely,

Bob Nelkin, Director  
Community & Chapter Affairs

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