

Public Service Board,
CANBERRA.

15th July, 1952.

The Acting Secretary,
Public Service Board,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

Dear Sir,

I should like to draw your attention to a matter concerning the female residents of both "Mulwala" and "Reid" Hostels. It is thought that you may be able to approach the appropriate authority in order to afford some protection for these residents.

On Friday night 4th July at about 9.15 p.m. I was having a bath and suddenly found a man looking under the bathroom door at me. I told him to 'get away' but although he did so, I was not sure that he had left the bathroom itself, which contains three shower cubicles and two bath cubicles. I returned to my room and encountered two policemen in the corridor looking for a policewoman who lives in the block. I told them of the incident but they did not seem to take an official interest in it and they left a few minutes later. Less than twenty minutes later the same thing happened to another girl in the bathroom and she screamed. Some men who were visiting their friends in the block (the blocks are segregated), rushed quickly to the bathroom door but the fellow had disappeared. They then looked outside the block and could find no sign of him. The matter was reported to Mr. Dransfield who in turn reported it to the police. In another block on the same evening, two men were walking in "C" Block, another girls' block and switching off the corridor lights whilst another girl found a man looking over the bathroom door in "F" Block. In "D" Block a man or men were knocking on doors along the corridors. It is ascertained that there were at least two men concerned.

Had this occurred on one night and no further incident had been reported, it would, perhaps, be better to give no more thought to it. However, on Friday night, 11th July, just one week after the incidents of "Mulwala", a girl was taking a bath in "D" Block, Reid House, at about 11.45 p.m. and heard someone enter the bathroom, leave again and shortly after a man, dark with ruddy complexion, whose description fits in with one of the "peeping toms" who were active in "F" Block, "Mulwala" House, the previous week, was looking through the bathroom window at her. The matter was reported to the Manager, Mr. Gorrie.

On Monday night at 5.40 (14th July), during the blackout, a girl was in the toilet of "E" Block, Reid House, and thought it strange that there was a strong smell of alcohol. On looking up, she saw a man's head looking over the adjacent cubicle. She refrained from screaming for fear that he would attack her and quickly ran to the bathroom where she could hear somebody bathing. She told the occupant of the bathroom and another girl. These three then obtained a torch and went to search the toilet. The middle toilet was locked.

They stood outside the entrance to the bathrooms and shortly afterward a New Australian, shabbily dressed and wearing no shoes or socks, emerged from the bathrooms and said "Sorry, this Ladies Bathroom", and hurried down the corridor.

As you can imagine, there is no feeling of security among the girls of these hostels, or at least, quite a number of them, and it is hoped that you may be able to enforce some investigations as early as possible.

Yours faithfully,

B. L. Koch