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ADDRESS
STATE HOSPITAL FOR MENTAL ILLNESSES AND DISEASES
HOWARD, RHODE ISLAND

JOSEPH N. BYLER
DIRECTOR

D. EARL HEISEY
UNIT LEADER

May 11, 1943.

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J. N. Byler
Director of Hospital Units.

Dear Mr. Byler;

re. letter May 7, 1943.

I think I can truthfully say that we don't really have any grievances or complaints here at this unit. The assignees seem satisfied with the food, living conditions, and time off. However, there is a situation existing between the employee-employer relations. I have reference to the ward bosses and our men. This hasn't come to me from the fellows as a complaint, but I have sensed it and have overheard some conversation to the effect. As you may know, the level of intelligence of most of attendants at these hospitals is very low. And it doesn't stop with them. The ward bosses are not much better. They often come to work too drunk to perform their duties. Also their method of handling violent patients is to the contrary of ours. Their influence is having an effect on our men to the extent that if our men don't treat the patients like the ward bosses, advocate they are disobeying their superiors. Maybe this is of no interest to Selective Service, but I think it should be one to our agency. It is a concern of mine and I don't know what would be the proper angle to approach it. It is a question to me to know if there should be any retaliation on our part to a demented person. I am inclined to believe there shouldn't be, and the hospital does not want us to strike a patient yet, when you go to the wards you will find the type of boss that I mentioned, who because of his personality and perhaps of the shortage of attendant help, has resorted to rough treatment of the patients. For our fellows to report this boss to the supt. of the hospital would only cause ill feeling and create unpleasant conditions for the fellows.

Our suits only came last week. That is for the first group of twenty five. The others have been ordered now but, if it takes as long as the others it will be some time yet till they come.

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May 11, 1943.

There is another matter I wanted to write about. I got a letter from Robert Kreider with a list of suggested speakers we could ask to come here to speak to us. I am wondering if you have arranged any schedule for this unit. Or should I contact some of them? I hope you will be able to come again in the near future. Don't forget to bring your umbrella and rain coat, for we are having alot of wet weather of late.

I might say yet, in the way of a complaint from my angle, I find it extreemly hard to get something done promptly from the hospital. As you know the set up here, the supt. is here very little and the ast. supt is very slow. For instance, the supt. has promised me to see that one of the doctors will teach our group a course on patient care or something of that nature. The group is very anxious for this teaching. Yet, when I call his attention to it he only defers it. I really believe he will do it but, when I don't know. Maybe I expect too much.

Sincerely yours,

D. Earl Heisey
unit leader