

dc police  
3/26/76  
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WASHINGTON, DC -- Mayor Walter E. Washington has told gay leaders he wants to "restore good relations" between police and gays after several incidents of apparent police harassment in the area of several gay bars and baths.

The mayor met with members of D.C. Gay Activists Alliance ~~and other gays~~ ~~gay leaders~~ on March 19, following the February 7 raid by police on the Club Bath II on O Street S.E. Five men were arrested in that raid, ~~which~~ which was conducted without a warrant, although charges of sodomy were later dropped.

Other complaints of police harassment in the Southeast area, which contains several gay "superbars" as well as the bath, were voiced by Don Culver, an owner of the Lost and Found on L Street S.E. He told the mayor that on several occasions in the previous two months ~~that on several occasions in the previous two months~~ ~~that on several occasions in the previous two months~~ police stood outside his bar to ask exiting patrons for IDs, saying they were "checking for drinks being taken off the premises," and occasionally arrested patrons outside the bar on charges of possession of marijuana. In the latter cases, Culver said, undercover police inside the bar had presumably tipped off officers outside the bar.

Deputy Police Chief Theodore Zanders told the GAA representatives that such harassment at the bath and around the bars was against department policy. He said large numbers of police, including many plainclothes officers, had been assigned to the area since a bar patron was slain during a holdup attempt, ~~in the area~~ and that some of the policemen apparently were ~~getting~~ ~~and other gays~~ restless. He said top police officials had been trying to curb such behavior.

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However, Zanders pointedly refused to promise any let-up in raids on movie theaters that show gay sex films, saying that police intend to clean up "hard-core pornography," both gay and straight. In fact, even as the gay delegation was meeting with the mayor and Zanders, police were raiding the Southwest Cinema and seizing copies of two gay films. A few days later, a similar raid was staged on the Cinema Follies on T. Street S.E., the second <sup>raid</sup> ~~time~~ this year for that theater.

On other matters, Mayor Washington said he had no objection to a provision in a proposed marriage law reform bill that would permit gay parents to retain custody of their children after divorce. He also promised to set up meetings with top city officials to discuss implementation of a new law ~~that~~ on equal employment opportunity in the District government that includes a provision for an equal opportunity ~~s~~ officer in each department specializing in cases involving discrimination against gays.