

Dear heart-
The Grand Central level-
opments seem to me to be
an advocate story. Hope you
will do it. C.

GAY ACTIVISTS ALLIANCE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Telephone: 544-3042

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013

January 22, 1975

Mr. James Baldwin, Executive Director
District of Columbia Office of Human Rights
The District Building
14th and E Streets NW
Washington DC

RE: Interco T/A The Grand Central
900 First Street SE
Washington DC 20003
Class C Restaurant
ABC License No. 11274

Dear Mr. Baldwin:

Members of the Gay Activists Alliance have become increasingly aware in recent months of certain deeply troubling policies and behavior of the owners and staff of the above-referenced gay restaurant.

We believe the practices witnessed are inimicable to the best interests of the gay community of Washington--as well as to the city of Washington at large--and they give every appearance of violating the law.

I refer to the persistent policy this restaurant seems to have of discriminating against blacks through the subterfuge of regularly and unreasonably asking them for age identification at the door, while whites are asked for identification only rarely. Blacks are often asked for two "valid" IDs, both with picture and birth date. We are told that heterosexuals also are discouraged from entering in the same way. The management's purpose appears to be to cultivate a favored and more lucrative clientele of white gay males.

We are told that in their attempts to enforce this policy, Grand Central employees insult and threaten those who protest. It is reported they will occasionally brandish baseball bats at complainants and that they tell whites to go around to a side door while dozens of blacks await admittance, "because there are too many niggers in here."

Grand Central's behavior appears to be in flagrant violation of the DC Title 34 Human Rights Law, which outlaws discrimination in public accommodations on the basis of race, sex and sexual orientation, as well as the DC Title 3 Alcoholic Control Board regulations (Section 3H), which prohibits demanding identification for admittance to a restaurant.

We believe gay people cannot hope to end anti-homosexual discrimination while racial discrimination remains institutionalized in our own gay community. The Grand Central is not the only gay establishment which has offended in this fashion, but its insolent misbehavior is now too persistent, defiant, violent and immoral to ignore.

To James Baldwin

- 2 -

January 22, 1975

The Gay Activists Alliance voted unanimously at its general meeting of January 14 to protest the Grand Central's policy. We understand you have already taken numerous complaints in this matter. We urge you to use the full force of your office to bring The Grand Central into quick and complete compliance with the law.

Yours sincerely,



Cade S. Ware
President

cc: Mayor Walter Washington

The City Council

Mr. James Hill
Alcoholic Beverage Control Board

Mr. Glen Thompson
The Grand Central