

GAY ACTIVISTS ALLIANCE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

P.O. Box 2554

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013

March 3, 1975

Mr. Fred Barber  
WMAL-TV  
4461 Connecticut Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008

COPY

Dear Mr. Barber:

According to the best scientific estimates available, nearly 10% of the population is gay. This means that 10% of WMAL's viewing audience is made up of gay women and men. The needs of this segment of the population, therefore, must be addressed by WMAL-TV.

In the past several years, gay people have indicated a general dissatisfaction with the treatment of gay themes by television. Three general problems with respect to this treatment can be cited:

- 1) Generally speaking, gays have been invisible on television. The treatment of love and affection between members of the same sex is still so infrequent as to be newsworthy.
- 2) When gays have been visible, we are usually relegated to the less popular viewing times of the broadcasting day. Our appearances are confined mostly to early morning and late night talk shows.
- 3) Whenever gay themes are treated in prime time, the image of gay people is usually a unidimensional, stereotypical one.

GAA/DC has decided to embark on a positive program for helping you reverse these patterns. We call our program "Project Turnaround" and through it we hope to create a more visible, balanced image of gay people and one that is integrated into your overall broadcast schedule.

Our Project Turnaround proposals are contained in the enclosure. These proposals cover the present license period which ends on Oct. 1, 1975 as well as the new license period of Oct. 1, 1975--Oct. 1, 1978. Each proposal is preceded by a brief background explanation. As you will see, some of the proposals address the need to create an environment at WMAL in which informed decisions can be made about the content of materials to be aired. Several other of the proposals represent, we feel, a minimum beginning for turning around these patterns in the treatment of gay people.

We hope that you will give these proposals your most serious consideration and that you will arrange with James Zais, the project's coordinator, for a mutually convenient time in the near future to discuss them. He can be reached at 462-5879 or 223-1950 (ext. 277,279).

Sincerely,

*Cade Ware*

Cade Ware, President

Enclosure

\* Same letter went to WMAL, WRC, WTTG, WTOP, WETA, WDCA.