



## Letters of Protest to Lansburgh's Department Store Washington, DC, Autumn 1945

**Tenth Street Baptist Church  
10th and R Streets, N.W.  
Washington, D.C.  
Rev. J. L. Henry, A.B., D.D., Pastor**

**October 19, 1945**

**Mr. A. S. Donaldson,  
Mgr. Lansburgh Department Store  
7th St. Bet. D & E Sts., N.W.  
Washington, D.C.**

**Dear Mr. Donaldson,**

**This letter is to protest the discrimination  
against Negroes at the soda fountain.**

**The above name Church has a membership of  
4,500 on roll, many of whom are customers of  
your store and have been for a number of years. I  
regret to say that if the discriminatory policy  
against Negroes i[s] insisted upon, I will have to  
advise the membership, of which I am the humble  
servant, to withdraw their accounts.**

**Our boys white and black have fought and  
died together for the cause of Democracy. If that  
be so, why can't they eat together?**

**Hoping you will give this matter your early  
consideration, I am**

**Yours for Better Race Relations,  
J. L. Henry**

**LANSBURGH**

Wash. D.C.  
Nov. 16 - 1945  
Mr. A. S. Donaldson,  
420 7th St, N.W.  
Wash. D.C.

Sir:

As some of your patrons object to my race drinking at the soda fountain I wish to relieve them of my presence at your counters purchasing merchandise, as I have been for more than thirty years. To do this I am closing the charge account in the name of

Florence Patterson Clark  
1532 15 St. N.W. 5



2533 Elvans Road S.E.  
Washington, D.C.  
November 19, 1945

Mr. A. S. Donaldson,  
Store Manager  
Lansburgh's Department Store

Sir:

I have just been refused service at your soda fountain.

I think it is a disgrace to the United States and a direct show of ingratitude to the men who just died in order to keep this country and its people free from Tyranny.

Just a little while ago, your store had posters urging the sale of War Bonds, now it is Victory Bonds. Evidently you have forgotten why these bonds must be brought [*sic*], just to refresh your memory, it is to insure peace and security for all American citizens who are veterans of the war we have just won.

Would you want the mark on your conscience, that you have denied the right of a sandwich or a piece of pie to a disfigured service man because he happened to be black; they offer the same service to some Japanese or German who has been practicing sabotage against you and your loved ones? There is only one answer to this question, it has to be "NO", or you will be branded as a traitor to America and all that it stands for.

Until the Negro has been offered the right to your soda fountain again, I am withdrawing my patronage and will personally see that any other Negro, I can reach, will withdraw his patronage also.

Mrs. Beatrice M Short