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I've known Austin Scott for several years. He started out with the AP here about 10 years ago, moved to New York, then to Washington and then resigned to go with the Post about a year ago, saying he was dissatisfied with the way AP was not developing more black staff members. He has been back here many times on special stories before he left the AP. I believe he's the son of a wealthy father. Attended Stanford, and married a white Stanford girl. They have two children of their own and two black adopted kids, all apparently very happy.

He writes somewhat deceptively along establishment lines, working in his challenging material rather subtly instead of rubbing people's noses in it. He's no revolutionary, but usually very well informed and on top of developments. Whether he reports them probably depends on whether he thinks he can get away with it. Don't underestimate him. I always have found him honest. He was the second black AP hired. The first was Hollie West, who also started out here, moved to New York and then moved to the Post where he's now their jazz critic. Hollie seems to have dropped mostly out of active reporting. Austin probably would be more alert for your purposes. If you need to contact him, don't hesitate to use my name. I'd say he won't go along unless he thinks something will work.

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