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Dear Js,

NO?  
I write about a brief item in this a.m.'s Post, wire-service rewrite on the conclusion of the prosecution case vs the Panthers in New Orleans. I hope you had some reason for clipping the S-I on this or that PH did with the T-P, for I'd appreciate a file on the trial.

From the first, because of my own experiences in N.O., I anticipated this would make a book, so from the first I maintained a separate file. Until I had to let my subs. to both N.O. rags expire. My own concept is embodied in a prospective title, "Desire", which is so rich.

If I can't interest a black writer in doing such a book, and I have made repeated him to one who could make the recommendation to a number (I'll needle him further with a carbon of this), eventually I'll do it myself. While I am willing to give my file away were I to be satisfied on the doctrine of the writing, because I know of no black writers who have had the opportunity of being investigative reporters, I would also collaborate.

From my own efforts to understand N.O., I have in my library sufficient background material on the special abuse of black women in that area, which would give particular point to so much, including what amounts to a revolt by black men, from boys not yet men, who made themselves a living wall that turned the police to older, establishment-arian types, who immediately, spontaneously and, I hope, permanently, radicalized.

Were there to be such a collaboration, which I can't anticipate, and were it possible for the writer and me to go there for perhaps a week, I know I could fill in much more. But, and I hope my own writing, as with both N.O. and Memphis shows, this is not really necessary. Only better.

One of the things I can perceive as probably no black can and few locally may be inclined to is that Garrison hardly put his best men into the prosecution. I know Numa Bertel only too well. He is a lazy hack. While I know of only one black employee ever on Jim's staff (and he had no single black investigator, which I think can be taken to mean he wanted no black fink among his investigators), I am also convinced he is not anti-black, and he deliberately ran a considerable risk in his last campaign to support (successfully) a black candidate for local criminal judge. He had earlier given his open support to his top assistant, who I know was scheduled for the job. He dropped this support and pushed a black man. His former assistant thereupon ran against him, with heavy denunciations of the kind usually effective in the south.

I have seen no other reporting of the trial. This story says that the police, which is not identical with the prosecution, could not produce a single eyewitness to identify a single one of the accused as firing a single shot. When there seems to have been what amounts to a pitched battle, can you understand what this really says, when there were so many observers?...And, unfortunately, there is an episode that, ~~unfortunately~~ also typically, is no credit to Mark or his sex-symbol companion - a foolish amateurism that led to arrests, almost guaranteed them.

In the course of my New Orleans experiences I met few blacks. Of the writers I met or heard of, I can say nothing good. The place is, so far as the white go, close to culturally barren, a congenial atmosphere for quitting the world. Even the traditional music is not commercialized, and while I enjoyed Preservation and Dixieland Halls, having met the owners of each and been at each, that was only because the real stuff ain't any more, except with the blacks, some of whom were talking about starting one of their own when I attended a couple of parties with one, a fine young musician. So, I do not know if there is such a black local writer. best regards,  
Hal