

# THE AFRO AMERICAN

628 N. Eutaw Street  
Baltimore, Md.

These articles appeared in the December 1964 issue of the AFRO; perhaps you missed them.

problems of race contacts or pull down the

## Magistrate Johannsen

With the death on Monday morning of Magistrate Paul Johannsen, Baltimore lost one of its most efficient, fairminded and sympathetic police court jurists. Sitting in the Western and Northwestern districts, the late Mr. Johannsen served communities of varied racial elements with such success that the Monumental Bar Association as well as leaders of all races gave his reappointments almost unanimous endorsement.

Combining his legal training with his wide knowledge of everyday human affairs, Magistrate Johannsen left most of those who came up before him on minor infractions of the law with a feeling that they had received a fair deal.

He was unalterably opposed to any form of police brutality and persecution, and for that reason was not as popular with the department as some other magistrates. He realized that there were some officers who would deliberately lie to pin a case on an arrested person, and stated this frankly when there was occasion to do so. On the other hand, when evidence was properly produced, he laid on the punishment to fit the crime and the criminal.

He was not 100 per cent perfect on interracial matters, and his rule that any white and colored persons of opposite sexes found together were guilty of disorderly conduct, as he said, "on general principles," did not measure up to his other attributes of honest justice. But compared with many magistrates, he was a prince, and the Northwestern district court will find it difficult to find a man of his efficiency and character.

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Foreign Subscription Price, \$4.06 Canada, Panama and all U. S. Foreign Possessions,  
One Year, \$3.54.

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