

The Divisiveness of “They” – Looting & Economic Disparity (Walt Bodine Collection)

Walt Bodine: ... The only thing that bothers me when I go around, I still hear people saying "they", you know, we're still splitting off into Black and white, "they". And for the very militant Black, "they" is everybody that's white for the very frightened white "they" the rioters are everybody that's Black. And that's not the way it is, it says the prosecutor says this law abiding 97%. So many are people that worked hard for the house they live in, they worked hard for the car they parked on the street and somebody turned over last night and burned. And some of these other things and these are victims, and yet they're going to get, many of them, where they go about the city, victims, the hostile stare, you know, where you want to ... this is one of the troubles and that's why it's so important, to catalog, to get in, and run through the courts, and know who's who, as the prosecutor's office is doing to get a line on where, really, when you come to the hardcore violence, where it's coming from, what kind of people and under what circumstances.

Unknown Speaker: It was one interesting thing that I saw today, in checking some of the pictures of this area. It was a picture of a shattered window somewhere along prospect or in that general area that was so hard-hit last night. And you could just see where the glass had shattered word said, "Soul Brother". And this had been the insurance, so many Negroes had used in other cities successfully, when rioting broke out, but here when lawlessness swept these areas, it made no difference who is Negro who was white in many cases, it was just violence and lawlessness for the sake of violence and lawlessness.

Walt Bodine: I think too, as a, as any sort of code, it wore out, anyhow, and almost anybody could write that on the window as far as that goes, so they wouldn't necessarily believe it. The person who is out to riot. The second thing is, the kind of guy who's reading it, at the bottom of the economic hole. He's got, you know, like one guy they interviewed in Detroit and you know, he said, Well, you could have lost your own life and he said, well I was I wasn't living much anyway, man. Okay so to him, "Soul Brother" doesn't mean anything except a guy that owns more than he has got more and must somehow the one of those that's helping to keep him down. So that goes just like everything else.