

Prison Officers Here Ask Stiffer Penalties for Inmates Who Riot

By EDWARD C. BURKS
 Presidents of the city's wardens' and correction officers' associations called yesterday for legislation to make the taking of a hostage in a prison riot a crime punishable by life imprisonment.

In identical telegrams to Governor Rockefeller and Mayor Lindsay the leaders of five associations representing more than 3,000 men here, said, in part:

"The senseless and brutal killing of 10 correction officers at Attica prison demands that immediate steps be taken to

insure the safety of correction officers and put inmates on notice that such conduct will not be tolerated."

Statement Is Sought

The telegram urged the Governor and the Mayor to issue a public statement that no amnesty, administrative or legal, would be granted to any inmate participating in riots or the taking of hostages. Further, they were asked to sponsor the life-imprisonment penalty at the next session of the Legislature.

The telegram went on: "Unless inmates are forewarned that riots and the tak-

ing of hostages will be dealt with swiftly and severely and without the possibility of concessions, you are begging for a repetition of these tragic events."

Amplifying those sentiments at a news conference, one of the signers, Leo C. Zeferetti, president of the 2,700-member Correction Officers Benevolent Association, said that in the case of hostage-taking, "immediate action" to bring about their release "is the best course of action."

Mr. Zeferetti said he would not pass judgment on the actions of officials at the Attica

Correctional Facility during a perilous situation. But, he insisted, "the inmates have got to realize we have no other recourse but to go in immediately." He said that at Attica the rioters had five days to re-inforce themselves while negotiations went on.

"Tense Calm" Elsewhere

A "tense calm" was reported by officials at other state correctional facilities. In some cases, "double coverage" by guards was in force.

In New York City, Al Castro, a spokesman for the Correction Department, reported a "fairly normal day" in detention houses and prisons. "We're trying to run them as normally as possible," he said. "If we get up tight, then the inmates get up tight."

According to Mr. Zeferetti, there has been a conspiracy among various prisoners in the state for a long time—a "prisoner liberation front," he called it—to wreck the prisons and cause disturbances. He said that some of the same prisoners involved in the riot in Manhattan's House of Detention (The Tombs) last year had doubtless been involved in the Attica riot.

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