

2 Men at Attica: One Street-Smart, One Legally Wise

Following are sketches of two of the reported leaders of the Attica revolt:

Richard Clark

By NICHOLAS GAGE

A high school acquaintance of Richard Clark, said by observers of the riot at Attica to be one of the convict leaders of the take-over, described him yesterday as "tough, street-smart and unlucky."

The description seems to be borne out by the parts of his life that could be gathered from available records and from friends and acquaintances.

Clark, 25, was serving two concurrent sentences totaling four years at Attica—for third-degree robbery and petit larceny—when the riot broke out.

Clark was born on July 29, 1946, in New York City. His parents, Thomas and Jenny Clark, gave him up to the Sheltering Arms Children's Service, 122 East 29th Street, before he was 2 years old.

His parents could not be reached yesterday and officials at Sheltering Arms refused to talk about him. But a receptionist there who knew him said she found it hard to believe he was involved in the riot.

"I hope he wasn't one of those killed," she said. By last night it could not be determined if Clark indeed had been killed when the police retook the prison on Monday.

When he was 2½ he was

taken in by a Lucille Stucks, who lived in Jamaica, Queens, and stayed with her until he was 14. She could not be located yesterday.

He went to schools in Queens and then to DeWitt Clinton High School. He would say later that he graduated from the high school but records show that he left in his senior year without graduating.

In Trouble in Navy

He joined the Navy on June 6, 1965, and was separated under honorable conditions on May 10, 1968. While in the Navy he was brought up on charges three times, twice for unauthorized absences and once for disobeying orders.

While on leave from the Navy in 1966, he married Celeste Baker, a laboratory technician. They had twin sons on Jan. 24, 1967.

The couple separated in November, 1968, when his wife went back to her parents. Mrs. Clark told police officials who questioned her after his arrest that he had "gone off" with another woman while she was in the hospital with hepatitis and that he had been taking narcotics.

After his arrest, Clark admitted having taken cocaine and heroin in 1968, but he said he gave up both drugs in early 1969. He was certified a non-addict before his sentencing.

Clark was first arrested on March 7, 1969, for participating in a robbery of a store on York Avenue. He and two companions walked into the store carrying one loaded pistol and knives and took \$150 from the owner and \$10 and a watch from two clerks, according to the charges.

Arrested Second Time

On July 10, 1969, while out on bail, he was arrested for trying to rob the owner of a Bronx clothing store at knife-point. The owner ran out of the store, however, and Clark left with only three shirts from a counter.

He pleaded guilty to petit larceny for that offense, but maintained that he was innocent of the charges in the fist case, saying he was just a bystander in the area when the police caught up with him.

He was sent to Sing Sing on Oct. 25, 1969, and then was transferred to Elmira Reformatory on Dec. 16 of that year. Three months later he was transferred to Auburn, a maximum security prison. While at Auburn he became a Black Muslim, according to a former inmate there.

His behavior at Auburn was good enough to earn him transfer to Walkkill, a medium security facility, on Oct. 2, 1970. He lasted only 13 days at Walkkill, however. He was transferred

to Attica on Oct. 15, 1970, because, prison authorities said he gave speeches to inmates advocating "the violent overthrow of the institution."

Herbert X. Blyden

By BARBARA CAMPBELL

From the crowd of desperate men at Attica, Herbert X. Blyden emerged as one of the most eloquent spokesmen for the prisoner revolt.

Draped in a blanket-poncho, it was Blyden who helped put together and read the 28 demands during the five-day revolt of more than 1,000 prisoners, and who put into words, sometimes with dramatic impact, the attitude of his fellow inmates.

Blyden, 34 years old, was also named as a leader in a prisoner uprising in October, 1970, at the Tombs—the Men's House of Detention in Manhattan. He has been indicted along with six other prisoners and a guard on charges of leading the disturbance there.

Busy Working on Case

Blyden's lawyers and friends have described him as a desperate man—desperate to prove that he was innocent of a charge of armed robbery five years ago, for which he was sentenced to 15 to 20 years.

In the five years that he

spent at Attica and the Tombs he devoted "almost 24 hours a day working on his case," according to Eve Cary, a New York Civil Liberties Union lawyer who befriended him.

In those years Blyden became a knowledgeable jailhouse lawyer as well as a reader of law periodicals and books written by such authors as Thomas Mann and Herman Hesse.

Miss Cary said that she did not believe that Blyden had encouraged violence at Attica because he was to prison-wise to believe that injuring hostages would win them their demands.

Instead, she said, he saw it as an opportunity to exert political power to bring about change in a last desperate attempt to "exercise some control over his life."

When he was 20 years old, four years after coming to New York from his birthplace, St. Thomas, V.I., he was convicted, along with his younger brother, of holding up a gas station for less than \$100.

Blyden told his current lawyers that a court-appointed lawyer had told him to plead guilty because he would be considered a youthful offender with no record. Instead, he spent five years at Elmira State Reformatory.

Four years after he left Elmira, Blyden was arrested for armed robbery of a Bronx car rental. And he was preparing, with the help of Richard Cherry, a lawyer with the Urban Coalition, an appeal on the Federal level after having exhausted his appeals in the lower courts.

Legal Defense Questioned

Mr. Cherry also said he believed that Blyden was innocent, convicted only because he could not afford adequate counsel to represent him, having been defended by a court-appointed lawyer who Blyden said spoke to him a few minutes before the trial began in December, 1965.

The one witness who placed Blyden at the scene of the robbery did not identify him as the actual robber, according to a transcript of the trial, but as an accomplice whom he said he saw "in profile" only for "two or three seconds" in a parked blue Ford. The robber has never been found.

Blyden was at the Tombs during the October, 1970, disturbance because he had won the right to have a judge hear his appeal to reverse the earlier gas station robbery conviction, believing that a reversal would give him a first-offender status and thus a lighter sentence for the rental car robbery conviction.

Blyden told observers invited behind the walls during the Attica revolt, that he has been indicted on 72 counts for his part in the Tombs disturbance. "After the Tombs case, he often said he felt like giving up," Miss Cary said.

NYT

9-15-71



The New York Times/Douglas M. Bruce

TRANSFERRED FROM ATTICA: Prisoners in chartered bus on Main Street of village on way to another facility