

OSWALD SEEKING FACILITY TO HOUSE HOSTILE CONVICTS

He Would Isolate Up to 500 of State's 16,000 Inmates to Forestall Rebellions
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By MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN

Special to The New York Times

ALBANY, Sept. 28—Russell G. Oswald, State Commissioner of Correction, said today that his department was seeking a facility to house as many as 500 of the system's most aggressive inmates, so they could be isolated from the rest of the state's 16,000 prisoners.

The Commissioner described this project during a news conference with seven reporters he had invited here after repeated requests for a meeting.

Except for a single television appearance, today's conference was the first time that the 62-year-old penologist had met with newsmen since Sept. 14, the day after state troopers quashed a five-day prisoner uprising at the Attica Correctional Facility.

There were these other developments today stemming from the Attica rebellion, in which 32 inmates and 10 hostages died:

¶Attica townspeople reported that widows and other relatives of guards who had been held hostage during the revolt were being harassed by anonymous phone calls and unidentified youths who have thrown stones at their houses.

A Difference Recalled

¶Union leaders representing the state's prison guards and state officials failed to reach agreement on the demands of guards, who have threatened a "lock-in" of prisoners in their cells on or before Oct. 7.

¶State Senator John R. Dunne, chairman of the Senate Committee on Crime and Correction, toured Attica, but was prohibited from talking with prisoners.

¶Selection of a citizens' committee to conduct "a full and impartial investigation of all the facts" of the uprising is proving elusive, with no group yet named by a selection panel of five judges.

The ground rules set by Mr. Oswald specified that there be no questions relating directly to events at Attica over the two-week period beginning Sept. 9.

Mr. Oswald led up to the discussion of a new, stricter security prison by mentioning a difference of opinion he had with Vincent R. Mancusi, superintendent of the Attica prison. It concerned the question of transferring five inmates who early in July had signed a mani-

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festo demanding changes in prison procedure.

Prior to the uprising, Mr. Mancusi had several times asked that there men be shifted, Mr. Oswald said.

"Mr. Mancusi thought they were real troublemakers," Mr. Oswald recalled. "He felt they were a behavior problem and that by transferring them, the rest of the institution might not get infected."

The Commissioner added: "It's his confection now that by not transferring them subsequently, they were able to develop support. Who knows?"

Mr. Mancusi could not be reached for comment.

Commissioner Oswald said he had originally received the manifesto on July 2 and had responded to it twice by mail. He then discussed it with Frank Lott whom he described as the inmate who headed the committee that drew up a list of 27 demands during the recent uprising.

Mr. Oswald said he had been assured by Lott that the prisoner would have no trouble conveying the Commissioner's sincerity on reform to other inmates.

Mr. Oswald said it was difficult to determine whether Lott and the others who signed the manifesto—Donald Noble, Peter Butler, Carl Jones-El and Herbert X. Blyden—represented the true feelings of inmates at the institution.

"I now wonder whether Lott did, in fact, represent them, because he failed to keep them under control, as he told me he could and would," the Commissioner said.

During the three times that Mr. Oswald entered the inmate-held yard for negotiations during the uprising, he saw Lott sitting at the prisoners' bargaining table. "But he was not in the center of it," he said.

On the general question of transfers, Mr. Oswald said it has long been standard penal practice to place "difficult people" in segregation or to move "them from one institution to another." This, he commented, "seems far too simplistic, and you can't handle this kind of situation in that way."

Mr. Oswald said he had been aware for some time of the problems posed by particularly truculent prisoners. In the last few months, he said, he has been searching for a part of a prison that could accommodate the "very small percentage of such prisoners that we have."

The Commissioner, who has been working out of an underground civil-defense bunker here since a bomb exploded near his offices 10 days ago, said the search for such a place has been going on for several months.

"I fear, he said, that with our present body of knowledge, there are certain individual we are unable to work with in the open institution who need segregation and intensive help."

He said it would be necessary to have a "clear-cut set of criteria as to who should be sent there." In response to a question, he added that he did not know whether the five manifesto signers were the kinds of prisoners who could be candidates for such a facility. Physical aggressiveness, he said, rather than political activity would ultimately determine such a selection.

Mr. Oswald couped this proposal with a call for construction of more minimum-security and moderate-security facilities. Furthermore, he said, he would like to open lumber camps to adult as well as youthful offenders.

Guards Press Negotiations

By **RALPH BLUMENTHAL**

Special to The New York Times

ALBANY, Sept. 28—Union leaders representing the state's

prison guards failed to reach agreement with state officials today on the demands of guards who have threatened a "lock-in" of prisoners in their cells on or before Oct. 7. Another meeting is scheduled for tomorrow.

However, the state has agreed to equip all guards with riot helmets that have face shields and with gas masks, according to P. J. Ciampa, organization director for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employes, A.F.L.-C.I.O., whose Council 82 represents the state's nearly 8,000 uniformed prison guards.

At present, the union maintains, only 5 per cent of the guards have such riot-control equipment, and some of the gas masks are said to date from World War I.

Meanwhile the State Department of Correction announced in a release that of the 32 prisoners killed in the Attica uprising 20 were black, four were Puerto Rican and eight were other whites.

The release also gave the racial breakdown of the 2,243

prisoners in Attica and the 12,278 inmates in the state as a whole.

The percentages at Attica were put at 54.9 black, 6.9 Puerto Rican, 37.7 other white and 0.5 other. The corresponding percentages for the entire system were 55.7 black, 11.9 Puerto Rican, 31.9 other white and 0.5 other.

Demands by Guards

The guards' union has issued a series of demands in the wake of the Attica rebellion.

The demands, as outlined by Mr. Ciampa at a news conference today, are for the hiring and rehiring of 1,100 to 1,200 additional guards, including those laid off in budget cuts; separation in maximum-security facilities of allegedly dangerous or troublesome inmates; riot-control training for guards; the distribution of more riot-control equipment; special compensation for families of guards killed in the Attica uprising, and improvement of the living conditions of prisoners and rehabilitative services.