

Antiwar Leaders Plan Demonstrations at Prisons

By C. GERALD FRASER

White antiwar activists will lead demonstrations Saturday at prison facilities across the nation to urge reform in prison policies in the United States and South Vietnam.

Nine prisons will see marches and rallies sponsored by antiwar activists and Third World groups acting through 46 local organizations.

The antiwar activists said they were moving into the area of prison policies primarily because the jailing of many colleagues had heightened their awareness of prison conditions.

"More and more of us who are into war resistance will see the insides of prisons for one spurious reason or another," said Sister Elizabeth McAlister.

A Roman Catholic nun, Sister McAlister is a member

of the Sacred Heart of Mary and one of eight persons indicted by a Federal grand jury on charges of conspiring to kidnap Henry A. Kissinger, the presidential aide, and to blow up heating ducts under buildings in Washington.

Plans Announced

Plans for the demonstrations were announced at the offices of the Harrisburg Defense Committee, at 156 Fifth Avenue.

Participating in the news conference were Sister McAlister, Dr. George Wald, a Nobel Prize-winning biologist of Harvard University; Beulah Sanders, of the National Welfare Rights Organization; Frances Beal, of the Third World Women's Alliance; Prof. Edward Sagarin, a criminologist who teaches at City College, and

Tom Davidson, a member of the Harrisburg Defense Committee.

Dr. Wald said that as a result of a recent visit to South Vietnam he had become concerned with the funding and staffing of prisons there and the building and use of "tiger cage" cells in those prisons.

He has also become disturbed, he said, by "a kind of dehumanization of prisoners" in the United States. He said the placing of men and women in American jails in a "subhuman" category had even been "extended to families" of the prisoners.

The issue of who is a political prisoner is another question that Dr. Wald said concerned him. He said he had always been aware of the difference between the traditional crimi-

nal and the political prisoner. But now, "I'm afraid I'm losing that distinction," the biologist explained.

He said that wardens shutting off prisons, the way the Government "can classify a document," implausible explanations by prisons officials at Attica and San Quentin and a judicial system in which "it costs too much to prove one's innocence and [in which] the courts really haven't got the time to prove one's guilt," had all brought him to this point.

The prison facilities where demonstrations are scheduled are the Federal Correctional Institute, Danbury, Conn.; Alderson Women's Federal Prison, Alderson, W. Va.; Cuyahoga County Prison in Cleveland and the Federal Youth Correctional Facility, Ashland, Ky.