

# Jail Tensions Grow; Guards Fear Violence

By Ernest Lenn

Tensions are building up in San Francisco's main county jail near San Bruno with inmates wanting swift changes in conditions, a spokesman for the Deputy Sheriffs Association said today.

The situation has reached the point where some deputy sheriff-jailers are concerned over their own safety, said Stephen Bruce Bley, attorney for the association.

Some deputies said that the Bruno jail has been seething for several weeks, since TV Staton KQED filmed a live program at the jail, in which a number of inmates aired their gripes directly to Sheriff Richard Hongisto, Robert Mendelsohn, chairman of the Supervisors Finance Committee, and others.

## Discipline

The deputies said that discipline has been difficult to maintain among some prisoners. They cited the incident last Friday, when for two hours 40 inmates milled around in a basement area, refusing to return to their cells.

Only two deputies were on duty. During the melee, some prisoners broke open lockers containing clothing, the deputies said.

Bley and representatives of the Deputy Sheriffs Association conferred late yesterday with Hongisto and his aides, discussing jail prob-

lems. cite the inmates to take over.

Bley quoted Hongisto as saying at yesterday's meeting, "We have to bring this horrible situation before the public."

Bley and the association representatives called on Hongisto to expedite service-incurred disability coverage for deputies who may be injured in line of duty. Bley said Hongisto gave assurances he would help all he can.

Governor Reagan last November signed into law a bill to provide such disability benefits for San Francisco deputy sheriffs, jailers and bailiffs.

## State Code

The legislation would blanket the deputies under the State labor code, assuring them full pay while disabled for up to one year. The association had charged that one third of the deputies were injured in line of duty over a one-year period. The only pay available to them in the past has been about \$87 a week in workmen's compensation.

The association representatives also discussed with Hongisto his recent statements regarding allegations made by some prisoners against deputies. Bley said that Hongisto promised a new procedure, whereby the sheriff will make no public comments to the news media regarding such allegations, pending an investigation.

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## Comments

They pointed out that Hongisto, commenting on the jail rebellion last Friday, had publicly said prisoners could take over the jail. Hongisto was told that such comments might tend to in-

Hongisto asked the association representatives for support in his new budget. Bley said this request will be submitted to a forthcoming association membership meeting.