

Governor Contends Uprising Was Work Of Revolutionaries

NYTimes SEP 14 1971

By WILLIAM E. FARRELL

Governor Rockefeller said yesterday that the uprising at Attica Prison was brought on by the "revolutionary tactics of militants" and that he had ordered "a full investigation of all the factors leading to this uprising, including the role that outside forces would appear to have played."

The Governor's comments were contained in a statement issued by his office here following one of the most critical moves of his 13 years in office—his sanctioning of the decision of State Commissioner of Correction Russell G. Oswald to storm the prison. Twenty-

Continued on Page 30, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

eight prisoners and nine guards who had been held hostage died as the assault forces moved in.

The action taken by the state prompted President Nixon to phone the Governor to express support for his actions in dealing with the prison rebellion.

Mr. Rockefeller was not personally available to comment on the uprising.

Statement Is Issued

Instead, a statement was issued by his press secretary, Ronald Maiorana, that said:

Our hearts go out to the families of the hostages who died at Attica.

The tragedy was brought on by the highly organized, revolutionary tactics of militants who rejected all efforts at a peaceful settlement, forced a confrontation and carried out cold-blooded killings they had threatened from the outset.

We can be grateful that the skill and courage of the state police and correction officers, supported by the National Guard and sheriff's deputies, saved the lives of 29 hostages—and that their restraint held down casualties among prisoners as well.

It was only after four days and nights of patient round-the-clock negotiations with the prisoners by Commissioner Oswald and the citizens' committee, exploring all possible means of peacefully securing the release of the hostages, that the state police went in to rescue the hostages and restore order.

I have ordered a full investigation of all the factors leading to this uprising including the role that outside forces would appear to have played.

No Elaboration Offered

Asked whether the Governor had any intelligence regarding a militant plot or who the "outside forces" might be, Mr. Maiorana said there would be no elaboration at this time.

There was speculation that the investigation of the Attica uprising would be handled by Robert E. Fischer, the deputy state attorney general who is director of the State Task Force Against Organized Crime.

The Governor began getting telephone calls regarding the situation at Attica at 6 A.M. at his Pocantico Hills estate.

By 8 A.M., he was at his apartment at 810 Fifth Avenue, where for the next half-hour he was involved in a discussion of his proposed \$2.5-billion transportation bond issue with Dr. William J. Ronan, chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and with Richard A. Wiebe, state director of planning and coordination services.

Also present were Mr. Maiorana and Hugh Morrow, the Governor's director of communications.

The bond issue was to have been the subject of a news conference that the Governor canceled yesterday, along with plans to go to the National Governors' Conference in San Juan, P.R.

"Everything we talked about was against the backdrop of the telephone ringing," Mr. Maiorana said.

Secretary on Scene

In addition to Commissioner Oswald, the Governor was in touch with two key aides he had previously dispatched to Attica his secretary, Robert R. Douglass, and T. Norman Hurd, the director of state operations.

The decision to send in troopers and New York National Guardsmen, who had been quietly called up Sunday by the Governor, was "made by the people at the scene," the press secretary said.

"They told him what the conditions were and he backed them all the way. The Governor, in effect, told Oswald you do whatever you have to do and I'll back you," Mr. Maiorana said.

Shortly after 9 A.M., the Governor was told that the decision had been made to move on the prison.

"He turned to us and said, 'We're going in,'"

Mr. Rockefeller was given an eyewitness description over the telephone of some of what was happening by Mr. Douglass

When the first of the hostages were freed, the Governor exclaimed: "My God?"

"There was definite relief on his face that even one hostage came out," the press secretary said.

Mr. Maiorana also said that Commissioner Oswald had told

the Governor that several of the slain hostages had, according to preliminary medical examinations, been killed hours prior to the issuance of the Commissioner's ultimatum to the prisoners.

Visit to Attica Rejected

On Sunday, the Governor rejected a request from the observers' panel called to Attica by prisoners to go to the prison, saying that he did not feel his physical presence could "contribute to a peaceful settlement."

Asked whether the Governor might not still go to Attica, the press secretary said: "I don't think so."

The Governor went to his office at 22 West 55th Street

around noon. There, he telephoned the Wyoming County District Attorney, Louis R. James, to compliment him on his stand on refusing one of the prisoners' key demands—complete amnesty from criminal prosecution.

In a telephone interview from her home in Warsaw, Mrs. Ruth James, the District Attorney's wife who took the call, said that "Governor Rockefeller called and asked me to express his gratitude for the way he (Mr. James) handled it and the stand he took on this amnesty business."

Mrs. James also said the Governor told her that President Nixon had called him to express support of the way the uprising was handled.