

Secretary to Kunstler Engaged To Inmate She Visited in Attica

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BUFFALO, Dec. 23—A secretary to William M. Kunstler, the civil rights lawyer, and her fiancé, an inmate in solitary confinement in the Attica state prison who is serving life for murder, filed suit in Federal Court here today alleging they had been denied correspondence and visiting privileges.

The couple, Dorothy Thorne, 38 years old, of 272 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, and Peter Butler, 28, said the privileges had been denied them since the uprising at the Attica Correctional Facility in September. They asserted that this constituted "cruel and inhuman punishment."

Mrs. Thorne—she was formerly married—first began corresponding with Butler last April in her capacity as a secretary to Mr. Kunstler at the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York.

According to one of her lawyers, Herman Schwartz, the legal correspondence led to personal letters during the summer. The couple met face to face — through the visitors' screen — at Attica once last summer, Mr. Schwartz said.

Though they have neither written nor visited since the uprising, they became engaged in October, with Mr. Schwartz acting as their intermediary.

Butler, who is in the fifth year of his life term, subsequently filed a Federal Court suit challenging a state law that prohibits convicts from marrying and specifically ask-

ing that he be allowed to marry Mrs. Thorne in prison. The suit is pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District of New York.

According to Mr. Schwartz, Mrs. Thorne has also hired a New York City lawyer to file another suit, in an effort to overturn Butler's conviction of first-degree murder in New York City.

The suit filed today in the Federal District Court for the Western District of New York named as defendants Walter Dunbar, executive deputy commissioner of the State Correction Department, and Vincent R. Mancusi, superintendent of the prison at Attica.

The suit asks the court to overturn a regulation that prohibits inmates in solitary confinement from having correspondence or visits with people other than relatives or officially designated lawyers. Butler has no living relatives, Mr. Schwartz said.

The lawyer said that Butler had been in segregated confinement since—and in connection with—the Attica inmate uprising in which 43 persons were killed. Mr. Schwartz said his personal appeals to Mr. Dunbar and Mr. Mancusi on the couple's behalf had been unsuccessful.

The lawyer, who is acting with Mr. Kunstler and Edward I. Koren of Buffalo as the couple's counsel said: "They want to get married as soon as possible."