

WARDEN RETIRING FROM ATTICA POST

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Inmates Demanded Mancusi Ouster During Rebellion

By JAMES F. CLARITY

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ALBANY, Jan. 26—The State Correctional Services Commissioner, Russell G. Oswald, announced today that Vincent R. Mancusi, superintendent of the Attica Correctional Facility, was retiring.

Mr. Mancusi's ouster was one of the principal demands made by Attica inmates during the rebellion at the prison last September that led to the death of 32 prisoners and 11 guards. The announcement caused Senator John R. Dunne, Republican of Garden City, L.I., chairman of the Crime and Correction Committee, to whistle in surprise.

Mr. Oswald's statement said Mr. Mancusi was retiring after 35 years' service with the department. Gerald T. Houlihan, the department's information officer, said the retirement was "voluntary." Although Mr. Mancusi, who had served enough time in the department to retire with a full pension, he had not, at 57, reached the mandatory retirement age.

Mr. Oswald, in a statement

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Attica Superintendent Retiring; Inmates Demanded His Ouster

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issued here, said Mr. Mancusi would be replaced at the maximum-security prison on Feb. 15 by Ernest L. Montanye, who is now director of the division of correctional camps. The camps are low-security units in which prisoners between the ages of 16 and 25 work on conservation projects in upstate areas.

Mr. Montanye, who is also 57 and has been with the Correction Department since 1942, was chosen for the job, according to Mr. Oswald's office, because his name was first on the Civil Service list of persons eligible for prison superintendent.

Mr. Houlihan said Mr. Oswald had not consulted Governor Rockefeller before making the appointment to the sensitive post at Attica.

Mr. Houlihan said Mr. Montanye had been at Attica during the rebellion as an assistant to Mr. Oswald. But Mr. Houlihan said he did not know exactly what were Mr. Montanye's duties there.

Mr. Montanye, who works at the department headquarters here and lives in suburban Glenmont, was not immediately available to discuss his new job, which pays \$17,513 a year and includes a furnished residence. Mr. Mancusi's office in Attica said he was not available for comment.

Superseded During Revolt

Mr. Mancusi's authority was superseded at Attica when the rebellion began Sept. 9. Mr. Oswald and state police officials took command of prison operations during the revolt. In the aftermath of the revolt, First Deputy Attorney General Robert M. Fischer, directing the state's investigation of the affair, frequently gave Mr. Mancusi orders.

Mr. Dunne, who has been involved in studying the state correction system for years, said when told of Mr. Mancusi's retirement: "I'm surprised. I'm just surprised."

He noted that Mr. Mancusi's

removal was one of the prisoner's two major demands that the state rejected during the revolt. The other, Mr. Dunne said, was total amnesty for all prisoners involved in the riot.

Mr. Dunne, who has visited virtually every correctional institution operated by the state, said he had never heard of Mr. Montanye.

David Rothenberg, executive director of the Fortune Society, an organization operated by ex-convicts that seeks improvements in prisons, said of the announcement: "After Mancusi goes, we can only go up. But we will wait and see about Mr. Montanye."

Mr. Rothenberg said a number of ex-convicts working at the society's Manhattan office today said they had never heard of Mr. Montanye.

Served at Napanoch

Mr. Montanye was born in Elmira and worked for the state Department of Mental Hygiene before becoming a guard at the institution for male defective delinquents at Napanoch in 1942. He was at that institution in 1950 when he was nominated as "correction officer of the year." In 1958 he became a sergeant at Walkill Prison. In 1965, the year Mr. Mancusi became superintendent at Attica, Mr. Montanye was promoted to lieutenant at Sing Sing.

In 1968 he became director of the four correctional camps, Pharsalia at South Plymouth in Chenango County, Mongerey, at Beaver Dam in Schuyler County; Summit, in Schoharie County, and Georgetown, in Madison County.

Mr. Montanye has completed courses in psychology, criminology, sociology and administration at New Paltz State College and the Moran Institute at St. Lawrence University. He teaches sociology and other subjects at the Correctional Department's training academy at Beacon.