

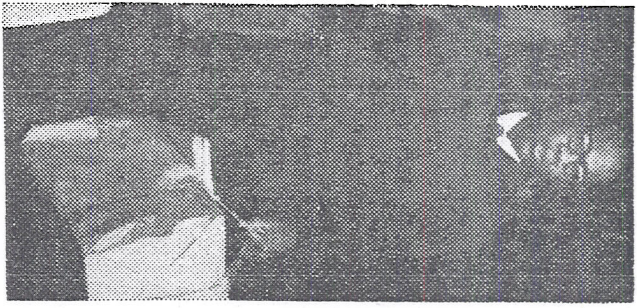
First of Attica Uprising Leaders Is Released, but He

By JOSEPH LELYVELD

Shortly after 10 A.M. yesterday, a tall young black man with a closely shaved head stepped through the small front door of the Attica Correctional Facility and surveyed the snowed-in parking lot. He was Richard X. Clark, the first of the leaders of the Attica uprising last September to be set free.

Later, he explained that he had scanned the parking lot to see if there were any policemen waiting with a warrant for his arrest. No inmates have yet been charged in connection with the rising, but a Wyoming County grand jury has been listening to witnesses in Warsaw for weeks.

Brother Richard, as he was called by the rebel prisoners when he was acting as one of their main spokesmen, was wearing a topcoat and suit the prison gave him that morning and a new pair of shoes. It was the first time he had worn



The New York Times
RELEASED FROM ATTICA: Richard X. Clark, a leader of September uprising, leaving upstate prison.

shoes, he said, since Sept. 13, the day the rebellion was quelled by the state police.

Forty-three persons died as a result of the four-day uprising, 39 of them from wounds sustained in the police assault. Since Sept. 13, inmates regarded as "hardcore" by prison authorities have been segregated from the general prison population and even given special uniforms to wear — white jump suits replacing the customary gray garb, with cloth slippers as an accessory.

Thoughts on Leaving

As the car that was taking him to Buffalo passed the Attica village limits, Clark was asked how it felt to put Attica behind him. Looking up from a pile of mail that prison authorities had withheld from him for four months on the ground that the letters, telegrams and publications were "contraband," he

replied: "Attica is in front of me."

In part, he was referring to his expectation that he be rearrested ("maybe next week, maybe even tomorrow"). And in part, he was voicing a vow to devote his efforts outside jail to raising funds and support for "the brothers" still inside who, he charged, have been subjected to persistent harassment.

"I want to be an extension of the brothers' voice on the outside," he said. "I'm the first one to get out that the institution didn't want to let out."

The way to his release was cleared Monday by an order from Federal Judge John O. Henderson in Buffalo. Clark, who is 25, had served 32 months after accepting a reduced sentence for an armed robbery that he now maintains he never committed.

Prison authorities told him he would be released on schedule, then notified him that they were depriving him of 30 days of good time. Judge Hen-

derson ruled they had not acted fairly.

Yesterday, Clark said, he was awakened at 3:30 A.M. when a guard started hosing water into the cell of a prisoner who had started a small fire in a coffee can to warm his hands. The guards, he said, have been making a practice of leaving windows open in the corridors despite sub-zero temperatures.

Less than 12 hours later, Clark was sitting in the studio of WGR-TV, the National Broadcasting Company affiliate in Buffalo, answering questions on a talk show with perfect aplomb.

The ordinary citizen, the interviewer said, wants to know why he should worry about convicted criminals losing their privileges. "Should they lose their manhood?" he answered in calm, even tones. "Should they lose their dignity?" Anyone who in-

Fears Arrest at Any Time

Yesterday afternoon, as the plane in which he was flying home circled over Staten Island, he started talking about how much he wished he would never have to return to Attica. "But only eight months and had just passed the exam given to candidates for the Police Department here when he was arrested on March 11, 1969. He has a wife and twin sons, 5 years old.

Outside the window of the plane, a panorama of the harbor was now unfolding. "Got to take the kids to the ferry this weekend," Clark said.