

More Time Sought for Inquiry Into a Possible Attica Cover-Up

The independent inquiry into the charge that the chief Attica prosecutor covered up possible crimes by law-enforcement officers is expected to last 45 to 90 days more, the special investigator heading the inquiry said yesterday.

Bernard S. Meyer, the former State Supreme Court justice who was named as the special investigator last month, announced that he had hired two additional lawyers to work on the inquiry and appealed to the public for information regarding the Attica uprising of 1971 and related events at the prison.

The two lawyers are Edward M. Shaw, former chief of the Federal Strike Force Against Organized Crime in Manhattan, and Eric A. Seiff, who is on leave as chief of operations for the criminal division of the Legal Aid Society of New York City. The appointment of Malachy T. Mahon, former dean of the Hofstra Law School, as executive director of the inquiry was announced earlier.

Coverup Charged

Mr. Meyer, whose official title during the inquiry is Special Deputy Attorney General, was appointed by Governor Carey and Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz after Malcolm H. Bell accused the chief Attica prosecutor, Anthony G. Simonetti, of a coverup.

Before his resignation last December, Mr. Bell was a key assistant to Mr. Simonetti. Mr. Bell conducted most of the grand jury hearings on possible crimes by state troopers and

correction officers who quelled the Attica prison revolt in September, 1971.

Mr. Simonetti has categorically denied Mr. Bell's allegation.

Mr. Meyer, who was assigned to "evaluate the conduct" of the state's three-year investigation and prosecution of crimes arising from the Attica revolt, was originally scheduled to report to Mr. Carey and Mr. Lefkowitz within 30 "working days." Twenty-six "working days" have elapsed.

Interim Report Planned

The former judge said yesterday that he would submit an interim report on June 2 with a request that he be allowed more time and staff. Mr. Carey indicated last week that he would be receptive to such a request.

Until now, Mr. Meyer said, he and his aides have been "gathering and evaluating information and documents and doing some interviewing." He declined to indicate whether any substantive findings had been reached, even tentatively.

Persons with information re prison or subsequent events were asked to write to Mr. Meyer at 160 Mineola Blvd., Mineola, N.Y., 11501 or to telephone 516 741-8790 or 212 895-3056.