

PS C
Prisoners Solidarity
Committee

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Special 8-page newsletter on Attica

Tom Soto reports
from inside Attica

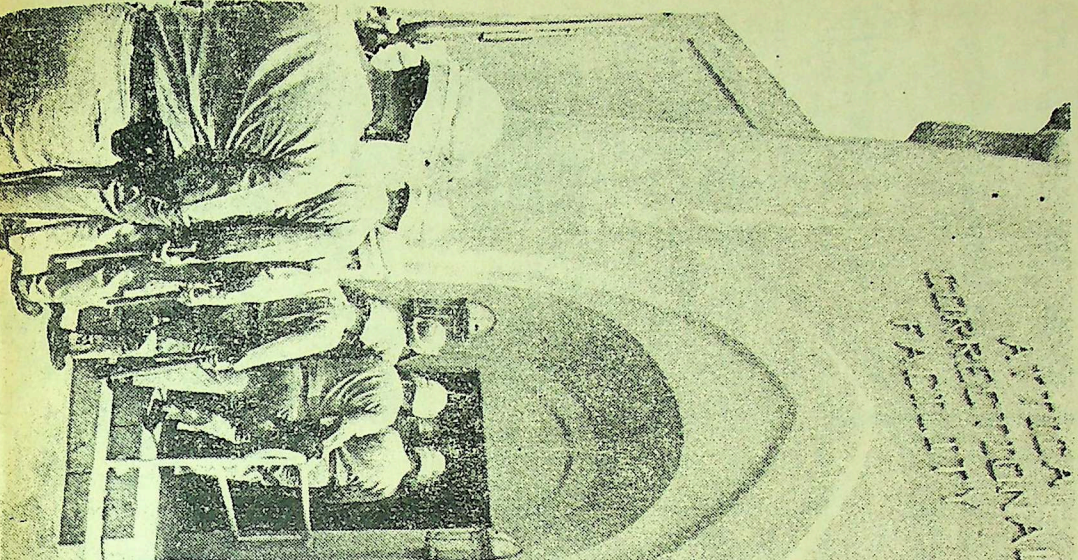
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A Report From Inside Attica



Contact the Prisoners Solidarity Committee at 58 West 25 St. New York, N. Y. 10010

ALAN



Rockefeller's assault troops entering Attica prison for the massacre.

ATTICA, N.Y., Sept. 14 — Billionaire Governor Rockefeller yesterday ended with a massacre the greatest prisoners' rebellion in modern times. Reflecting the blatant racism that has created the concentration camp system in this country and has led to prisoners' revolts nationwide, a guard held hostage by rebelling inmates at Attica State Prison emerged from the prison's main gate free and unharmed with a violent shout of "White power!" Behind him, within the prison walls, speared a carnage of blood and bodies, including 28 dead prisoners and hundreds wounded, some fatally. Also dead were 9 guards held as hostages, all, according to later autopsies, killed by bullets as 1000 state troopers, sheriffs' deputies and prison guards armed with shotguns, automatic weapons and nausea gas stormed the prison with guns blazing.

"It resembled the aftermath of a war," some observers said, and they were right. Attica, with its prisoner population 85 per cent Black and Puerto Rican and the high political consciousness and clenched fist salutes displayed during the rebellion, was one more battle in the continuing war for national liberation of the Black and Brown populations in the United States. Few believe that it will be the last.

On Thursday, September 9, over 1000 prisoners, long abused by the all-white racist guard force, a vicious prison system, and an economic and political dictatorship held over the poor and working class of this country by the rich, rose up to overpower their tormentors. Within minutes, the inmates seized Cell Block D and 32 guards. Then, from a makeshift megaphone, the inmates issued their demands, many of which reflected the high political content of the rebellion.

POLITICAL DEMANDS RAISED

"An immediate end to the agitation of race relations by the prison administration of this State," the prisoners demanded. An end to the racial discrimination against Brown and Black prisoners by the parole board; a replacement of the present parole board appointed by Rockefeller with a board elected by the people; the right to labor union membership while working in the prison and State and federal minimum wage instead of the present slave labor; constitutional right to legal repre-

THE PRISONERS OF ATTICA

Unity and courage VS.

Rockefeller's machine guns

sentation at parole board hearings; "an end to the segregation of prisoners from the mainline population because of their political beliefs"; an end to guard brutality against prisoners; and, later the prisoners added their demands for amnesty from criminal prosecution and "speedy and safe transportation out of confinement to any non-imperialist country."

"Many prisoners believe their labor power is being exploited," said the declaration of demands, "in order for the state to increase its economic power and to continue to expand its correctional industries (which are million-dollar complexes), yet do not develop working skills acceptable for employment in the outside society, and which do not pay the prisoner more than an average of forty cents a day. Most prisoners never make more than fifty cents a day. Prisoners who refuse to work for the outrageous scale, or who strike, are punished and segregated without the access to privileges shared by those who work; this is class legislation, class division, creates hostilities within the prison."

The prisoners set up a People's Central Committee which included Black, Puerto Rican and white members, organized their own typing pool and sound system. As for the hostages, according to Tom Soto of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee who saw them, the guards were being well treated, undoubtedly much better than the guards had ever treated the prisoners.

ROCKEFELLER REJECTS AMNESTY

Nelson Rockefeller, billionaire governor of New York, disagreed. "To do so (grant amnesty) would undermine the very essence" of American society, he said. From the barbed-wired seclusion of his 3000 acre private estate at Pocantico Hills, Rockefeller rejected the plea of the mediating committee for him to join the negotiations. Instead, this brother of the head of Chase Manhattan Bank ordered the full mobilization of the National Guard units in western New York to prepare a massacre of Attica's inmates.

The demands of the prisoners were never seriously considered, and the most fundamental of the demands, amnesty, was never considered by the State. To the prisoners, this was crucial as many were in danger of being framed up on murder charges for the death of a sympathetic guard killed by other guards when the rebellion broke out.

Meanwhile, the troop buildup outside the prison continued. Sheriffs' deputies poured in from 13 surrounding counties in their own automobiles, armed with shotguns and 30-30 hunting rifles for "the turkey shoot" as one racist called it. It was clear that Rockefeller's government was not negotiating in good faith.

Under cover of "negotiating," they were preparing the massacre, as hundreds of National Guard troops were moved into the area on Sunday. Police outside the prison grew increasingly hostile to arriving crowds of prisoners' supporters and relatives. One state trooper leveled his shotgun at members of a delegation of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee and growled, "Get out of the roadway or we'll wipe you out!"

Meanwhile, relatives of prisoners were denied access to the prison grounds by police, although relatives of hostages were allowed in. A roadblock

one mile from the prison sealed off the prisoners from their relatives and outside supporters. As far as the State was concerned, the prisoners' families had no rights. A curfew was also imposed in the town of Attica to prevent angry Black, Brown and white supporters from exercising their right to be at the scene.

Rockefeller's government had also decided the prisoners had no rights. Not even the right to live.

Yesterday, Monday morning, the State's mobilization was completed, and by 8 a.m. 1700 troops armed with machine guns, automatic rifles, tear and nausea gas, shotguns, and high pressure hoses were poised for the attack. At 9:45, Oswald gave the signal for the attack to begin. Two Army helicopters circled over the northeast corner of the 55-acre compound where the prisoners were gathered. One dropped canisters of nausea gas onto Cell Block D, while the other swooped down on the men below, firing automatic weapons in the crowd of prisoners, shooting them down in "Vietnam" fashion. The prisoners had no weapons to return the fire but defended themselves as valiantly as they could. Their only means of defense were hand-made weapons. It was a massacre.

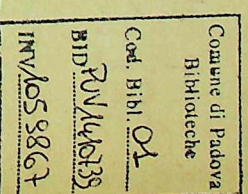
CAPITALIST PRESS LIED!

Yesterday the capitalist press was full of horror stories of hostages with their throats cut, mutilations and executions. The racist hysteria against the prisoners' uprising was being carefully fanned. Today the truth came out—the guards were all killed in the same murderous assault by police and national guards on the prisoners.

So far, twenty-eight prisoners and nine hostages were reported killed, hundreds of prisoners wounded. The 28 surviving hostages were taken for treatment to a nearby hospital, while the hundreds of wounded prisoners waited for treatment in a small room in the prison, 8 by 10 feet, the floor covered with blood. "It's the worst thing I've ever seen," said one doctor emerging from the prison gate in a blood-stained gown.

Asked if he had any second thoughts after seeing the resulting massacre, Commissioner Oswald patred his huge stomach and calmly replied, "No, I don't." Nelson Rockefeller had no second thoughts, either. He agreed that the security of the whole rotten prison system was at stake. The highly political content of the prisoner demands was also a direct challenge to the dictatorship of wealth enjoyed by millionaires like Rockefeller. This was not just a prison rebellion, but part of a larger class war going on across the country. This was recognized on a national level as President Nixon personally phoned his congratulations to the Governor. Rockefeller was, of course, delighted.

The people were not. Prisons around the country stirred with anger. In Baltimore City jail, the second revolt within a year broke out, and prisoners of Cleveland County Prison also rebelled. Throughout New York, Rockefeller ordered all inmates in the state's maximum security prisons confined to their cells, in fear of spreading rebellion. Rockefeller, slipping his mint julep at his Pocantico Hills estate, may have been delighted with Nixon's support, but he was frantically worried about the rising tide of people's vengeance that is increasingly threatening to sweep him and his wealthy class into the dustbin of history.



Breaking through the walls of isolation

What is the

Prisoners Solidarity Committee?

Once in a very great while, a rich man goes to prison. Maybe he's taking a six-month rap for a company that defrauded the people out of millions; when he gets out after his brief stretch, he's set for life. And even while he's in, every little comfort is provided for him, so that the time passes as pleasantly as possible.

Most of all, he is never really isolated, never forgotten. His lawyers visit him constantly, the guards treat him like a "gentleman," and he is able to conduct his business affairs from prison.

Prisoners weren't made for people like this. The fact that a handful of them may be in a few federal institutions is largely an accident.

But the prisons are full, overflowing, exploding with poor, oppressed men and women for whom prisons have meant the end — of life, of happiness, of friends and family. The first stretch becomes a stigma that dooms a young person to a life behind bars. The prisoner never sees a lawyer, is prevented from defending himself, is se-
ranged from his or her family just out of the sheer impossibility of visits to isolated prisons, and can look forward to desperation and disappointment when and if he ever hits the streets again.

For thousands of prisoners, especially the large percentage of Black and other oppressed people routed into the prisons from birth, these conditions have become unbearable. The terrible isolation imposed by the racist authorities has been broken again and again in the only way left to human beings who have been literally sealed in their own tombs: by open rebellion. These rebellions are specifically directed at the numberless injustices that read like a description of the Chamber of Horrors; but they are also something more.

They are a passionate cry to brothers and sisters on the outside, a desperate affirmation that they are alive, there on the inside; they are human beings who, while treated worse than animals, have not been crushed, whose spirit lives on in rebellion.

The Prisoners Solidarity Committee is another absolutely indispensable product of this new spirit. It was formed less than a year ago, when prisoners at Auburn, N.Y., wrote to organizations

on the outside for help. Youth Against War & Fascism responded, and soon helped form the Prisoners Solidarity Committee. The committee has expanded to many cities since then, and includes relatives of prisoners and released prisoners themselves.

When news of the PSC reached the jails, it released a dammed-up flood of letters from brothers and sisters telling of the indignities, the brutality, the pain that is a daily part of prison life. But these letters all told something else. They were not pathetic appeals from beaten people; they rang with hope and strength and willingness to struggle. Moreover, the writers were thrilled that they were finally breaking out of their isolation, that people outside were listening and working with them.

The PSC published some of these letters in the pamphlet, "Prisoners Call Out: Freedom!" The PSC raised some money with this pamphlet and social affairs, and rented a bus

ATTENTION: PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Contact the Prisoners Solidarity Committee if we can help you in any of these ways:

- Help you get in touch with your loved ones. (The PSC has many, many messages from the Attica prisoners. Not all of them are supplied with addresses. If you are trying to get news about or to anyone in Attica, contact the PSC and we will help.)

- Legal assistance. The PSC will try to get legal help for prisoners and their families.
- Transportation. We are raising funds to charter more buses so that relatives can visit prisons in remote areas.

● Publicity. The PSC puts out pamphlets, leaflets, press releases and organizes demonstrations to make the voices of the prisoners heard.

Anyone wishing to help in the work of the PSC should also contact us at the following chapters:

NEW YORK CITY	ROCHESTER, NEW YORK	DETROIT, MICHIGAN
58 West 25th Street	69 Rohr Street	2515 Woodward
BUFFALO, NEW YORK	BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS	MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
939 Main Street	P.O. Box 8875	150 E. Juneau Avenue
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK	CLEVELAND, OHIO	WILMINGTON, DELAWARE
120 Dell Street	Box 2576, East Cleveland	P.O. Box 972

Parole Board. Most prisoners are denied parole solely because of their prior records. Life sentences should not confine a man longer than 10 years as 7 years is the considered statute for a lifetime out of circulation, and if a man cannot be rehabilitated after a maximum of ten years of constructive programs, etc., then he belongs in a mental hygiene center, not a prison.

25. We Demand that better food be served to the inmates. The food is a gastrointestinal disaster. We also demand that drinking water be put on each table and that each inmate be allowed to take as much food as he wants and as much bread as he wants, instead of the severely limited portions and limited (4) slices of bread. Inmates wishing a pork-free diet should have one, since 85% of our diet is pork meat or pork-saturated food.

26. We Demand an end to the unsanitary conditions that exist in the mess hall: i.e., dirty trays, dirty utensils, stained drinking cups and an end to the practice of putting food on the tables hours before eating time without any protective covering over it.

27. We Demand that there be one set of rules governing all prisons in this state instead of the

so that prisoners' relatives could get to Auburn and visit them. For many of them, it was the first visit in years.

When the Auburn 6 had several court hearings, the PSC got sizable demonstrations of support, even in blizzard conditions. More and more, the PSC became a vehicle whereby the prisoners themselves could speak to the people outside, could generalize their struggle, fuse their grievances and their hopes into the main current of rebellion that is rising in the country as a whole.

Thus it was small wonder that when the heroic Attica prisoners met with a small group of observers during the rebellion, it was the PSC delegate, Tom Soto, who they most wanted to see. It was to him that they entrusted the greatest number of messages, for their loved ones and for the movement as a whole.

The PSC, on hearing of the rebellion, had immediately mobilized all its strength: it sent a delegation to Attica, arranged transportation for relatives, and organized many demonstrations throughout New York State and in several major cities elsewhere. The prisoners knew about all this, and knew that what they had to say would be heard on the outside.

At the most difficult moments, when ruling class hysteria against the prisoners reached its height, the PSC announced from inside Attica that it unconditionally supported the prisoners' demands. A further bond of love and trust was forged in those tense hours.

The isolation of the prisons has been permanently shattered. Even the highest concrete wall, the darkest cell, the cruelest solitary "hole" can no longer hold the terror it once had, for 1500 men at Attica have looked the worst in the face.

present system where each warden makes rules for his institution as he sees fit.

IN CONCLUSION

We are firm in our resolve and we demand, as human beings, the dignity and justice that is due to us by our right of birth. We do not know how the present system of brutality and dehumanization and injustice has been allowed to be perpetrated in this day of enlightenment, but we are the living proof of its existence and we cannot allow it to continue.

The taxpayers who just happen to be our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, daughters and sons should be made aware of how their tax dollars are being spent to deny their sons, brothers, fathers and uncles of justice, equality and dignity.

* * *

The above demands were presented at the outset of the rebellion. In addition, the prisoners made the three key demands of passage to a nonimperialist country, the firing of warden Mancusi, and complete amnesty. These key demands were unconditionally refused by Rockefeller and his prison hacks.

— Attica demands

(continued from PSC 8)

20. We Demand an immediate end to the agitation of race relations by the prison administration of this State.

21. We Demand that the Dept. of Corrections furnish all prisoners with the services of ethnic counselors for the needed special services of the Brown and Black population of this prison.

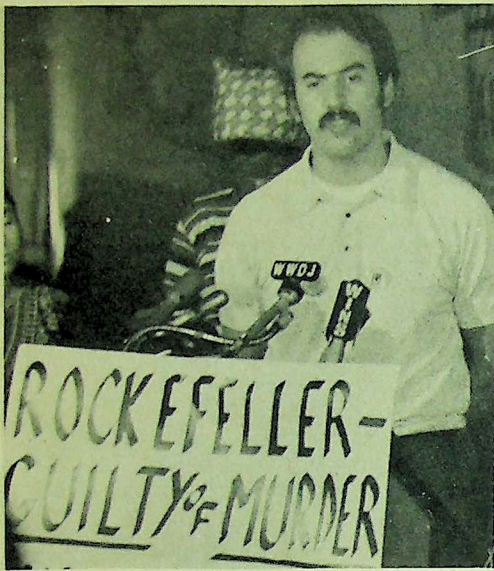
22. We Demand an end to the discrimination in the judgment and quota of parole for Black and Brown people.

23. We Demand that all prisoners be present at the time their cells and property are being searched by the correctional officers of state prisons.

24. We Demand an end to the discrimination against prisoners when they appear before the

Report from inside Attica

"We'll win or die together"



TOM SOTO

Following is an interview with Tom Soto of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee. Tom Soto was invited by rebelling inmates to Attica Prison last Thursday at the beginning of the uprising. He spent four days in the prison talking to inmates and trying to give voice to their demands.

* * *

WW: Why did you go to Attica?

Tom: The inmates who participated in the rebellion at Attica made it clear in their demands that they wanted a representative from the Prisoners Solidarity Committee (PSC) to come to the prison. Many of the prisoners had heard of the support work we were doing at the Tombs, at Auburn, at the Women's House of Detention in New York City and at many other prisons around the country.

They asked that the PSC be present at Attica in order to give voice to their demands. Our organization was distinguished in this respect from some of the people present on the committee of civilians who were asked to go up there by Governor Rockefeller and State Commissioner Oswald to negotiate in the interest of the state.

WW: Do many of the prisoners at Attica know about the PSC?

Tom: Many of the prisoners I spoke to — Black, white, Puerto Rican, Chicano — were aware of our activities and were heartily behind us. Several of these prisoners had been at other prisons and were aware of our activities that way. Many of them know about the bus program we arranged to transport relatives to prisons throughout New York State. And several of the inmates we had actually had correspondence with.

WW: How did you get into the prison?

Tom: Well, when the PSC was informed on Thursday that we were wanted by the inmates, our Buffalo committee immediately contacted the national staff in New York City. I took a plane to Buffalo the next morning and got to Attica Prison at about 9 a.m. I should add that representatives of the PSC were outside Attica all day and night Thursday. As soon as I got there, I informed the authorities at the prison that I had been asked by the inmates to be up there and requested to see them immediately.

I was forced to wait from 9 a.m. until approximately 11 o'clock that night before I was finally allowed to enter. During this time, the state officials who were asked to come to Attica by Oswald and the government were flown in and brought to the prison by state police.

When these official "negotiators" arrived at the prison around 4 p.m., I informed them all of who I was, but it wasn't until about 11:00 that night, after everyone else had gone inside, that I was finally admitted. I feel that the reason I was admitted at all

D Block. As the inmates who were greeting us saw that I was from the PSC, I got salutes of "All Power to the People" and "Right on." The response to us was tremendous.

It was pitch dark in the prison — this was between 11:00 and 12:00 Friday night. When we crossed from B Block through the tunnel into D Block, the liberated area, I was totally amazed at the incredible sight in the yard of D Block. I saw approximately 1500 inmates there. They were organized into a security system, standing with arms locked in circles five rows deep.

BLACK, BROWN AND WHITE ARMS INTERLOCKED

The greeting that I received, because I am Puerto Rican and representing the PSC, was very moving. Prisoners gave me tremendous hugs of solidarity, there was enthusiastic shaking of hands and slogans shouted, "Que Viva Puerto Rico Libre" and "All Power to the People." But the most striking thing of all was that as I moved through the courtyard among the tents they had set up, I could sense the terrible oppression these men had been through and their comradeship, strength and unity. I saw Black arms interlocking with white arms, interlocking with Brown arms. It was total unity among all of them.

The inmates asked the committee of observers if we were truly with them, would we be willing to stay overnight in the prison. Of course, the politicians refused, replying that they could not stay in the institution. I had already agreed to stay the night, along with several other Puerto Rican brothers.

After the politicians left, I got to speak with hundreds of Black, Puerto Rican and white prisoners; I spoke most extensively with the brothers assigned by the prisoners to be my security guards. Two were Puerto Rican, two Black and one white. They escorted me throughout the liberated area and took me wherever I requested to go, telling of the racist, inhuman treatment and conditions that led to the rebellion. The inmates informed me that the authorities had turned off the water, that they had no food supplies, that they had no toilets, that they were being starved while prison officials were telling the people outside that food was getting in regularly. The authorities

telling him to come back when he had learned to speak English. Another brother, William Jamison, I was told, had complained of being ill, but was told it was just in his head. After a week in the observation ward he was returned to his cell. The next day he died.

All of the inmates said that they had been brutally beaten at different times, that they had been gassed, that they were generally treated like animals, that there were no Black or Puerto Rican history books available to them. One of the brothers suggested that one of the demands should be that everybody be released from special housing (solitary confinement).

TOUR OF THE LIBERATED AREA

Upon my request, the inmates took me on a tour of the entire liberated area. I saw the cells, smaller than 8 feet by 6 feet, with just enough room for a bed and about 3 feet that you could actually walk back and forth in. Every window in the prison had thick, three-quarter-inch bars. (I say this because one of the claims of the prison hacks is that a guard had been thrown out of a window on the first day of the uprising. This is absurd because there are no windows without bars.)

The brothers complained of the short periods for exercise, amounting to about one-half hour a day. And, of course, in the winter there was no yard at all. They informed me that their blankets were washed once a year; they complained about the diet that had almost no protein, the terrible housing, the one 5-minute shower a week, and the sexual assaults by guards. There were some incidents described to me that were so horrible that I cannot remember the details, my mind refuses to recall them. The misery and terror that exists in Attica can only be compared with a Nazi concentration camp. In fact, the entire yard looked like a Palestinian refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

I'd like to quote one small note given to me by a young brother. It kind of sums up all the pain and anger that the inmates feel. It reads:

"We have been constantly oppressed and maltreated by the fascist pigs far too long. We are human beings with human desires and we demand an end to brutality, prejudice, and injustice and we

the PSC, the Lords, the Muslims and several Puerto Rican brothers — were locked up in a separate room under armed guard and threatened with being shot if we tried to leave, while the others were meeting with Oswald to draw up a list of 28 proposed demands.

WW: On Saturday night, when the proposals of Oswald and the politicians were read to the prisoners, how did they react?

Tom: At first, there was dead silence, a deep sense of betrayal and then anger. I let the prisoners know that I had nothing whatsoever to do with those proposals, that I, along with several other brothers, had been locked in a room under armed guard while the talks were going on.

Throughout the reading of the demands, everyone was totally silent. First of all, there was no amnesty. In fact, in a letter written by the DA on this very subject of amnesty, the DA said that he would prosecute anybody who he felt had committed a "crime." That's some amnesty. The proposals gave no guarantees; they were not legally binding in any way and the prisoners knew it.

For example, on the demand for minimum wages, Oswald only said he'd recommend that, but then the budget could be allotted to allow only 25 cents an hour and his word would be worthless. Another proposal said that the prison would provide inmates with "adequate food, water, and shelter." That word "adequate" is so ambiguous, it's meaningless. The prison officials already claim that prisoners receive adequate food, water, and shelter.

Well, the inmates got up and said that the authorities must think we are bullshitting because that's not what we were asking for. All that was simply words and had no meaning. A Puerto Rican brother got up and very eloquently stated, "We have suffered, we have died, we have fought, we have been dehumanized, we have been raped, we have been beaten, we have been gassed; now they give us a bullshit piece of paper.... The oppressed cannot accept this!"

WW: How did the prisoners react to Oswald's ultimatum?

Tom: First of all, in his ultimatum, Oswald implied that the whole committee had approved all of his recommendations. Consequently, the inmates felt that the committee had betrayed them. When we got to see the prisoners Sunday night, they were angry, and rightfully so. The prisoners answered Oswald's ultimatum by saying that they would stand firm on the demand for amnesty and the next move was up to the state. The issue was total amnesty; everything else was secondary.

They said that the proposal that Oswald had submitted was bullshit, and they were tired of playing games. He had to decide, did he want to negotiate or did he want a massacre? Of course, now we know that Oswald and Rockefeller chose the massacre. They never seriously negotiated with the prisoners; they were just waiting for the kill.

FACING 40 MACHINE GUNS

WW: What was your last impression at Attica before you left?

Tom: There is one scene that I'll never forget. I was leaving the prison for the last time, late Sunday night. As I entered corridor A leading into the liberated area there was a brother whom I happen to know personally standing on security. His arms were folded as he faced 40 machine guns on the administration side. On his shirt he was wearing a PSC button. Today, I don't know if he is alive.

Another thing I'll never forget: a brother whom I rapped with a long time noted the ring on my finger and asked about it. I told him it had been made from an American fighter bomber shot down by Laotian women over Laos. I gave it to him and he considered it to be a very dear show of solidarity between the PSC and the prisoners and the Indochinese people.

As I left, I knew that I might never see these men



that we were wanted by the inmates, our Buffalo committee immediately contacted the national staff in New York City. I took a plane to Buffalo the next morning and got to Attica Prison at about 9 a.m. I should add that representatives of the PSC were outside Attica all day and night Thursday. As soon as I got there, I informed the authorities at the prison that I had been asked by the inmates to be up there and requested to see them immediately.

I was forced to wait from 9 a.m. until approximately 11 o'clock that night before I was finally allowed to enter. During this time, the state officials who were asked to come to Attica by Oswald and the government were flown in and brought to the prison by state police.

When these official "negotiators" arrived at the prison around 4 p.m., I informed them all of who I was, but it wasn't until about 11:00 that night, after everyone else had gone inside, that I was finally admitted. I feel that the reason I was admitted at all was first because the inmates wanted the PSC there, and second because three Puerto Rican brothers who got inside before me threatened to tell the inmates that the PSC had been there for two days and wasn't being allowed inside. The authorities, fearing this kind of pressure, were forced to allow me into the prison.

I WAS THERE TO SUPPORT PRISONERS' DEMANDS

As soon as I went up to the office where the different state representatives, senators, assemblymen, etc., were, I was informed that I had to conform to the discipline of the group, that I could not speak independently, and that my only role would be to listen to them talk with the inmates. I immediately responded by telling them that I was not a member of any negotiating committee or any mediating team; I was there as a representative of the PSC to talk to the brothers inside, to support their demands unconditionally, and to give voice to their demands on the outside. I made it very clear that I had nothing to do with them.

WW: Once you were in the prison, did you get to talk to many of the prisoners? Could you describe to us what you saw?

Tom: I was taken inside the main gate of the prison, in through the administration building, then through a series of tunnels, electrically controlled steel gates, and finally to a tunnel near A Block—liberated territory guarded by prisoners. Separating the inmates on one side and all the guards and state officials on the other side were bars which could be opened by a key. On the administration side there were about 30 to 40 guards equipped with sub-machine guns, sniper rifles, gas grenades, and shot-guns.

The inmates on security in the tunnel in A Block were informed when I or others from the committee were coming through. We were led into the passageway two at a time, each of us was searched twice—once by the guards and then a second time by the inmates on their territory. As soon as the inmates recognized the PSC button that I was wearing, and a button that said, "Stop the War Against Black America," they shook my hand and greeted me warmly.

These inmates, some wearing football helmets and headresses, were extraordinarily well organized. They had already devised a very tight security system. We were led from this tunnel down through A Block, into B Block, then through the courtyard of B Block into the tunnel that separates B Block from



were claiming that they were sending in food three times a day, but in reality the 1500 inmates were being sent only 1000 sandwiches with a few large cans of coffee a day. The sandwiches consisted of two pieces of bread and one piece of coldcut in between.

INMATES GRIEVANCES

All the inmates I spoke with looked physically worn out. Many were dehydrated and suffered from vitamin deficiencies. But their spirit was always very strong, very united and very determined. There was real class solidarity among Black, Brown and white, even though the word "class" was not mentioned. I'd like to say here that never in my entire life have I seen so many people of different nationalities united in such a way. They all saw themselves as exploited and oppressed—all together.

One white brother from North Carolina spoke, describing how Black people were mistreated in his home town. He told how much he had learned about racism in prison and wound up his talk by saying, "I want everyone to know, we're going to stick together, we're going to get what we want, or we're going to die together."

The prisoners informed me that there were over 200 inmates doing life sentences at Attica. Almost all of them are Black and Puerto Rican. Eighty-five per cent of the prison population at Attica is Black and Puerto Rican; there are no Black or Puerto Rican guards, doctors, or officials. They spoke of the slave labor conditions—how they had to get up at 6:00 a.m. and be in the sheet metal workshops by 8:00; and then take lunch and a short period in the yard, then back to work again. For this they received 25 cents per hour!!

Many of the Latin brothers who spoke to me said that when they went to the medical authorities for treatment the doctor couldn't speak Spanish. One racist doctor refused to treat a Puerto Rican brother,

demand to be accepted as equals." It is signed, Brother Che, Palante.

I got hundreds of notes like this one, written to the prisoners' families, telling of the prison horrors and explaining why the rebellion was necessary. Many asked me to contact their relatives to tell them that their loved ones inside were OK. Today I do not know how many of these beautiful brothers are dead or alive.

After returning from the liberated cellblock, we proceeded to an area in the yard and sat on the ground and started to talk politics. They wanted to know about the struggle on the outside; they wanted to know about all the progressive political organizations, especially in their communities, and of course about the PSC; they wanted to know about the international situation, about the war in Vietnam; they wanted to know what the workers are doing, particularly about the wage freeze; and they of course wanted to know what were the possibilities of the masses moving to help them.

NO REAL NEGOTIATIONS WENT ON

WW: What was the role of the so-called negotiating committee?

Tom: Personally, let me say that the PSC was there to give voice to the demands of the brothers. The so-called committee was simply a screen that the authorities used to hide behind, giving them time to build up forces for the massacre. At no time did the authorities directly negotiate with the inmate population. At no time was there any indication that the authorities were willing to give in one-half inch on any substantive demands. The committee was used to give a false impression to the public that actual negotiations were going on while that was really not the case.

On Saturday afternoon, members of the left block of the committee—which was composed of

were just waiting for the kill.

FACING 40 MACHINE GUNS

WW: What was your last impression at Attica before you left?

Tom: There is one scene that I'll never forget. I was leaving the prison for the last time, late Sunday night. As I entered corridor A leading into the liberated area there was a brother whom I happen to know personally standing on security. His arms were folded as he faced 40 machine guns on the administration side. On his shirt he was wearing a PSC button. Today, I don't know if he is alive.

Another thing I'll never forget: a brother whom I rapped with a long time noted the ring on my finger and asked about it. I told him it had been made from an American fighter bomber shot down by Laotian women over Laos. I gave it to him and he considered it to be a very dear show of solidarity between the PSC and the prisoners and the Indochinese people.

As I left, I knew that I might never see these men again. The atmosphere was filled with tension. There were many hugs and kisses, many goodbyes, many messages to families on the outside. Yet there was also an incredible strength and determination among all the prisoners to fight for their just demands or die in the attempt.

Finally, I'd like to add that the prisoners don't view themselves as criminals. They know that they—the Black people, the Puerto Rican people, the poor white people—are not "criminals" but oppressed people, driven by poverty. They know that they have been denied proper education; they have been denied jobs; they have families to support; and they know that the only way for poor people to survive, for those with no hope of getting jobs, was through stealing. Most of them were there for petty crimes of stealing \$20 or \$100 or \$200, in other words, crimes of survival.

They see themselves as victims of a racist society which oppresses and exploits their people. They see the Rockefellers, the Mellons, the big corporations, the banks, those who rob and steal their labor for profit, as the real criminals.

The inmates always told me that they had no intention of killing any of the hostages. They took them because there was no other way to redress their grievances. The guard-hostages were the only thing that stood between the prisoners and sudden death. As it turned out, Rockefeller decided to sacrifice even the guards rather than to give in to the just demands of the prisoners. The blood of all the dead is on his hands.

But one thing the rulers of this country never seem to learn—they think repression, repression and more repression will end the oppressed people's uprisings. In fact, just the opposite is true. The men at Attica were so oppressed, so tortured, so brutally treated that finally they chose to revolt and even die rather than endure life behind those walls any longer. They knew that many would die, yet they chose the dignity of struggle rather than the misery of submission.

The Attica uprising was an historic event. It will live forever in the hearts and minds of the oppressed around the world. If the class solidarity shown there is any indication of the future, the cause of the oppressed and poor cannot fail. No prison rebellion in U.S. history has ever been so politically conscious and so determined. The Prisoners Solidarity Committee felt honored to have been invited by the prisoners to support them and is pledged to continue our work on their behalf.

Prisoners' relatives tell their story

“ They pointed guns at us...”

Monday evening, just a few hours after the ruthless slaughter of prisoners at Attica, WORKERS WORLD spoke with four women who had just returned from the scene. Olga, Janie, and Idalia are three Puerto Rican women whose brother has been at Attica Prison only about a month. Carmene is a Black woman. Her husband has been at Attica since last June. All four women made the trip to the prison with members of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee.

* * *

Olga explained that when her brother was transferred to Attica, the family found out about it purely by accident. “The family was not notified. My brother was not notified beforehand. It was by pure coincidence or luck that his wife went to visit him on the day of the transfer. This is the way she found out. They were both very upset and angry but they could do nothing about it.”

Carmene had been to see her husband two weeks previously. At that time she had asked him about the conditions at Attica. “I asked him was it any better than Auburn (the prison he had been transferred from—ed.) and he said no—if you know the conditions at Auburn—the same conditions they have there are the conditions at Attica. It's no better.” Carmene also mentioned

that while at Auburn her husband had had his life threatened by one of the guards and had been put in solitary.

INHUMANITY CAUSED REBELLION

We asked Janie what she thought caused the rebellion. “The inhumanity there. When I went to see him, you come all the way from New York City and all they give you is fifteen minutes. First, they weren't even going to let me in, claiming that I wasn't his sister. Finally, after hours of waiting, they let me see him. I was with him for fifteen minutes. By the way, they take finger prints of every finger and your palms. They put you through a machine to check for metal.

“My brother was furious about the harassment we had received. We asked him about the conditions. He said that the other prison had been bad, but this one was worse. He said it was like a concentration camp. He couldn't even get his mail. If a prisoner doesn't have relatives to send him money so he can buy food at the commissary, he is forced to eat scraps. All they give you at this prison are things like flour and powdered milk which you have to prepare yourself.

“When the fifteen minutes were over the guard came over and told us to leave. My sister and I got up. My brother was holding my hand and telling me to be careful going back home. The guard came over again and said, ‘Do I have to repeat myself?’ My brother got red. You could see the blood in his face. When he started to walk out, the guard told him to report to, I don't know where, but it was clear they were going to scold him.”

RELATIVES BARRED FROM ATTICA

Upon reaching Attica at 4:30 Saturday morning, the women immediately went to the prison. “We found the road blocked. At first they thought we were inquiring about the guard hostages and they were very helpful. They had lists and everything. When they found out our brother was a prisoner, they changed their minds altogether. They told us to get in our car and get out.”

“We encountered threats and provocations at every turn,” Janie said. “The guards were very hostile. At one point they pointed their shotguns at us and said, ‘Now we told you to get in that car and get out of here or do you want to get killed?’ This happened on two occasions. Each time they pointed their guns at us. They also said, at another point, ‘Didn't they tell you on the other side, we don't want you here!’ At the same time, guards' wives were passing freely in and out of the prison.”

“I can only imagine what goes on inside if we who are supposed to be free out here get such abusive treatment. What the hell is going on inside? The minute I was walking up the road I told myself, ‘This is like a camouflaged concentration camp.’”

Attica Town youth have dialogue with PSC

ATTICA—One aspect of the courageous struggle waged by the Attica prisoners was its effect on the consciousness of people all over.

The young people of the town of Attica, some of them the children of guards held by the prisoners, gathered by the roadblocks on Sunday afternoon where members of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee and prisoners' families maintained a constant vigil of support for the courageous men of cellblock D.

They came out of curiosity, mostly. But they stayed and talked when the prisoners' supporters began explaining the prison issue and connections between Rocky's prisons, Rocky's wars in Viet Nam and the

Middle East, and Rocky's taxes. Raised in a small town, by racist parents, these young people had many distorted ideas, especially about the prisoners.

But after a couple of hours of careful explanation and discussion, many began to agree, some thanking us for taking the time to tell them “what it's all about.”

This one incident, multiplied many times over, is part of the whole process of change the prisoners ‘inside’ and those of us on the outside are all working for. They didn't gain physical freedom at Attica this year, but some day they will. By then there'll be many more people supporting the prisoners, and that day, WE'LL WIN.

Rochester

“Total amnesty” Cleveland

“Jail Rockefeller”

CLEVELAND, Ohio, Sept. 13—A

demonstration called today by the Rochester Prisoners Solidarity Committee to protest the massacre of prisoners at Attica State Prison drew the participation of 100 people, including 15 relatives of Attica prisoners.

Starting at 4:30 p.m., the PSC demonstration was held at a busy intersection in downtown Rochester, and picked up the support of 40 bystanders. “Oswald — tool of Rockefeller's rule!” chanted the demonstrators, frequently chanting allusions to the heroic struggles of the Jackson brothers. Over 4000 leaflets condemning the massacre were distributed throughout the Rochester area, and local radio and TV stations covered the demonstra-



CARMENE

tions as they carried banners saying “End slave labor at Attica!” and “Total amnesty for Attica prisoners!”

The rush hour of busy downtown Cleveland had its routine broken today by a militant demonstration of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee protesting the Attica massacre. Carrying signs reading “Avenge Attica massacre” and “Jail the rich; Free the poor,” about 20 people raised the fact that 85 per cent of the inmates in the country are Black and Third World, and almost all are poor. Undaunted by pouring rain, the demonstrators also carried a large banner reading, “Jail Rockefeller; Free Attica prisoners!”

Breaking through the walls of isolation

What is the Prisoners Solidarity Committee?

Once in a very great while, a rich man goes to prison. Maybe he's taking a six-month rap for a company that defrauded the people out of millions; when he gets out after his brief stretch, he's set for life. And even while he's in, every little comfort is provided for him, so that the time passes as pleasantly as possible.

Most of all, he is never really isolated, never forgotten. His lawyers visit him constantly, the guards treat him like a "gentleman," and he is able to conduct his business affairs from prison.

Prisoners weren't made for people like this. The fact that a handful of them may be in a few federal institutions is largely an accident.

But the prisons are full, overflowing, exploding with poor, oppressed men and women for whom prisons have meant the end — of life, of happiness, of friends and family. The first stretch becomes a stigma that dooms a young person to a life behind bars. The prisoner never sees a lawyer, is prevented from defending himself, is estranged from his or her family just out of the sheer impossibility of visits to isolated prisons, and can look forward to desperation and disappointment when and if he ever hits the streets again.

For thousands of prisoners, especially the large percentage of Black and other oppressed people routed into the prisons from birth, these conditions have become unbearable. The terrible isolation imposed by the racist authorities has been broken again and again in the only way left to human beings who have been literally sealed in their own tombs: by open rebellion. These rebellions are specifically directed at the numberless injustices that read like a description of the Chamber of Horrors; but they are also something more.

They are a passionate cry to brothers and sisters on the outside, a desperate affirmation that they are *alive*, there on the inside; they are human beings who, while treated worse than animals, have not been crushed, whose spirit lives on in rebellion.

The Prisoners Solidarity Committee is another absolutely indispensable product of this new spirit. It was formed less than a year ago, when prisoners at Auburn, N.Y., wrote to organizations

on the outside for help. Youth Against War & Fascism responded, and soon helped form the Prisoners Solidarity Committee. The committee has expanded to many cities since then, and includes relatives of prisoners and released prisoners themselves.

When news of the PSC reached the jails, it released a dammed-up flood of letters from brothers and sisters telling of the indignities, the brutality, the pain that is a daily part of prison life. But these letters all told something else. They were not pathetic appeals from beaten people; they rang with hope and strength and willingness to struggle. Moreover, the writers were thrilled that they were finally breaking out of their isolation, that people outside were listening and working with them.

The PSC published some of these letters in the pamphlet, "Prisoners Call Out: Freedom!" The PSC raised some money with this pamphlet and social affairs, and rented a bus

so that prisoners' relatives could get to Auburn and visit them. For many of them, it was the first visit in years.

When the Auburn 6 had several court hearings, the PSC got sizable demonstrations of support, even in blizzard conditions. More and more, the PSC became a vehicle whereby the prisoners themselves could speak to the people outside, could generalize their struggle, fuse their grievances and their hopes into the main current of rebellion that is rising in the country as a whole.

Thus it was small wonder that when the heroic Attica prisoners met with a small group of observers during the rebellion, it was the PSC delegate, Tom Soto, who they most wanted to see. It was to him that they entrusted the greatest number of messages, for their loved ones and for the movement as a whole.

The PSC, on hearing of the rebellion, had immediately mobilized all its strength: it sent a delegation to Attica, arranged transportation for relatives, and organized many demonstrations throughout New York State and in several major cities elsewhere. The prisoners knew about all this, and knew that what they had to say would be heard on the outside.

At the most difficult moments, when ruling class hysteria against the prisoners reached its height, the PSC announced from inside Attica that it unconditionally supported the prisoners' demands. A further bond of love and trust was forged in those tense hours.

The isolation of the prisons has been permanently shattered. Even the highest concrete wall, the darkest cell, the cruelest solitary "hole" can no longer hold the terror it once had, for 1500 men at Attica have looked the worst in the face.

ATTENTION: PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Contact the Prisoners Solidarity Committee if we can help you in any of these ways:

- Help you get in touch with your loved ones. (The PSC has many, many messages from the Attica prisoners. Not all of them are supplied with addresses. If you are trying to get news about or to anyone in Attica, contact the PSC and we will help.)
- Legal assistance. The PSC will try to get legal help for prisoners and their families.
- Transportation. We are raising funds to charter more buses so that relatives can visit prisons in remote areas.
- Publicity. The PSC puts out pamphlets, leaflets, press releases and organizes demonstrations to make the voices of the prisoners heard.

Anyone wishing to help in the work of the PSC should also contact us at the following chapters:

NEW YORK CITY	ROCHESTER, NEW YORK	DETROIT, MICHIGAN
58 West 25th Street	69 Rohr Street	2515 Woodward
BUFFALO, NEW YORK	BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS	MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
939 Main Street	P.O. Box 8875	150 E. Juneau Avenue
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK	CLEVELAND, OHIO	WILMINGTON, DELAWARE
120 Dell Street	Box 2576, East Cleveland	P.O. Box 972

— Attica demands

(continued from PSC 8)

20. We Demand an immediate end to the agitation of race relations by the prison administration of this State.

21. We Demand that the Dept. of Corrections furnish all prisoners with the services of ethnic counselors for the needed special services of the Brown and Black population of this prison.

22. We Demand an end to the discrimination in the judgment and quota of parole for Black and Brown people.

23. We Demand that all prisoners be present at the time their cells and property are being searched by the correctional officers of state prisons.

24. We Demand an end to the discrimination against prisoners when they appear before the

Parole Board. Most prisoners are denied parole solely because of their prior records. Life sentences should not confine a man longer than 10 years as 7 years is the considered statute for a lifetime out of circulation, and if a man cannot be rehabilitated after a maximum of ten years of constructive programs, etc., then he belongs in a mental hygiene center, not a prison.

25. We Demand that better food be served to the inmates. The food is a gastronomic disaster. We also demand that drinking water be put on each table and that each inmate be allowed to take as much food as he wants and as much bread as he wants, instead of the severely limited portions and limited (4) slices of bread. Inmates wishing a pork-free diet should have one, since 85% of our diet is pork meat or pork-saturated food.

26. We Demand an end to the unsanitary conditions that exist in the mess hall: i.e., dirty trays, dirty utensils, strained drinking cups and an end to the practice of putting food on the tables hours before eating time without any protective covering over it.

27. We Demand that there be one set of rules governing all prisons in this state instead of the

present system where each warden makes rules for his institution as he sees fit.

IN CONCLUSION

We are firm in our resolve and we demand, as human beings, the dignity and justice that is due to us by our right of birth. We do not know how the present system of brutality and dehumanization and injustice has been allowed to be perpetrated in this day of enlightenment, but we are the living proof of its existence and we cannot allow it to continue.

The taxpayers who just happen to be our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, daughters and sons should be made aware of how their tax dollars are being spent to deny their sons, brothers, fathers and uncles of justice, equality and dignity.

* * *

The above demands were presented at the outset of the rebellion. In addition, the prisoners made the three key demands of passage to a nonpunieralist country, the firing of warden Mancusi, and complete amnesty. These key demands were unconditionally refused by Rockefeller and his prison hacks.

Protests over massacre erupt in many cities

New York

700 hit

Rocky's office

NEW YORK, Sept. 13—Over 700 people gathered outside the offices of Nelson Rockefeller here late this afternoon to protest the fascist massacre earlier in the day at Attica State Prison.

The thoughts of the crowd were clear in the many signs and banners and the shouts of "Rockefeller! Murderer! Tear Down the Jails!" After an hour of continuing police attempts to limit the size of the demonstration by surrounding it with barricades, the crowd surged out onto 5th Street and then onto Sixth Avenue, marching against the traffic. The police were left in the dust as the march moved south, bringing traffic to a halt as homeward-bound workers read our banners and took leaflets explaining the action.

At 42nd Street the demonstration swung east to Grand Central Station where, inside the huge central area, Fred Goldstein of Workers World Party addressed the crowd of demonstrators and workers. "The demands of the prisoners show the truth of prison conditions. We have to bring these facts to the people. When they know the truth about the horrible conditions that exist, they will rise up and tear the prisons down!"

Goldstein announced a public meeting on the Attica events to be held in New York on September 17. The featured speaker will be Tom Soto, a member of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee who was inside Attica during the events as an invited guest of the prisoners. He will report on what really happened at the prison.

Goldstein concluded by reminding the crowd of the class character of the Attica struggle. "Rockefeller the billionaire says that amnesty for the prisoners would have undermined the American way of life. But he really means that it would undermine his way of life. His freedom to rob the poor. He's the outside agitator. It was his class that built the prisons as part of their system to protect their wealth and power. Brothers Out of Attica! Rockefeller In!"



Demonstration in New York City.

Buffalo

Cops club protesters

Sept. 14--In response to the brutal murders Rockefeller, Oswald & Co. committed Monday at Attica Concentration Camp, a rally and demonstration were called in downtown Buffalo. The Prisoners Solidarity Committee of YAWF issued a leaflet headlined "Hands Off the Attica Prisoners" and calling for the removal of all troops from Attica. Representatives from Black groups, B.R.A.G. and B.U.I.L.D., a relative of one of the prisoners, attorney William Kunster, and Tom Soto, from the National Staff of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, all spoke. Their speeches reflected justified contempt for the actions of the prison administrators against the Attica prisoners.

The rally attracted 300 people, and many more on-lookers. But with the obvious interest shown by the people passing by, the Buffalo police got increasingly up-tight. They attacked the rally, clubbing indiscriminately, and beating people to the ground. Fifteen people were arrested and the rally was completely broken up by the riot-gear police and their dogs.

The massacre at Attica was a clear escalation of the ruling class's domestic war against the working poor and oppressed people. Their attempt in Buffalo Monday to smash any opposition to their genocidal policies is a clear indication of just how little freedom there really is in the U.S.

FREE THE ATTICA PRISONERS
TEAR THE PRISONS DOWN

Wilmington

Beatings at Smyrna

WILMINGTON, Sept. 14—The Prisoners Solidarity Committee picketed the Wilmington office of Governor Peterson today to protest the barbaric massacre of 30 prisoners at Attica Prison, calling for the indictment of Governor Rockefeller, and to expose the brutal beatings administered to the rebellious prisoners of Delaware's own concentration camp Smyrna Prison.

"Support the struggle for liberation at Smyrna and Attica," read the PSC banner, connecting the two prison struggles as part of one struggle for the national liberation of oppressed minorities.

After the Smyrna rebellion, prison guards systematically brutalized prisoners held in the maximum security section. One of the prisoners had every bone in his hands broken so that they were three times their normal size. Another was beaten unconscious three times and left with a hole in the back of his head. All beaten prisoners were denied medical care. The screams of the victims were so loud that some of the prisoners in the minimum security section became sick in anguish.

The Prisoners Solidarity Committee has been contacted and given access to pictures of beaten prisoners and names of guards who led the brutal assault. The PSC

intends to publish the names of the guards with the photographs in a special four-page supplement of SEIZE THE TOWN on prisons with special emphasis on Attica and Smyrna. PSC is also planning a demonstration on September 18, Rodney Square, Wilmington, in support of the Attica and Smyrna prisoners. The Committee is also planning a public forum that might be held in Wilmington.

Detroit

PSC rallies at county jail

DETROIT, Sept. 14—"Attica, Wayne, both the same! Racist hacks are to blame!" resounded against the walls of Wayne County Jail here today as 70 demonstrators picketed against the campaign of the rich ruling class of billionaire Rockefeller to crush the prisoners' growing movement across the country.

Yesterday, over one hundred shotgun-armed police with fire trucks stood and waited to attack prisoners outside Wayne Jail as tensions in the jail grew following news of the Attica massacre. Inside, nervous prison guards launched a shake-down search of every prisoner, exposing the prison officials' fear of a prisoners' uprising at Wayne.

As the Prisoners Solidarity Committee's demonstration approached the jail today, county police attempted to turn them back. The demonstrators, however, defied the police and set up a picket line which swelled to about 60 people within a few minutes.

As the strength of the picket line grew, the demonstrators marched around the entire jail with chants of "Vengeance Attica Prisoners! Tear the walls down!" A member of the PSC closed with a short statement about the committee and the need to return again and again so that "Wayne County Jail, better start shaking! Prisoner power is in the making!"



Demonstration in Buffalo.

FOR THESE DEMANDS THEY DIED

Following is the list of demands issued by the rebellling Attica prisoners.

* * *

We, the men of Attica Prison, have been committed to the New York State Department of Corrections by the people of society for the purpose of correcting what has been deemed as social errors in behavior. Errors which have classified us as socially unacceptable until re-programmed with new values and more thorough understanding as to our value and responsibilities as members of the outside community. The Attica Prison program in its structure and conditions have been enslaved on the pages of this Manifesto of Demands with the blood, sweat, and tears of the inmates of this prison.

The programs which we are submitted to under the facade of rehabilitation are relative to the ancient stupidity of pouring water on a drowning man, inasmuch as we are treated for our hostilities by our program administrators with their hostility as medication.

In our efforts to comprehend on a feeling level an existence contrary to violence, we are confronted by our captors with what is fair and just, we are victimized by the exploitation and the denial of the celebrated due process of law. In our peaceful efforts to assemble in dissent as provided under this nation's U.S. Constitution, we are in turn murdered, brutalized, and framed on various criminal charges because we seek the rights and privileges of all American People.

In our efforts to intellectually expand in keeping with the outside world, through all categories of news media, we are systematically restricted and punitively remanded to isolation status when we insist on our human rights to the wisdom of awareness.

MANIFESTO OF DEMANDS

1. We Demand the constitutional rights of legal representation at the time of all parole board hearings and the protection from the procedures of the parole authorities whereby they permit no procedural safeguards such as an attorney for cross-examination of witnesses, witnesses in behalf of the parolee, at parole revocation hearings.
2. We Demand a change in medical staff and medical policy and procedure. The Attica Prison hospital is totally inadequate, understaffed, and prejudiced in the treatment of inmates. There are numerous "mistakes" made many times; improper and erroneous medication is given by untrained personnel. We also demand periodical check-ups on all prisoners and sufficient licensed practitioners 24 hours a day instead of inmates' help that is used now.
3. We Demand adequate visiting conditions and facilities for the inmate and families of Attica prisoners. The visiting facilities at the prison are such as to preclude adequate visiting for inmates and their families.
4. We Demand an end to the segregation of prisoners from the mainline population because of their political beliefs. Some of the men in segregation units are confined there solely for political reasons and their segregation from other inmates is indefinite.
5. We Demand an end to the persecution and punishment of prisoners who practice the Constitutional Right of peaceful dissent. Prisoners at Attica and other New York prisons cannot be compelled to work as these prisoners were there for the purpose of housing prisoners and built is no mention as to the prisoners being required to work on prison jobs in order to remain in the mainline population and/or be considered for release. Many prisoners believe their labor power is being exploited in order for the state to increase its economic power and to continue to expand its correctional industries (which are million-dollar complexes), yet do not develop working skills acceptable for employment in the outside society, and which do not pay the prisoner more than an average of forty cents a day. Most prisoners never make more than fifty cents a



6. We Demand an end to political persecution, racial persecution, and the denial of prisoner's rights to subscribe to political papers, books or any other educational and current media chronicles that are forwarded through the U.S. Mail.
7. We Demand that industries be allowed to enter the institutions and employ inmates to work eight hours a day and fit into the category of workers for scale wages. The working conditions in prisons do not develop working incentives parallel to the many jobs in the outside society, and a paroled prisoner faces many contradictions of the job that add to his difficulty in adjusting. Those industries outside who desire to enter prisons should be allowed to enter for the purpose of employment placement.
8. We Demand that inmates be granted the right to join or form labor unions.
9. We Demand that inmates be granted the right to support their own families; at present, thousands of welfare recipients have to divide their checks to support their imprisoned relatives, who without the outside support, cannot even buy toilet articles or food. Men working on scale wages could support themselves and families while in prison.
10. We Demand that correctional officers be prosecuted as a matter of law for any act of cruel and unusual punishment where it is not a matter of life and death.
11. We Demand that all institutions using inmate labor be made to conform with the state and federal minimum wage laws.
12. We Demand an end to the escalating practice of physical brutality being perpetrated upon the inmates of New York State prisons.
13. We Demand the appointment of three lawyers from the New York State Bar Association to full-time positions for the provision of legal assistance to inmates seeking post-conviction relief, and to act as a liaison between the administration and inmates for bringing inmates' complaints to the attention of the administration.
14. We Demand the updating of industry working conditions to the standards provided for under New York State law.
15. We Demand the establishment of inmate worker's insurance plan to provide compensation for work-related accidents.
16. We Demand the establishment of unionized vocational training programs comparable to that of the Federal Prison System which provides for union instructions, union pay scales, and union membership upon completion of the vocational training course.
17. We Demand annual accounting of the Inmates Recreational Fund and formulation of an inmate committee to give inmates a voice as to how such funds are used.
18. We Demand that the present Parole Board appointed by the Governor be eradicated and replaced by the parole board elected by popular vote of the people. In a world where many crimes are punished by indeterminate sentences and where authority acts within secrecy and within vast discretion and given heavy weight to accusations by prison employees against inmates, inmates feel trapped unless they are willing to abandon their desire to be independent men.
19. We Demand that the state legislature create a full-time salaried board of overseers for the State Prisons. The board would be responsible for evaluating allegations made by inmates, their families, friends and lawyers against employers charged with acting inhumanely, illegally or unreasonably. The board should include people nominated by a psychological or psychiatric association, by the State Bar Association or by the Civil Liberties Union and by groups of concerned involved laymen.

(continued on PSC 3)

P S C
Prisoners Solidarity
Committee

58 WEST 25th STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10010
Tel: 989-3932

Second 8-page newsletter on Attica

Letters
from

Attica

pp.4-5

Attica
executions,
terror,
continue

Over a week after the Attica massacre, word has leaked out (both through inmates and lawyers) that not all the prisoners who died were killed during the assault on the prison September 13. It is now known that several men who were leaders of the rebellion were alive after the assault, only to be executed and reported dead several days later. According to Tom Soto of the Pri-

Attica
massacre
since the

soners Solidarity Committee, who was in Attica during the rebellion at the request of the prisoners, Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve, State Senator Garcia, and Representative Herman Badillo all reported privately that they saw Elliot Barkley alive after the police assault. "They told me," said Soto, "that when they were taken into D Block by Assistant Commissioner of Corrections Dunbar on the Monday morning of the massacre, they saw four inmates lying naked, face down on the ground. One of them was Barkley, and Eve said he was alive. Dunbar told them that these were the prisoners who had done the throat-slashing and castrating of the hostages (later to be exposed as a complete lie)."

The questions now remain: When was Elliot Barkley murdered and by whom?

(continued on PSC 3)



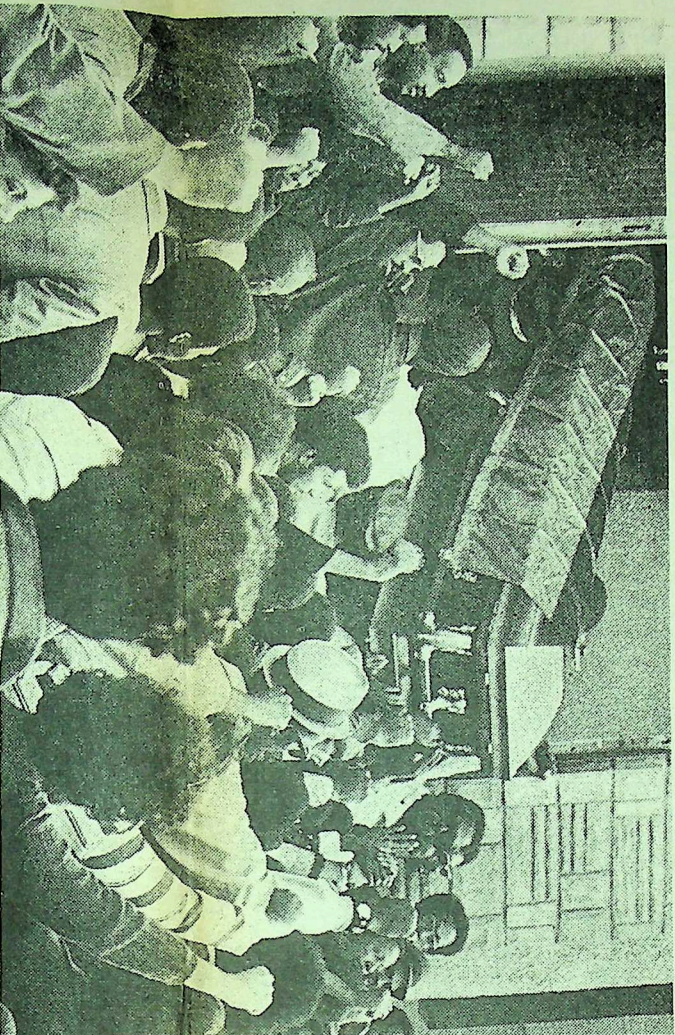
Oppressed bury their Attica dead

by JOHN DIAZ

NEW YORK, Sept. 25 — A funeral march and rally were held in Brooklyn today sponsored by a coalition of about twenty-two groups, among them the New York and New Jersey Chapters of the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords Party, Black Liberation Party, Committee against Attica Massacre, Republic of New Attica, and many others. The march, held in honor of six of the murdered brothers of Attica, also contained a contingent from the Prisoners Solidarity Committee.

On Friday, Sept. 24, the day before the march, the caskets of the murdered prisoners were taken from a funeral home in Manhattan and brought to the Sumner Army in Brooklyn after the relatives forced their way in. The funeral services originally were to be held at the Sumner Army, but this had to be changed to the Cornerstone Baptist Church on the corner of Madison and Lewis, because Rocketteller, even after murdering the prisoners, wouldn't allow their families to use the Army.

On Saturday, the caskets were to be driven from the church to Fulton and Flatbush for the funeral march. At about 12:30 the cars arrived with the caskets. People lined up along the sidewalk with their clenched fists raised in solidarity as the cars slowly moved past them. One could



People raise fists in solidarity with slain prisoners.

Harlem honors Attica

by JOHN DIAZ

NEW YORK, Sept. 18 — Ever since the heroic rebellion at Attica and the brutal massacre that followed on September 13, there have been demonstrations, protests, marches, and rallies all over the country. One of these was a protest march and rally which took place in Harlem today. The demonstration was sponsored by about 40 Third World organizations and was one of the largest protests that Harlem has seen in recent years.

The march started from two different points, one at 138th Street and the other at 110th Street and converged at 125th Street and 7th Avenue into a massive rally. About 6,000 people began marching from 110th Street. Brightly colored banners of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee and the Third World Caucus of Youth Against War & Fascism were visible for passersby to see. They read "Prisons are concentration camps for the poor," and "Free all political prisoners." As the march grew, angry demonstrators chanted: "Remember Attica!" and "1, 2, 3, 4, open up the prison doors!" People from

the community gathered on the sidewalks all along the way and responded with shouts of "Right on" and with clenched fists. Their solidarity was so great that large numbers of them joined us in the march, and by the time it reached 125th Street, the march had grown to about 1,500 people.

The rally commenced with a speech given by Tom Soto of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, who had been on the observers' committee in Attica during the rebellion. The crowd loudly applauded as Tom said, "I went to Attica as a representative of the PSC at the request of the brothers in Attica. My sole purpose there was to articulate their demands and to unconditionally support them. I was not there to compromise their demands or their lives."

Waiting to speak after Soto was Basil Patterson, a Black politician who ran for lieutenant governor on the Democratic Party ticket in 1970. As he climbed onto the platform, however, the crowd greeted him by chanting "No politicians, no politicians!" A vote was taken and the people voted against having

notice great sorrow on the almost expressionless faces of the people, but it was also evident that they were very angry because of the Attica massacre.

As the last car drove by, the people fell in behind it to begin their march through Bedford-Stuyvesant to the church. The marchers moved on, clapping and chanting "Remember the massacre — Remember Attica," while people from the community gathered along the sidewalks raising their clenched fists in solidarity. Many joined us in the march.

Just before arriving at the church, the caskets were removed from the cars and carried the rest of the way. Five of the caskets were covered with the Black Liberation flag and one with the Puerto Rican flag. They were set up on the altar in front of a speaking platform. Brothers and Sisters from the Panther Party were stationed around the altar on security, with rifles and Black Liberation flags.

At one point the church was packed with about two thousand people, with at least another thousand outside. Some of the speakers were relatives of the brothers who died in the Attica rebellion.

BODY MIXUP

Thomas Hicks was supposedly one of the slain brothers of Attica. But his immediate family said that the body Rocketteller's government had sent as Tom Hicks was not Hicks at all. Tom had been shot in the mouth a few years back by a pig. As a result he had two front teeth missing. He also had a pierced ear.

But the body which had been sent had all its teeth and no pierced ear. So the question is, where is Tom Hicks? and who is this dead brother? To add to the mystery, the Prisoners Solidarity Committee received a letter on Saturday, Sept. 25, from a brother in Attica who was involved in the rebellion (we won't mention his name for fear of reprisals against him). He had heard that Tom Hicks was on the list of dead, but had seen Tom Hicks alive after the assault in Attica had taken place. He also saw him alive, in the custody of guards, one hour after they had been locked up in their cells. So we ask again, where is Tom Hicks?

After the rally at the church ended, the caskets were put back on the cars. Three of them had to be taken to a medical examiner to be fingerprinted to try to get proper and positive identification of them. The other three were taken to Frederick Douglass Cemetery on Staten Island where they were buried. The six slain brothers were: John Barnes, Harold Thomas, Rafael Vasquez, Manuel Johnson, Frank Williams, and an unknown brother who was supposed to be Thomas Hicks.

AVENGE ATTICA — TEAR THE PRISONS DOWN!



Harlem marchers condemn Rocketteller.

any politicians speak at the rally.

After the no-politicians vote was taken, Hassan Sharief El-Shabazz spoke. Hassan, a former inmate at Auburn and Attica and a member of the PSC, is the only brother from the Auburn 6 who is out on bail. (The Auburn 6 are six prisoners framed up on assault charges following a rebellion in Auburn prison last November.) Carmene Garriga, the wife of an Attica inmate, followed Hassan with a brief talk. Among the other speakers were William Kunstler, Juan Fi Ortiz from the Young Lords Party, and Kinshasa from the New

LNS Women's Graphics

York 21.

The rally lasted a few hours. The people had come out in large numbers and their interest, their anger, their unity, their awareness, and their class solidarity were clearly visible in the speeches, in the people's chants, in their comments, and especially in their militancy. They made it clear that the heroic struggle of the brothers in Attica would never be forgotten and that the day will come when we will tear the prisons down.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!
REMEMBER ATTICA!

Prison rebellions erupt nationwide

In the wake of the Attica massacre, prison rebellions spread like wildfire across the United States, as the country's 200,000 prisoners expressed their solidarity with the Attica rebellion. The 13 reported rebellions since the Attica massacre doubles the total number of reported prison rebellions since the beginning of this year.

▲ At Parish Prison in New Orleans, La., 267 inmates broke cell doors, damaged plumbing, and set fires in protest over Attica and their own imprisonment. One floor of the prison was held by 54 inmates for over 18 hours.

▲ At Norfolk Prison in Massachusetts, 400 prisoners went on strike against the prison's factories on September 27 in support of 22 demands for reforms and amnesty. After a three-hour meeting with state officials, Lester Richards, chairman of the inmate council, announced that the grievances were being handled by negotiating committees. An inmate spokesman said, however, that the prisoners "were just about to explode

if something isn't done."

▲ At Walpole State Prison in Massachusetts, about 200 inmates also staged a day-long strike against the prison factories on September 27.

▲ At Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary, prisoners went on strike against the prison's factories.

▲ The prison at Atlanta, Georgia, was also the scene of a protest strike against the Attica massacre and similar conditions prevailing there. ▲ In Terre Haute, Indiana, prisoners launched another protest strike.

▲ At Wayne County Jail in Detroit, over one hundred police armed with shotguns and tear gas surrounded the prison on September 13 in anticipation of a rumored rebellion planned to protest Attica. Inside, a "shake-down" was carried on.

▲ At the Women's Prison in Alderson, West Virginia, 37 women, "the more vocal, revolutionary types," as one prison official put it,

rebelled against being transferred to maximum security prisons, until finally subdued by pepper gas.

Throughout New York State, billionaire Gov. Rockefeller ordered all prisoners kept under tight security restrictions. Nevertheless, prison rebellions continued:

▲ At Clinton Prison in Dannemora, N.Y., 250 prisoners, some wearing black armbands, tried to march on the mess hall on September 15 after hearing about Attica, before being turned back by shotgun-carrying prison guards and state troopers.

▲ At the Great Meadow Prison in Comstock, New York, about 75 inmates rebelled for three hours on September 15, throwing bottles and setting fires.

▲ At Elmira Prison, New York, about 200 prisoners staged a protest of several hours on September 14, chanting slogans in their cells expressing solidarity with Attica inmates.

Chicago responds to Attica

CHICAGO, Sept. 18.—Rocketfeller's brutal massacre at Attica Prison prompted the Chicago Prisoners Solidarity Committee to sponsor a demonstration at 12:00 noon Saturday at the Federal Building. A picket line was started with approximately 150 people and soon grew to a crowd of close to 400.

Chanting loudly, the militant group marched out of the Federal Building and through the Loop (which is always bustling with shoppers on Saturdays). A lot of the onlookers were young and Black, but even the old and the white responded with cheers, Right Onsl, etc., as demonstrators marched down State Street chanting "Attica's Blood on Rockefeller's Hands"; "Support Heroes of Attica — To Rebel Is Justified"; "Hey Hey Ho Ho, Racist Prisons Got to Go."

After marching around the Civic Center once, the crowd gathered there for a rally. The speakers included representatives from Rising Up Angry, the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, the Iranian Students, and the Black Panther Party. Jeff

Sarles spoke for the Prisoners Solidarity Committee and gave a report on Tom Soto's observations and experiences after spending a night with the prisoners in Attica. He ended by saying the prison cells are already overcrowded, but "we should use these cells to lock up the few billionaires who make up the American ruling class."

Harold Bell of the Black Panther Party directed his speech against the Progressive Labor Party, which had been very disruptive at the demonstration. Bell pointed out that Bobby Seale was requested by the prisoners to be on the negotiating committee and that PL had received no such request. He looked at the PL contingent when he announced that "we don't need any reactionary criticism in the Black community."

The Chicago Prisoners Solidarity Committee views this demonstration as only the first step in the long struggle against the fascist prison system.

Tear Down the Jails!
All Power to the People!



Rally of 2000 at Capital steps in Albany hear Tom Soto of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee tell of Attica atrocities.

-Terror continues

(continued from PSC 1)

Several reports from Attica indicate that others were also summarily executed inside Attica's walls after the Monday attack. A letter from an Attica inmate to the Prisoners Solidarity Committee (see centerfold for full text of the letter), reveals that Tom Hicks was also alive Monday morning one hour after the takeover of the prison—"I know," wrote this prisoner, "I

seen him." The reign of terror in Attica continues. "I'm still awaiting my turn to die," wrote the above prisoner to the PSC. "My brothers and I (how many I can't say) who are in segregation are branded as leaders (chalked X on our backs)."

Still another prisoner who was recently transferred from Attica told a relative that after the police and troopers took control of D Block, inmates from C Block who

were in solitary confinement during the rebellion were taken into the yard, stripped naked, and used as target practice. (Although those in solitary did not take part in the rebellion, many of them are known to the prison authorities as militant and political.) One inmate saw a guard with a rifle aimed at another prisoner. When he stepped in front of the brother, he himself was shot and killed.

Lawyers who have been allowed to interview Attica prisoners have reported that the men told them of the torture and beatings they have endured since the retaking of the prison. The guards forced the men to crawl around naked, as they were being kicked in the faces, burned with cigarettes, and jabbed with clubs. The men were forced to run a gauntlet of guards who clubbed them in a racist frenzy.

It appears now that the list of dead inmates was not immediately released because the prison authorities wanted to cover up the executions later on. "The story about inmates hiding in tunnels," said Soto, "made it possible for the guards to torture and murder more prisoners without their families or supporters knowing what happened to them."



Statement of

Attica Liberation Faction

Following are extensive excerpts from a statement drawn up by the inmates of Attica prison in the week following the massacre. It was given to lawyers who were able to get into the prison to see the inmates. The statement was released September 22.

ATTICA, New York (LNS)— We are making this statement to expose the vicious political machine that exists in all New York State prisons. We at this time intend to clog the wheels of that machine....

We are not criminals, nor are we enemies of the people. Government and public institutions are established to serve and promote the needs and welfare of the people. Why must they subjugate and exploit us through the labor process and oppress the people of America through increasing taxes, paying for emergency health care, transportation, housing, food, etc., when everything is "pay on the spot" or credit with interest. Looking at this objectively, this capitalist system creates opposing tendencies among ourselves; examples: racial, religious, and class biases. Our job as concerned people is to expose the system, which is really run by approximately 400 families (DuPonts, Rockefellers, Fords, Mellons, etc.) and show that these people, a minority, are only a breed infected by money and have no concern whatever for the people in general. True, we have truthful representatives in our government. However, they are puppets whose strings are pulled by that monopoly of families.

We have discovered, as Madame Binh no doubt knows, the frustration of negotiating with a political system bent on genocide. Killings are being committed not only in Viet Nam, but in Bengla Desh, Africa, and South America. Is it not so that our Declaration of Independence provides that when a government oppresses the people, they have a right to abolish it and create a new government? And we at "Attica," and all revolutionaries across the nation are exclaiming that right! The time is now that all third world people acknowledge the true oppressor and expose him to the world!!!

Fascist control has been instituted through various devious means in all concentration camps here in Attica and all through New York State. For instance: even though Black and Puerto Rican brothers number conservatively 85 percent of the total population of these contemporary plantations, we are collectively allotted only 1 percent of the controlling inmate positions.

Just as Hitler instilled fear in his concentration camps, so has Rockefeller, allowing and sanctioning the same tactics to be perpetrated here: the Fascists deal with fear and psychological control, such as not allowing grown men to talk when we walk down the halls; marching us to and from each meal; segregations of facilities, such as black and white loel

The fascist regime can only exist when fear is the controlling factor. But when intelligence is used, then the fascist pigs must resort to violence to cover up their atrocities against the poor people. In conclusion, those brothers whose lives were taken by Rockefeller and his agents did not die in vain. Why?

Because the uprising in Attica did not start here nor will it end here! Moreover, the storm trooper-like tactics of Rockefeller's gestapos again proves to the third world that the Nazi element in this racist system will stop at nothing to eliminate the forces who are the oppressed masses, who are struggling for human recognition and are crying out for Freedom, Justice, and Equality.

In Solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the human communities,
Peace/Power and Brotherhood
ATTICA



Letters from impris

The following letter, sent out of Attica during the rebellion, is from prisoner Sam Melville. Melville, accused of many political bombings in New York City, was murdered when D Block was retaken by state troops.

Agincourt, Sept. 10, '71
Evening (around the campfire)

ATTICA

Power People!
We are strong, we are together, we are growing. We love you all, we need your continuing love & support. Brother Huey is on his way and Counselor Kunschler, too. YAWF is storming the walls. What shall we do? Cha Cha Cha.

Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh
Please inform our next of kin

Sam Melville

CLINTON

Please give our greetings of Peace and Power to all our hard working comrades dedicated in our common struggle for Liberation....

We are now fifteen (15) along with eight (8) other brothers which is a total of twenty-four (24) are in a very dangerous situation, as we are not receiving any outside mail from our attorneys. They just beat up brother almost to death as he came from visiting his mother. They also beat up (another) brother before he went back to Rikers Island.... They are getting ready to kill us and you must come up immediately with newspaper reporters and with a court order....

They are trying to put fear into us for our political beliefs by beating us one by one and it's a very precarious position we are in, in regards to the Attica massacre. There is a connection and they are trying to justify their criminal acts by doing something awful to us. You must do something as they have stoppped all outgoing and incoming mail.

Power!

P.S. As a result of what happened to we refuse to submit to shackles, chaining us.

LEWISBURG

Greetings to the PSC:

The superherotic uprising at Attica prison, New York State's maximum security dungeon, has already established itself as a milestone in the history of the revolution which is exploding in this country, the very citadel of world imperialism and the arsenal of global reaction. The inmates overcame seemingly impossible obstacles and rose up,

held out, and fought for four days around the clock, knowing that, in the end, death, immediately—or slowly—would almost certainly overtake them.

That fact alone proves, beyond even a shadow of a doubt, that the conditions in the house of bondage made life unbearable. The slave drivers, smeared with blood, forced things to the breaking point.

Governor Rockefeller, member of the billionaire dynasty which plunders seven continents and chokes the seven seas, blamed "militant revolutionaries" for the bloodshed, while he and his cronies rigidly dictated the mass murder of the prisoners

Following is an interview with Hassan Shariat El-Shabazz, one of the Auburn 6 indicted on charges stemming from the Auburn prison rebellion of November 4, 1970. Hassan was recently bailed out by the Prisoners Solidarity Committee. The PSC is currently organizing the legal defense of the Auburn 6 as well as building public support for their case.

* * * * *

Hassan of Auburn 6 speaks

speaks

PSC: What do you feel caused the Auburn rebellion?
Hassan: The Auburn rebellion was caused by the same conditions that prevailed at Attica. Some of those conditions are: drugs being rampant in the prison, sold by the pig guards, forced homosexuality, brutality by the guards, and racism perpetrated by the administration.

But the demands to end these conditions were only some of the demands. The main demands of the Auburn rebellion were for freedom to control our own destinies, the freedom not to be treated like animals, not to be turned into mindless, spineless robots. Just as the students at Kent State rebelled for the same purpose, to control their own destiny, the same demands prevailed in Auburn. The men were tired of the many promises that were made and broken, the

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Prisoned brothers

CLINTON

Brothers and Sisters I greet you... These sub-pigs beat me and gas me. It looks like the only way I am going to be free is to die. I , thank you for your time and consideration, and understanding of our situation. It is understandable that you tried to help and look out for the welfare of us up here. Any news that you could send on anything, please do so. We need news up here. How long must our People be cooped up in these concentration camps?

Your Brother at arms

COMSTOCK

All Power to the People!
I sit here in this box trying to organize my thoughts and whip the thought of Attica from my mind, not the incredible slaughter, but the repercussions it will cause behind the walls of doom, repercussions that have already begun to form, that may create more killing.

I will use this concentration camp as (proof) for my (statement). First, when the reports of the assassination of Brother George Jackson (came out) all articles that were in the newspapers and magazines were cut out. The explanation that was given for this oppressive act was that the articles were inflammatory! Then came the attack at Attica and the taking of lives. Here, before the news reports were broadcast, the administration ordered that all inmates were to be kept in their boxes.

When the news was released here, head pig Cowboy (J.P. Conboy) placed the prison under a "State of Emergency." The explanation that was given to the press was for "reasons of security."

... As I write today, the first day anyone has been allowed out of their cell, the state trooper who has been placed on a tower in front of my window is standing, looking into the yard with his gun out so all can see it. There has created a condition here that is horrifying and dangerous. There is nothing that is more a threat to security than pigs standing over men with guns. There is no reason for men to have to live under dehumanizing conditions and be treated as animals. . . .

and the sacrifice of his gestapo-hirelings.

Just like in Vietnam, helicopters sprayed gas on the already unarmed convicts, so as to render them totally defenseless. Then came the cowardly armed bands of the state to pump lead into their bodies, immediately killing twenty-eight, and, according to NBC News, wounding over one hundred. "most of whom are not expected to live," especially after the medical hacks get through treating them.

The NBC News tried to jerk public tears with their cheap old trick of showing the wives and children of the dead or wounded storm troopers.

Rocketfeller too shed crocodile tears in phony sympathy for them.

Hacks are like trained watchdogs. To a Rocketfeller, a DuPont, an H.L. Hunt, a Morgan, a Mellon or a Giannini, they are a dime a dozen. If one should get killed, the big bosses just go out and buy a new one.

The convicts, who spared the robots they had taken into their custody, showed far more mercy, even for these torturers, far more human empathy and understanding, than did the corporated state, which didn't give a damn if they lived or died when push came to shove.

It is significant that President Nixon, speaking for the whole cap-

"I saw Tom Hicks alive"

ATTICA

To: Prisoners Solidarity Committee
Tom Soto and staff
Brothers and Sisters:

As a revolutionary fighting for self-determination for all oppressed people, what can I say for the hermanos whose lives were sacrificed for our struggle. And about those whose behavior patterns are not conditioned as ours. However, they believed in what we were doing. Many are now hostile — vigilant towards the "pigs," but had to get shot, wounded, beaten, looked and scowled upon like animals which we're not, to make this imperialist-racist government here in America see that we are still struggling while we're physically incarcerated in a concentration camp.

Brothers, sisters — others, for the time being I'm still alive. How or why, are questions which I can't answer logically. . . . Nevertheless, my brothers and I (how many I can't say) who are in segregation are branded as leaders (chalked X on our backs). Even hermanos who were wounded (shot) are here with "minor" medical attention, and in pain. To tell you of that disastrous day 9/13 — it's like telling you about My Lai and bloody massacres of Vietnamese people under the yoke and subjugation of U.S. militia teams — munition which they used — 45 sub-machine guns, 12-gauge shotguns, 337 mags, hi-powered scoped .30-30's, 30.06's, M-14's, CN gas, helicopters — state troopers, pepper gas and even concussion grenades were used. That day, 9/13, to the pigs everybody was a nigger — Black-white-Spanish — the aged, shot, wounded, sick, the beaten, everyone had to crawl the length of "A," block yard without rising our glueous maxims and hands on our heads, face in the ground and nakedly runned through two lines of troopers — correction pigs, etc. Not only that, Tom Hicks (innmate) was alive during the security of the institution in the hands of the pigs, and the Lawyers Guild reported him dead. He was alive one hour after take-in — I know, I seen him. To add to that I still heard shots that afternoon. I'm still awaiting my turn to die; however, as a revolutionary, that does not mean to be executed by the pigs, to plant fear in the oppressed people who'll take similar procedure such as us. And before they do that I'll sacrifice my own life, for my beloved oppressed people's success.

My job until my death, is to expose the system, re-educate the people and establish a government which promotes and serves their needs. I'm enclosing this letter with the revolutionary spirit of the times.

Power/Venceremos
ATTICA LIBERATION FACTION

talist class, momentarily interrupted his campaign for economic fascism to telephone "congratulations" to Rocketfeller for his tactics. The moneyman who own the governments and prisons of the United States are swinging to fascism to save their profits.

They are fanning up racism to a genocidal heat. They are transforming the prisons to extermination centers, especially for the Third World peoples. Time is running out.

There is only one way to defeat fascism. The would-be fascists must be shown, in no uncertain terms that if they want to wage war against the oppressed, they will not wage it the way they want, in which only the fascists are armed.

No, they will get civil war and they

same. The guards are all racists and the administration is also racist. And, as you can see from the rebellion at Attica and the prisoners' demands, the conditions there are the same as they were in Auburn.

The men were asking for social, economic, and political power which is the freedom to control their own destinies. The food at Attica is despicable, the atmosphere is pregnant with racism, and in general, as I said, conditions are the same at all concentration camps.

PSC: The Attica uprising seemed to be very politically conscious. Is this political consciousness a trend in prisons today?

Hasasan: Emphatically, Yes. Political consciousness is not only a trend in prisons, but it is the trend of all people in Babylon today. Or rather, should I say, the majority of people in Babylon are beginning to wake up to the fact that this system is just no good and that in order for the people to survive, the system's got to be torn to the ground and built up anew.

In prisons today, if one is not politically conscious, one does not survive because a person who is in prison today who is not politically

conscious is dead. In a sense, he's physically walking around, but mentally he's in a state of what I would call limbo. A prisoner who walks around, who bends to the will of the guards, a man who lets himself be led, instead of leading, a man who takes everything and does not fight back, is in effect a dead man.

In prisons today, prisoners have become aware of their heritages and their cultures, and here I'm speaking mainly of the Black and Puerto Rican brothers. The white prisoners are also becoming aware of the fact that the administrations mainly direct their rule of death, brutality, and fascist might against the Black and Puerto Rican prisoners, and, in effect, this heightens the political consciousness of the white prisoners. In view of this, solidarity is born, as you can see from the Attica rebellion. Therefore, as I said, political consciousness is definitely a trend in prisons today and it will continue to be a trend. What I'm really saying is that there are going to be more Atticas, not only in Babylon, but across the world, until people are treated like human beings and not animals.

many lies that had been told to us. The system caused the rebellion at Auburn.

PSC: Hasasan, how did you come in contact with the Prisoners Solidarity Committee?

Hasasan: After the rebellion at Auburn, we wrote Youth Against War & Fascism for assistance and as a result, the Prisoners Solidarity Committee was formed. They supported us tremendously. We (the Auburn 6) had a federal hearing at the insistence of the PSC to protest the fact that our lives were in danger at Auburn. We wanted to be removed from Auburn. As a matter of fact, we still haven't received a decision from that hearing. That goes to show that in this racist, capitalist society, life is not worth a damn, only property. And that's what the laws are made to protect. At any rate, it was through the support and efforts of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee that myself and five other members of the Auburn 6 are alive today.

PSC: You were in Attica. Can you tell us what Attica is like?

Hasasan: Attica is really like any other concentration camp. It has a little more harsh security than most, but in general the conditions are the

The old lie about prison reform

by JERRY ZILG

In a large smoke-filled auditorium in Manhattan, sour-faced politicians counted the votes between yawms. On the floor, their partners mullied about noisily, not even bothering to listen or pretend interest. Then the presiding committee of this Democratic Party state convention announced that the resolution on prison reform had been overwhelmingly endorsed as part of the party's electoral platform.

"Our prisoners are housed in buildings that are unsanitary and out of repair," the platform read. "They are employed with meager instruction upon inadequate machinery of obsolete type, lacking safeguards required by law in factories. Opportunities for education are almost totally lacking." Instead, the platform held the promise that the prisoners would be "usefully employed" and taught "trades."

The Democratic politicians were not happy about admitting that such conditions existed, but they had no choice. It had been a year of prison rebellions, attempted escapes, mass political arrests, and exposes on cruelty to prisoners that had already caused a public uproar, too much publicity.

The year was 1920, and New York's governor was Alfred E. Smith, later to be the 1928 presidential candidate and still later, in the thirties, a wooer of Nazi Germany. But 1920 was a year that Smith had to be a wooer of the people instead, confusing them with rhetoric about prison reform.

WOMEN PRISONERS REVOLT

On January 3, just one day after U.S. Attorney General Mitchell Palmer launched his night-time raid on thousands of workers and other "subversives" across the country, a rebellion broke out at the Reformatory for Women at Bedford, N.Y. Touched off by the prison administration's denial of recreation for the women, the outburst was only the end result of a long series of cruel abuses inflicted on the prisoners. These atrocities included torturing the women by forcing their heads under water until they almost drowned, stringing up inmates by their arms while they were handcuffed behind their backs, poor food and degrading treatment by prison matrons and guards.

It took a full day for prison officials to put down the rebellion. The women had armed themselves with sticks and pipes, but in the end prison guards armed with guns overwhelmed them, and many were thrown into solitary confinement. The prison officials refused to comment on the number of women injured by the police assault. Enough of a battle had been put up, however, to capture publicity on conditions inside

the prison.

The floodgate had been opened and a tidal wave of protests followed. On January 23, the National Civil Liberties Bureau in a detailed report accused Alcatraz's warden, Col. R.D. Johnson, of cruel treatment of conscientious objects (to World War I). The next day, Secretary of War Newton Baker promised he would investigate. He never did. Instead, the issue was ignored and the brutality went on.

So did the criticisms. Before the month was over, it was revealed that influenza had swept through New York and New Jersey prisons and that sick inmates were not getting adequate medical care. Later, in North Carolina, the Prisoners Relief Society issued a report on the deplorable prison conditions in that state, and was promptly barred from the state's prisons by the governor.

SLAVE LABOR IS THE ANSWER

In response to these exposes, the federal government proposed its version of prison reform. On May 3, 1920, the National Commission on Prisons and Prison Labor proposed the industrialization of the country's prisons to end the "idleness and boredom" of prison, train inmates in skills, and, by exploiting their labor, make them produce profits that would not only pay for their own maintenance, but also provide a surplus for state treasuries.

Not surprisingly, New York, the country's front-runner in many things, including number of prisoners, was the first to heartily adopt the federal proposal. In fact, according to an economic report on March 8, New York's prisoners had already generated over \$60,000 in profits for the state treasury in six months. This represented an increase of 25 percent in the inmates' productivity over the previous year—in other words, speed-up. "Even higher returns can be expected next year," boasted the report.

New York State's Prison Survey Committee made other recommendations, including "fair" wages, allowing support of relatives, and the abolishing of Sing Sing as a prison, transforming it into a clearinghouse for newer prisons. Everything will be improved, promised the committee, promised the Governor, promised the Democratic Party platform, promised the federal government. The year 1920 closed with Attorney General Mitchell Palmer sending personal greetings of Christmas cheer to the country's trapped prisoners. Meanwhile, at Dannemora Prison, two inmates died after being served poisoned salmon, and at Auburn, prison officials chalked up one dead prisoner, seven wounded in attempted escapes that year from a living hell.

PRISONERS STILL THE SAME

Half a century later, Sing Sing prison still stands as a monument to continued oppression by a rich ruling class. Auburn still stands also, and the murders, beatings, bad food, and degradation still go on. But one thing has changed—the prisoners.

Most of them today are members of oppressed nations—nations that are struggling for liberation. As in Auburn and now Attica, men and women are standing up to their tormentors and fighting back, armed with a political consciousness and unity of determination never before attained, responding to the beat of revolutionary drums, deaf to the plea of false fifty-year-old promises. It is time, they say, that the walls come down.



Police attack Attica pickets

MILWAUKEE, Sept. 21—Police viciously attacked a demonstration protesting the Attica massacre here today, arresting and beating six people. The target of the police assault was the Prisoners Solidarity Committee which, along with several other groups, called today's rally and march.

After the rally at the Civic Center Plaza, a march of about 150 people moved to Wisconsin Avenue along the sidewalk. At 4th Street, under the pretext of giving a jaywalking ticket to Jim Miller, a PSC leader,

police attacked the demonstration.

They particularly sought out active PSC members for arrest. In addition, a Black photographer, Harold Hampton, was jumped and beaten by racist cops. He was later charged with obstructing an officer and resisting arrest.

Among the six arrested were Jim Miller, who was beaten by two cops and then charged with resisting arrest, and Benita Orozco, another PSC leader. She was charged with battery to a peace officer and resisting arrest. Bill Colangelo of Youth Against War & Fascism was charged with

resisting arrest.

In a press release issued today, the Prisoners Solidarity Committee in Milwaukee has strongly condemned this attack and charged that it was part of a trend toward repression of political opposition to racism and fascism in this country.

"The same repressive system that caused the bloodbath at Attica is behind this attack, and the racism of the police department is clearly seen in the cases of Hampton and Orozco," the statement read. Benita Orozco has been active in many struggles in the Latin community

here against police brutality. The statement continued:

"The movement on the outside to support the prisoners has been growing. Such groups as the Prisoners Solidarity Committee and the Wisconsin Inmates Peoples Union have begun to both educate the American people as to the true nature of those prisons and have begun programs to concretely aid prisoners and their relatives. The role of prisons as concentration camps for poor and oppressed people is being exposed more and more each day.

"The Prisoners Solidarity Committee will have a meeting on Monday, September 27, at 7 p.m. at the Rubard Bookstore, 1618 W. Wells to plan future activities. All interested in building the necessary link of solidarity to the prisoners inside are invited to come. Contact the Prisoners Solidarity Committee at 150 E. Juneau, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202."

Ludlow, Colorado, 1914

ROCKEFELLER'S

OTHER MASSACRE

It looked like a tent city. Hundreds were huddled under makeshift shelters to protect themselves from the cold. All around the encampment national guards with rifles and machine guns stood ready.

The sun was just rising when the assault began. When it was over, the camp was a mass of charred debris. The dead and wounded were strewn on the ground. The New York Times expressed measured, neutral horror at the bloody scene. But Rockefeller had given the order — end the strike!

No, it wasn't Attica. And it wasn't Governor Nelson D. Rockefeller who ordered the assault then. But it was a similar scene — another Rockefeller massacre — only at that time the blood was on the hands of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Nelson's father. Like money, massacres of working and oppressed people run in the Rockefeller family.

The place was Ludlow, Colorado; the time, April 20, 1914. Hundreds of miners were on strike, struggling to get the Rockefeller-owned Colorado Fuel and Iron Company to recognize and negotiate with their union, the United Mine Workers of America. The company met the workers' strike with brutal reprisals. First, the miners were evicted from their company-owned homes in Ludlow to face the freezing Colorado winter. The company got court injunctions and indictments to stop the strike. Then Rockefeller imported gunmen from the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency. These goons rode around in an armored car, shooting down strikers on sight. Finally, the National Guard was mobilized to protect Rockefeller's profits.

The miners fought back against this reign of terror. They set up a tent city in Ludlow, decent wages, and working conditions. Then Rockefeller ordered the attack.

On the morning of April 20, 1914, while the miners and their families were still sleeping, company-hired goons and national guardsmen drenched their tents with oil and ignited them. When the dazed victims ran out of their flaming shelters, they were machine-gunned down. Many women and children who were hiding in holes dug to protect them against rifle fire were burned alive or suffocated in underground furnaces. Nineteen people were murdered and scores were wounded. Over two-thirds of the dead were women and children.

FROM LUDLOW TO ATTICA

It's a long way from Attica to Ludlow, both in distance and time. But a bond of struggle

200 hear inside report on Attica

BUFFALO, Sept. 19 — About 200 people, mainly from the local Puerto Rican and working class community, filled a meeting hall here tonight to protest the Attica massacre. Many who gathered had relatives and friends inside Attica and heard reports from those who were inside the prison during the rebellion.

The meeting, called by the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, BUILD (a Black community organization), Black Student Union, El Comité (a Puerto Rican community organization), PODER (a Puerto Rican student group), and Youth Against War & Fascism, was held under

against a common enemy unites the two events. In Ludlow it was the exploited workers, mostly white, who were fighting for a decent life; in Attica it was the oppressed prisoners, mostly Black and Puerto Rican who rose up. Yet their demands had a similar thread — demands for a union, an end to slave wages, and better working conditions.

In Ludlow the boss, the enemy who had the workers shot down, was a Rockefeller, repre-



revolutionary banners proclaiming "Attica, Auburn, the Tombs, San Quentin — Nada Que Perder — Solo Candelas! (Nothing to lose but their chains!)." Behind the speakers' platform, a Puerto Rican flag was pasted over the symbol of oppression, the U.S. flag.

The meeting was chaired by Joan Margardt from the Prisoners Solidarity Committee (PSC) and Evelyn Rodriguez from PODER. Tom Comar, an ex-prisoner and member of the PSC, told how the committee has been trying to inspect Erie County Jail despite government resistance. Then Sharon Chin, from the national office of the Prisoners

senting an empire of wealth that was built on the sweat and blood of miners and other workers, the boss was a Rockefeller again, this time carrying out the slaughter not for his own personal profits, but in the interest of his entire class of billionaire rulers. Rockefeller explained away the murders by saying he did it to safeguard "the very essence of our free society." In 1914 it was the same story — the strike was called illegal and the strikers "criminals." Therefore a massacre was "justified."

But words have different meanings for the oppressed and the Rockefellerers. Who is a criminal and what is illegal?

BILLIONAIRE ROBBERS MAKE THE LAWS

In the U.S. today, as in 1914, it's the Rockefellerers and their rich pals who define these terms and make the laws. They say it is illegal for the poor to steal in order to live, but legal for Rockefeller to steal from workers; they say it is illegal for prisoners to take hostages, but legal for the government to hold vast numbers of Black and Puerto Rican people hostage in prisons; they say it is illegal for prisoners to rebel (just like they used to say that strikes were illegal), but legal to run concentration camps for the poor, based on racism and brutal terror.

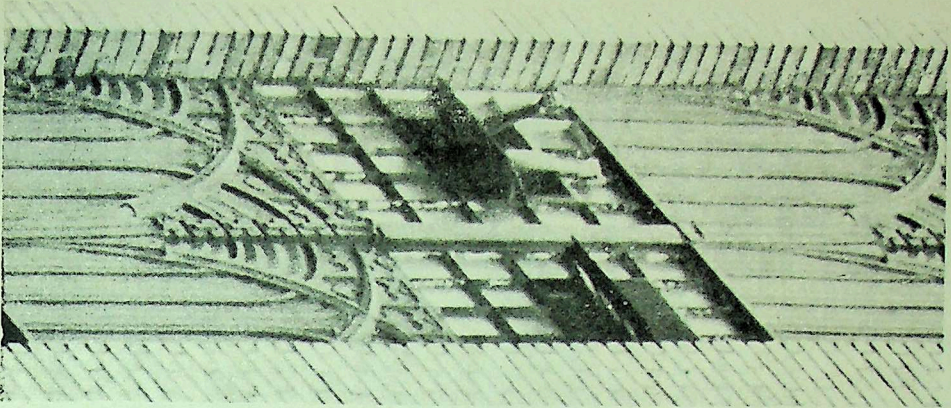
Solidarity Committee, spoke of how the Committee has supported the struggles of prisoners since its formation around the rebellion at Auburn Prison. At this point, an ex-prisoner from many of New York State's dungeons, who cannot be named because he is on parole, exposed how the prison authorities use any vile means to divide prisoners by racial background and other false barriers.

Tom Soto, also from the national office of the Prisoners Solidarity Committee, Alberto Capps, and Domingo Rodriguez spoke. They had all been inside Attica during the rebellion, supporting the just de-

mands of the prisoners. In Spanish and English, they described the concentration camp conditions inside and the tremendous unity, courage, and determination of the prisoners fighting back against Rockefeller and Oswald.

During the questions and discussion at the end, an ex-prisoner in the audience asked how we were going to be sure that the struggle would be continued and how prisons were really going to be changed. Tom Soto answered that prisons are a part of this system — the same system run by Rockefeller and Co. which exploits working people every day and maintains concentration camps to oppress Black, Puerto Rican, and poor people. Those concentration camps will only be abolished when the workers take over outside as the prisoners are doing inside, and the whole system is changed.

**PRISONERS ARE CONCENTRATION CAMPS FOR THE POOR!
TEAR DOWN THE WALLS!**



Sisters extend fists from old Women's House of Detention.

Bail fund women aid imprisoned sisters

by VERONICA GOLOS, Women's Bail Fund

The Women's Bail Fund was organized to aid and draw attention to women prisoners, who suffer under conditions just as brutal as those in Attica or San Quentin.

Through demonstrations, leaflets, and especially by baiting women out of the Women's House of Detention in New York City, the Bail Fund has focused on the imprisoned sisters. It has also organized many militant demonstrations outside of the prison to let the sisters inside know that they were not alone.

Recently, the House of D was moved from Greenwich Village to the city's penal colony on Rikers Island. When the move was announced, a whole campaign was launched to expose the Rikers concentration camp for what it was. And on the day of the move, hundreds of women gathered outside the jail at dawn to protest the transfer to an island where the women would be more isolated than ever.

In the new, "improved" prison, each woman is in a tiny cell. She is punished for the slightest infraction of rules that she is never informed about, and forced to undergo horrible internal searches which frequently result in vaginal infections. The women have no access to

the new facilities that are supposed to be for their benefit. Sentenced women are forced to work at prison industries that pay 3 to 10 cents an hour.

Everything is done to frighten and demoralize the women. Lights are kept on 24 hours a day, forcing prisoners to lie under their beds to be able to get any sleep. There are no clean clothes, no food fit to eat, no medical care when it is needed. Women who speak Spanish find it is impossible to get whatever few rights they might have because the staff does not speak their language. Women are extremely isolated, both from each other and from their family or friends. They are denied any news of what is happening on the outside that might affect their lives. Most of the sisters suffering under these conditions have not even been convicted of a crime — they are awaiting trial in jail because they are too poor to raise bail of even fifty or a hundred dollars.

The racist system which puts such a large percentage of Black, Puerto Rican, and poor people in jail, which only builds more jails and refuses to meet any of the prisoners' most basic demands, and resorts to cold-blooded massacres when its ordi-

nary brutality fails to crush the spirit of the prisoners — that system has no right to judge the actions of people trying to find a way to survive.

The plight of our sisters in prisons across the country has not been dramatized by large rebellions like the one in Attica. The women, nevertheless, suffer the same kind of racism and terror that male prisoners suffer. They, too, are jailed primarily because they are poor and oppressed. The Women's Bail Fund, recognizing the special oppression that women in this society bear, is dedicated to exposing the conditions in women's prisons and helping to free the victims of this concentration camp system.

(The Prisoners Solidarity Committee would like to extend special thanks to the Women's Bail Fund for their contribution to the PSC transportation fund. This fund is used to transport prisoners' relatives to prisons. Most of the relatives are too poor to pay for visits to the prisons which are situated in remote areas, often hundreds of miles from the prisoners' homes.)

Fascism and the Prisoners Solidarity Committee served a 6-month sentence, partly in Alderson and then in Passaic County Jail, which received \$22.50 a day for keeping her under the contract system.

"After a week in Southern county jails with double bars, Alderson looked much like an all-girl campus," she recalled. "There is sunlight, grass, trees, the beauty of the West Virginia mountains...I could hardly wait for the freedom of moving out of a locked cell, without my hands cuffed and locked to a chain around my waist...." "But their basic principle for 'reforming criminals' is still to dehumanize you. The favorite game of the cops is to find out what you want and then not let you have it."

The small rebellion at Alderson in response to the Attica massacre gives the lie to the theory that newer and better jails are a solution. The women at this "model" prison identified with the Attica rebels because they, too, are the poor, the Black and Puerto Rican people who fill all the U.S. jails for the "crime" of being poor.

Women prisoners rebel in West Virginia

by ELLEN PIERCE

The county, state, and federal jails that dot the map of the USA are filled with women prisoners as well as men. Alderson Federal Reformatory for Women in West Virginia is the showcase of these women's concentration camps. There are "cottages" instead of cells and surrounding mountains instead of bars at this minimum security jail.

But the prisoner struggles which have swept the concentration camp system have touched Alderson too. Women there held a memorial service for the murdered Attica inmates. Prison authorities responded by transferring 66 "ring-leaders" — ten percent of the population — to maximum security jails.

A transfer doesn't just mean a change of scenery. It means being condemned to do time in terrible state and county jails. Although county jails can legally be used only for short-term prisoners, the women transferred out of Alderson could be forced to serve their sentences, no matter how long, under inhuman county jail conditions.

Are you interested in supporting the prisoners?

Please return form to: PRISONERS SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
58 West 25th Street
New York, N.Y. 10010

Anyone wishing to help in the work of the PSC should also contact us at the following chapters:

- NEW YORK CITY
58 West 25 Street (212) 989-3932
- BUFFALO, NEW YORK
939 Main Street (716) 882-1112
- ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
69 Rohr Street
- SYRACUSE, NEW YORK
120 Dell Street (315) 474-5551 474-5551
- BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
P.O. Box 8875 (617) 661-0345
- CLEVELAND, OHIO
Box 2576, East Cleveland (216) 231-8456
- DETROIT, MICHIGAN
2515 Woodward (313) 962-4979
- MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
150 E. Juneau Avenue (414) 273-8089
- WILMINGTON, DELAWARE
P.O. Box 972 (302) 656-8451