

THEY'RE TALKING AT SING SING



CLARENCE DAVIS DAILY NEWS

A masked prisoner looking from behind bars in Cellblock B, where inmates held 15 guards at the Ossining Correctional Facility.
Three pages of stories; other pictures in centerfold

Jets dump Cincy; Raiders next

See sports pages

Infamy rivals Attica's

By RICHARD ROSEN

Even now, after the passage of more than 11 years and countless other prison riots, the mere mention of the name—Attica—conjures images of chaos, brutality and death.

But the reputation of another state prison, the

maximum-security Ossining Correctional Facility, is almost equally infamous.

The prison still is widely known as Sing Sing, despite a 1980 name change. During the 1930s, organized-crime figures referred to Sing Sing—located near the Hudson River 30 miles north of the city—with the words "up the river." The phrase became part of American slang.

TWO INMATES WERE KILLED at Sing Sing last

August in separate incidents. A month earlier, 10 persons were indicted on charges of receiving bribes to smuggle drugs, cash and other items into the prison and to transfer inmates to other facilities.

It was at Sing Sing, which was renamed by the state in 1980, that convicted atomic spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed in the electric chair in June 1953. They are the only civilians to have been put to death in this country for espionage.

Former underworld kingpin Charles (Lucky) Luciano was among the more notorious of Sing Sing's temporary residents.

Sing Sing inmates staged three nonviolent protests during the 1960s against state parole and sentencing-reduction regulations.

DESPITE SING SING'S notoriety, it is Attica, located near farmland about 30 miles from Buffalo, by which all other prison revolts are measured.

In fact, Sing Sing inmates yesterday unfurled a banner saying: "We don't want another Attica."

The four-day uprising of nearly 1,300 inmates at the Attica Correctional Facility ended Sept. 13, 1971, one of the bloodiest one-day encounters between Americans since the Civil War.

Thirty-three inmates and 10 prison guards and civilian employees were killed in the state police assault on Attica that wrested control of the facility from the rioting inmates.

ONLY ONCE, IN APRIL 1930, were more lives lost in a prison rebellion. At that time, 317 Ohio State Penitentiary inmates, locked in their cells, were killed in a fire set by other, rioting prisoners.

There have been many other bloody jail riots since 1971. Among the worst were:

- A 36-hour rampage at the New Mexico State Penitentiary in Santa Fe in 1980, during which 33 inmates died and most of the prison was destroyed.

- Rioting at the Oklahoma State Prison in McAlester in 1973 that left three inmates dead and \$23 million in damage.

- Two inmates and a guard were stabbed to death in a two-hour disturbance in July 1978 at the Georgia State Prison in Reidsville.

- A day after the violence in Georgia, three guards were stabbed to death at the maximum-security prison in Pontiac, Ill.



MICHAEL LIPACK DAILY NEWS

Sing Sing inmates display banner (above) saying they don't want another Attica (left), the revolt by which all other uprisings are measured.

Big houses are too small

By RICHARD ROSEN

Faced with a burgeoning inmate population and overcrowded, antiquated facilities, the state's 37 prisons will require at least 3,000 more beds during the next three years.

That estimate, included in Gov. Cuomo's State of the State message last week, came several months after a state study concluded that the penal system was "drifting toward disaster."

The yearlong study by the governor's Executive Advisory Commission on the Administration of Justice

said the deterioration of prison conditions would lead to "chaos... or even worse, to a possible repetition of the bloodshed at Attica."

FORTY-THREE inmates and civilian employees were killed during the four-day uprising at the Attica Correctional Facility in September 1971.

Despite the state's fiscal woes, Cuomo has pledged to develop a five-year plan to add prison beds.

At the same time, the governor vowed to keep a campaign pledge and discontinue the housing of 750 inmates at the Pilgrim State Psychiatric Hospital in Suffolk County.

The conversion of the Pilgrim State

facilities, which was opposed by hundreds of homeowners, is one of the makeshift ways by which the state has been trying to cope with overcrowding.

There are nearly 28,500 inmates in the state's prisons, up to 15% more than capacity and about double the number of 10 years ago.

IGNORING the warnings that overcrowded prisons could erupt in violence, voters in 1981 narrowly defeated a \$500 million state prison bond issue. The bond issue would have provided \$350 million for prison construction, \$125 million in matching funds for local jails and \$25 million for facilities

for juveniles and the criminally insane. It lost by just 13,699 votes out of about 2.5 million cast.

Speaking yesterday at Kennedy Airport, where he went to greet Israeli President Yitzhak Navon, Mayor Koch said: "We should have passed the prison bond issue in November of 1981. If you want us to arrest people and put them away, we have to build more cells. We have to have a place to put them."

Lt. Gov. Alfred DelBello said: "Overcrowding is a consistent problem, and when you have overcrowding, you have irritation and instability."

WHAT'S INSIDE

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BEAUTY IMPROVEMENT PLAN stresses fewer calories and more exercise. 1st Person

SOCIAL SECURITY will see changes in 1983: See Sylvia Porter's column on page 37

IT'LL TAKE STEEL and dollars to save American industry. Jerome Cahill reports on page 38

THE GRAMMY is the oldest and most prestigious of all music awards. Ella Fitzgerald has 11 of them and Vladimir Horowitz has 18. It's building to its silver anniversary, and new awards will be presented in February. Bill Bell reports Page 39



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