

45th Anniversary of Attica Prison Uprising Observed



New York, September 13 (RHC)-- Today marks the 45th anniversary of the uprising at Attica state prison near Buffalo, New York. It was September 9, 1971, when prisoners took over the state prison known as the Attica Correctional Facility.

The riot was one of the most well-known and significant uprisings of the Prisoners' Rights Movement and was based upon prisoners' demands for political rights and better living conditions. Coming two weeks after the murder of Black Panther Party leader George Jackson at San Quentin State Prison, about 1,000 of Attica prison's approximately 2,200 inmates rioted and seized control of the prison, taking 42 staff hostage.

During the following four days of negotiations, authorities agreed to 28 of the prisoners' demands, but would not agree to demands for complete amnesty from criminal prosecution for the prison takeover or for the removal of Attica's superintendent.

On September 13th -- 45 years ago today -- then-New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered armed state troopers to raid the prison. Troopers then shot indiscriminately more than 2,000 rounds of ammunition. In the end, 37 men were killed, including 27 prisoners and 10 guards.

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