

November 21, 1973

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As some of you may know, last year a group of prisoners at Walpole State Prison in Massachusetts, Prisoners Against Poverty, Racism, and War, organized a fast of the Christmas dinner as a protest against poverty in America which was supported by many community organizations in the area. Over one thousand Massachusetts inmates participated and it was an integral part of their resistance movement, particularly at Warpole, the maximum security prison.

This year the N.P.R.A. (National Prisoners' Reform Association) the inmate union at Walpole, has issued a call for a nation-wide prisoners' boycott of the Christmas meal in support of the indicted Attica Brothers and in memory of the Attica Rebellion which gave strength to the emerging prison movement and inspiration to the fight of people everywhere for freedom. It is also in memory of the massacre at Attica which revealed the violence which hides behind the facade of American justice.

We strongly support the call from the Brothers at Walpole and feel that this nationally coordinated fast is a powerful offensive action on the part of the prison movement at this time. It is also a particularly important statement in support of the Attica Brothers while the Grand Jury still sits and possible further indictments against the Brothers is a continuing reality.

There are many ways to support the fast. Make copies of the call and distribute it throughout your community and to the local media. Help it to be circulated in the prisons and jails. Have one Sunday's church collection go to the Defense Fund. Plan a college dining room fast where the college contributes the money saved.

This fast is an excellent opportunity for people on the outside to raise some of the desperately needed money for the upcoming trials. Won't you please join us in this effort.

In struggle,

National Lawyers Guild  
The Midnight Special  
Attica Brothers Legal Defense  
The Prisoner Survival Center (Boston, Mass.)

For more information contact:

Massachusetts Lawyers Guild  
595 Mass. Ave.  
Cambridge, Mass.  
(617/661-8898)

## PRISONERS' CHRISTMAS FAST

We call on all prisoners to join in a nationwide prisoners boycott of the traditional Christmas dinner.

We prisoners are expected to pause at xmas-time with Middle America: to eat and be merry and feel thankful. But all across America, hidden behind the myths & the dollar signs & fancy tinsel, there is hunger of body & spirit. The system-enforcers are everywhere; repressing people, violating the Bill of Rights, protecting & enforcing the priorities and life styles of the profit-makers. Forty million people live in poverty. Millions more can barely make ends meet. There is massive inflation, unemployment, broken-down neighborhoods, outrageous price-tags on everything from the basic necessities of life to civil rights. And for the millions of Third World & poor white people, the injustices of poverty, institutionalized racism, inequality of opportunity, exploitation & oppression, is what life is all about. We prisoners know this. These injustices are what prison is all about.

Attica is to the prison system what the American police-court-prison business is to capitalism. Attica is the reverse side of the American dollar. Attica is poverty is inequality is injustice is racism. Attica is My Lai is ITT is Watergate is abuse of power is Behavior Modification. Attica was no mistake. The machine-gun butchery carried out by the self-righteous mercenaries is officially sanctioned. Nixon, Rockefeller, Oswald, those in power, clearly understood the effect that widely publicized negotiated settlement at Attica would have on other contained ghettos. Attica is Law & Order is Status Quo is every prison is every ghetto is Attica. There will be no pause for xmas inside Attica.

Many of us have always refused to take any holiday dinners - as a silent personal protest. Let them keep their turkeys and stuffing, even though it is the only decent meal most of us would have all year.

WE NOW CALL ON ALL PRISONERS TO JOIN IN A BOYCOTT OF XMAS DINNER. We will not mourn the dead nor sing praises to the survivors. Too many of us are still dying, thousands of us are buried alive. We refuse to take the xmas meal as a gesture of solidarity with the 60 Attica Brothers who are taking the weight. We are protesting everything Attica represents.

Two years ago, after months of being lied to, harrassed, ignored in trying to negotiate their grievances, 1200 men risked whatever they had - and revolted. That New York list of 28 grievances has been echoed for many years all over the country, in every prison & city uprising from Walpole & Wounded Knee to San Quentin & Newark. They were the same demands shouted for in the Tombs, in Alderson & Leavenworth, in Baltimore & McAlistier, in Rhode Island & Georgia, in New Hampshire & Illinois - demands for those human & civil rights that have long been denied to people held under the iron heel of the system, whether we be in ghettos or reservations, in sweat shops or mindless schools, or in prison.

Three million dollars & all the fantastic resources of the state of New York have been geared to convict the 60 defendants to justify the state's barbarity. They have been indicted on 1300 separate counts, calling for thousands of years, plus the death penalty. Their lawyers are all volunteering services, as are many people, but the defense expenses will cost over \$500,000.

And so we call on people everywhere to join in solidarity with the Attica Brothers. We ask our people who are not in prison to buy one less xmas gift for each other: and to donate the price of that gift to the ATTICA BROTHERS DEFENSE FUND, c/o the NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD, 23 CORNELIA STREET, NY, NY 10014.

From the WALPOLE CHAPTER  
NATIONAL PRISONERS REFORM ASSOCIATION  
PRISONERS AGAINST POVERTY, RACISM & WAR