

City Convicts Strike, Issue List of Demands

The 472 prisoners at the City Prison Farm staged a sit-down strike Thursday and presented a long list of demands ranging from better food to more adequate medical treatment and improved working conditions.

The strike started after breakfast. But the prisoners refused to discuss their demands until an Atlanta Constitution reporter could be located at 2 p.m. and brought to the facility on Key Road SE.

Capt. R. F. Jordan, superintendent of the prison, and the reporter met with the striking prisoners for three hours. The meeting was orderly, marked with good-natured banter between Jordan and some of the inmates.

By KEELER McCARTNEY

Jordan said after the meeting that he would take the demands under consideration and do what he could. He added, however, some of the things called for could not be met "within a day or even a week."

The prisoners said flatly they would not return to work "until we get more than promises."

Food was the chief gripe, both as to quality and quantity.

"I been coming out here for 15 years and I ain't never seen it like it is now," one prisoner said. "We need better food and more of it."

Another prisoner said he thought the farm food would be sufficient if prepared properly.

Jordan said he was not receiving a sufficient number of women prisoners to operate the kitchen and was having to fill out the staff with men. He asked if any of the striking prisoners had experience as cooks. Several said they did. Then he called for volunteers for kitchen duty. None volunteered.

Prisoners assigned to outside work crews carry their lunch in "squad boxes," and get nothing to drink except water.

"You get beans, corn muffins and salt pork," one said.

"Sow belly," another chimed in.

One waved a doughy wafer

Continued on Page 9, Column 4

City Prisoners Strike Over Food

Continued from Page 1

biscuit. "This is what we got for breakfast," he said. "Let's see you eat this."

"How'd you like to get three or four of them and then have to tote garbage all day?"

Another prisoner said he had seen prisoners in the kitchen with the flu, tuberculosis and lice.

The prisoners asked that kitchen help be cleared through the Health department. Jordan said he would contact Health department officials and see what could be worked out. He pointed out, however, most sentences are only for a few days and the sentences would be completed before a full health check could be made.

Prisoners charged that guards were fed at one table and the prisoners at another. "Let us

all eat out of the same pots," one suggested.

Another complaint was medical treatment facilities. The prisoners charged medicine was doled out by nurse matrons who were not registered nurses.

Jordan said a physician comes to the farm five mornings each week. He said prescriptions are kept at a central location and the medicines are handed out a dose at the time in accordance with the doctor's instructions.

"I worked this out to eliminate reports of drug traffic," he said. "And it has worked."

A prisoner who said he was a 100 per cent disabled veteran and had suffered broken ribs recently was assigned to a garbage detail. He asked why. Jordan said the physician certified prisoners for "light" duty or "regular" duty and the administrators followed those guidelines.

Another who said he "could hardly walk" told of being assigned to swing a grass blade. He said he refused, was "put in the hole a night and a day and then refused again and was put back in until we struck this morning."

Prisoners who had been assigned to the mayor's cleanup campaign protested they worked side by side with paid laborers and only got two changes of clothing a week and two small sacks of smoking tobacco.

"It looks like if the citizens could pay them \$16.80 a day, they could give us a nickel sack of tobacco," a prisoner said. "We get a sack of tobacco on Tuesdays and Thursdays and another if we go to church on Sundays."

A protest was filed about the farm canteen. The prisoners objected to vending machines. They also said they thought the

city should sell items at wholesale prices.

Jordan told them he had attempted unsuccessfully to get the city's permission to use profits from the concession for special occasions at the farm, such as Christmas.

Jordan agreed with a prisoner's request that sentences be computed from the time of court sentence instead of when they are received at the farm. He said other requests for shorter work days, particularly those assigned to police headquarters and the camp kitchen, are already being met through time off given at the end of sentences.

An extra 100 men were assigned to the Sanitary department upon the mayor's request, Jordan related. He said the Sanitary department "would be tickled" to hire any prisoner at the conclusion of his sentence.

A similar strike a year ago

at the farm when Jordan first took over as superintendent extended for a week. It ended when he ordered inmates to go to work or face new charges of failure to obey an officer.

New Year's Eve Slaying Nets Barkeep Life

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP)—George Robertson, 44, of Augusta was sentenced to life in prison Wednesday for the New Year's Eve murder of Ronald Deith Cash, 22, of Augusta.

Superior Court Judge William Fleming Jr. sentenced Robertson after a jury recommended mercy.

Cash was shot at a Richmond County night spot where Robertson was a bartender.



Staff Photo—Billy Downs

Reporter McCartney, Capt. Jordan Hear Prison Complaints



CITIZENS LARGEST DISCOUNTS

Offers South's

3 MORE SHOPPING DAYS TILL MOTHER'S DAY