

## **KINROSS PROTEST TURNS VIOLENT**

A protest by inmates to coincide with the anniversary of the 1971 Attica Correctional Facility riots in upstate New York turned violent at the Kinross Correctional Facility in the Upper Peninsula over the weekend. According to the Michigan Corrections Organization (MCO), the union representing corrections officers, the protest was very serious, with multiple fires set and two housing units left unlivable. About 150 of the roughly 1,200 inmates—those seen as instigators of the disturbances—were bused to other prisons, said MDOC spokesman Chris Gautz. No prison staff or inmates were injured, but non-custodial staff was evacuated Saturday and more than 100 Emergency Response Team members and 190 additional corrections staff from around the state helped restore order.

The protest began on Friday, Sept. 9, when all kitchen staff and some other inmates with prison jobs refused to show up for work, participating in what was planned as a nationwide protest of prisoner conditions to coincide with the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Attica riots. The MDOC had prepared for possible widespread disruptions on Friday, but Kinross was the only state prison that took part in demonstrations, said Gautz. Although the Level 1 and Level 2 security classifications for Kinross prisoners are low security, many of them are serving life sentences for murder and other violent crimes. The inmates were persuaded to return to their housing units Saturday afternoon after a meeting with top prison officials. A spokesperson for the MCO said “we’re not certain that this situation is completely over.”

“We would like to commend these corrections officers who are on the front line every day, and the MDOC administration for making security decisions under extreme pressure,” said MSEA President Ken Moore. “Also, our MSEA members who are in crucial support positions at Kinross and around the state at other prison facilities. Their commitment to public safety is so important and very much appreciated.”

--edited from “Upper Peninsula inmates set fire, damage house,” by Paul Egan; *Detroit Free Press* (9-12-16)