

Berkowitz Goes To Attica Center In Tight Security

By MAX H. SEIGEL

New York Times (1923-Current file); Nov 14, 1978;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2007)

pg. B5

Berkowitz Goes To Attica Center In Tight Security

By MAX H. SEIGEL

David R. Berkowitz, the confessed .44-caliber killer, was transferred yesterday from the Central New York Psychiatric Center at Marcy to "a prison within a prison" at the Attica Correctional Facility.

The staff at the center said that he had recovered sufficiently from his mental illness to be able to cope with confinement in a regular penal institution. Both the center and Attica are maximum security institutions.

David F. Alexander, a spokesman for the State Department of Correctional Services, said that the 25-year-old former postal clerk would be kept in the Attica reception center used for classifying and assigning newly arrived inmates. He said that was the maximum security section of the maximum security prison.

"The others will be classified and then go on," Mr. Alexander said, "but Berko-

witz will stay. He'll have a room to himself, but he'll be allowed to join others in recreational activities. He'll be allowed to have visitors, to take correspondence courses, and to move about. He also will be put to work, probably as a porter at the start."

Mr. Berkowitz was transferred on the same day that a State Supreme Court justice in Brooklyn granted Doris Johnson, the conservator of his estate, custody of court-sealed tapes recording his conversation with a lawyer, Philip Peltz, shortly after Mr. Berkowitz was arrested.

Mr. Alexander disclosed that the transfer of Mr. Berkowitz had taken place in secrecy and under tight security.

"A state police car, a van and a car filled with Correction Department men were involved in the early morning transfer," he said. "Berkowitz arrived at Attica at 9 o'clock."

At the psychiatric center, Martin H. Von Holden, director of the center, disclosed that the perpetrator of the "son of Sam" slayings had spent an "uneventful" four months under treatment.

"He had many visitors who were friends or relatives, from a list he, himself, had approved," Mr. Von Holden said, "and he received more than 100 letters, most of them from women."

The director said that at the center Mr.

Berkowitz lived in a dormitory with 23 other inmates and ate with them. He also took part in normal recreational activities.

In seeking custody of the disputed tapes, Miss Johnson had said she wanted to start negotiations with possible purchasers to create a fund to pay her own expenses and finance the defense of 11 civil suits filed against Mr. Berkowitz.

The tapes also had been sought by Leon Stern and Ira Jultak, the two lawyers who had defended Mr. Berkowitz. But Justice Gerald S. Held said in a brief ruling:

"While the court is aware of the substantial legal work done by Leon Stern and his co-counsel, Ira Jultak . . . the court will not pass upon the merit, amount or priority" of their claims. "Such determination," Justice Held said, "shall await the successful establishment of a fund to pay all proper claims."