



# A Time to Die: The Attica Prison Revolt

*Tom Wicker*

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"Superb."—**Kurt Vonnegut**

"Wicker's story though could not be more vital today... *A Time To Die* compels us to understand the inhumanity of prisons in America, one of the greatest injustices of our time, and of a state that has no compunction about murdering prisoners and jailers alike. Think Attica forty years ago, think Pelican Bay today. Then act."—**Michael Ratner**, president, Center for Constitutional Rights

"[*A Time to Die's*] lessons about the racist underpinnings of mass incarceration, about the cynical politics that determine life-or-death decisions, and about the conditions that deny prisoners their basic humanity—are as relevant today as when it was first published."—**Liliana Segura**, associate editor, *The Nation*

"A powerful book."—**Anthony Lewis** for *New York Times*

In September 1971 the inmates of Attica prison revolted, took hostages, and forced the authorities into four days of desperate negotiation. At the outset the rebels demanded—and were granted—the presence of a group of observers to act as unofficial mediators. **Tom Wicker**, then the associate editor of *The New York Times*, was one of those summoned. In four crucial days, he learned more, saw more, and felt more than in most of the rest of his life. In the end, a police attack was launched, and as a result dozens of prisoners, as well as prison employees, were killed.

**Tom Wicker**, a former reporter, Washington bureau chief, and columnist for *The New York Times*, is the author of several books, including *On the Record*. He lives in Rochester, Vermont.

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