

Reaction to the Autopsy Report

Disbelief, Anger in Attica

Attica

Reactions from families of slain hostages to reports that they had died of bullet wounds ranged from angry disbelief to an accusation that authorities had recklessly risked lives in ordering the assault at the State Prison.

A burly man with the build of a football lineman, his eyes were watery as he said. "I don't want to work there so long as this state is run by the Oswalds, the Dunbars and the niggers." Russell G. Oswald and Walter Dunbar are the two top officials in the Corrections Department whose reformist policies are seen by most of the townspeople here as the basic cause of the rebellion at the prison.

James Hardie, an Main street insurance man whose father was one of the dead hostages, also was angry about the autopsy findings in Rochester, especially the medical examiner's statement that he found no evidence of mutilation.

WOUNDS

Hardie said he was at the prison when the bodies were removed after the carnage in the prison yard and he saw wounds that he was sure could not have been caused by bullets.

The reaction of disbelief was widespread and strongly felt in this all-white town of 2800 whose major industry is a maximum-security prison with a population of inmates that is 85 per cent non-white.

Second-guessing about tactics tended to take the form of assertions that the assault came four days too late. A

number of persons noted that it was not until the second day that the hostages were dressed by their captors in prison garb, which made it hard for the assaulting force to distinguish them from inmates.

To signify support for authority — and resentment over its breakdown at the prison last week — merchants belonging to the Lions

Club yesterday flew the American flag from their shops at full staff, giving the town a holiday appearance strangely out of key with its mood of mourning and anger.

The accusation came from the family of Carl W. Valone, a 44-year-old guard who was killed, according to an autopsy performed yesterday in Batavia, by a bullet in his

side.

"We feel that Carl was killed not by the prisoners but by a bullet that had the name Rockefeller written on it," declared a close relative who asked not to be named because he holds a government job. He said he spoke for the whole family.

BODY

The relative said he had personally viewed the body after the autopsy. "There was no slashing. He was not even touched," he said.

The solution for the impasse at the prison that preceded the assault, he said, was "talk, only talk." The family had sent telegrams before the assault to Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller urging him to go to the prison.

The autopsy on Valone was the only one not conducted at the Monroe county medical examiner's office. It was performed at the Genesee Memorial Hospital by Dr. Muhtesem Veznedaroglu, a pathologist from the Genesee Laboratory Co. The Valones were the first family to learn that their relative had been killed by bullets.

Other families, told earlier that their relatives had been slashed to death by the prisoners, found the Monroe county medical examiner's findings hard to accept.

"Bull!" was the reaction of a brother-in-law of John G. Montelone, a slain hostage. The brother-in-law, who declined to give his name, said he broke down emotionally and quit his job at the prison as a guard Monday after the last hostage was freed.

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UPI Telephoto

Many Attica stores flew flags in memorial to slain