

Rocky Admits Police Guns Killed Guards

Examiner News Services

ATTICA (N.Y.) — Gov. Nelson Rockefeller, admitting rebel convicts had no guns, said today nine hostages were shot to death in the crossfire of assault forces retaking Attica State Prison.

The governor spoke at an early afternoon news conference in Albany after two widely known pathologists confirmed nine hostages killed in the revolt died of gunshot wounds.

A 10th died of wounds suf-

fered in a beating when the riot broke out a week ago today.

"I don't think there was indiscriminate shooting by state police," Rockefeller said. "I think the hostages were caught in a crossfire.

Order to Shoot

"The police converged from four different directions with instructions to shoot the prisoners who stood behind each hostage as an executioner."

"The autopsies showed gunshot wounds of various

types — rifles, pistols, etc — and this was the crossfire. We know for sure the prisoners didn't have guns."

The autopsies were performed by Dr. Henry Siegel of Westchester County and Dr. Michael Baden, assistant New York City medical examiner, after an undertaker said he found no visible bullet wounds on one of the hostages, Richard Lewis.

Shot in Back

Dr. John Edland, Monroe County medical examiner, who had performed the origi-

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nal autopsies. disclosed the findings of the re-autopsies.

Edland said Lewis was shot in the back by a single bullet which lodged in his chest.

In another development, David Anderson, a black leader from Rochester on the citizens' committee which negotiated with the convicts claimed the talks deteriorated after the arrival of Chicago Seven lawyer William Kunstler.

He charged that Kunstler raised the inmates' hopes of winning amnesty.

"After a very positive meeting Friday evening, they (the prisoners) seemed very close to sitting down with Oswald again," he said.

Mood Changed

But after Kunstler attended a midnight meeting with the convicts, Anderson said: "The mood changed. They kept talking about the am-



TROOPER STANDS GUARD AT NEW YORK PRISON
State police were assigned to Green Meadow penitentiary after Attica transfer
—AP Photo

nesty thing: they began talking about dying."

Kunstler expressed himself in a way that contributed to heightening their expectations regarding the amnesty demand," he said.

After that session, Anderson said, he "lost faith" in the talks and departed after 17 hours inside the prison.

Meanwhile, in Washington, Congress began a probe of the riot and bloody suppression of it amid calls for prison reform and criminal investigations.

The House Select Committee on Crime announced that Chairman Claude Pepper (D-Fla.) and three other committee members would meet with Gov. Nelson Rockefeller tomorrow morning in New York City and then travel to Attica.

As part of the widening inquiry into the carnage, Rockefeller planned to meet later today with state legislative leaders in Albany.

The governor has taken "full responsibility" for the way the insurrection was put down, and the White House has said President Nixon was "not going to second-guess him."

Also in Washington, Sen. James Buckley (C-R-N.Y.) announced today he has sent his personal assistant for New York State affairs to Attica on a fact-finding mission.

A spokesman for Buckley said, however, the senator still stands behind his statement Monday calling for swift punishment of those responsible for killing hostages, despite the new information.

"Of course, the senator isn't calling for prosecution of state troopers. They were just doing their job," the spokesman said.

In another development, a physician who examined inmates yesterday said more than 160 prisoners claimed to have been beaten when led back to their cells Monday.

A copyright story in today's editions of the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle attributed the report to Dr. Lionel A. Sifontes, 36, of Buf-

falo, who served on a seven-man medical team that examined more than 500 inmates.

"They had quite a few body bruises ... you don't get body bruises from a hand," Sifontes was quoted as saying.

Sifontes, however, would not speculate on how the

prisoners were bruised and a prison official had no immediate comment.

Meanwhile, unrest grew among both inmates and guards at other state prisons.

At Clinton State Prison, in northeastern New York, officials used tear gas on six inmates who resisted being transferred from one cell block to another.

At Green Meadow Prison, near Glens Falls, a group of inmates threw bottles and burning rags in a four-hour disturbance.

Five guards resigned in

two days at Auburn State Prison in central New York.

State Corrections Commissioner Russell G. Oswald had admitted that there had been some "erroneous reporting" by officials about what had taken place when the insurrection was put down.

Lewis, 42, was to have been buried yesterday, shortly after the first victim of the

rebellion — Guard William E. Quinn, 28 — was laid to rest on a hillside overlooking the prison.

Officials said Quinn was beaten and pushed out of a window last Thursday.