

# Dunbar, Aide of Oswald, Says He Was the Source

By FRED FERRETTI

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 30—Walter Dunbar, executive deputy commissioner of the New York State Department of Correctional Services, told a Congressional committee today that he was the official source of reports that hostages' throats had been slashed and that one hostage had been castrated during the inmate rebellion at Attica. The reports were erroneous.

"I honestly said this because I believed it," Mr. Dunbar said. "If I erred, I erred as a human being."

Mr. Dunbar's admission came in a halting emotional response to a question directed to him by Representative Jerome R. Waldie, Democrat of California, a member of the House Select Committee on Crime, which is in its second day of hearings on prison disturbances at Attica, at Raiford, Fla., and at Rahway state prison in New Jersey.

Mr. Waldie had asked Mr. Dunbar if the reports of slashed throats and other atrocities had been factors in the decision to storm the Attica Correctional Facility on Sept. 13 after four days of fruitless negotiations.

"At the time of the moment of truth," Mr. Dunbar said, "I was tired after five days and nights. My major goal was to save lives. I saw hostages at Times Square [The juncture of the four prison yards in Attica] with knives at their throats.

"I saw and subsequently showed on television one man, one employe, who was slashed from ear to ear. I spent the time the best I could trying to insure the truth as I saw it."

Mr. Dunbar said during a hearing recess that he had received reports of throat-slashings and atrocities from "sev-

eral different sources." He continued:

I stood there and saw weight hostages with inmates with knives as their executioners. I saw two hostages with their throats cut. The castration? It was an honest report. An eyewitness told me that under extreme emotion. I honestly told you that because I believed it."

After the rebellion was crushed on Sept. 13, autopsies determined that the throats of three prisoners had been slashed before the storming of the prison by state troopers. Most of the other deaths—11 hostages and 32 prisoners died as a result of the uprising and its aftermath—were attributed to gunshot of wounds. The throats of several guards

were slashed, but they survived.

Sitting beside Mr. Dunbar as he testified was the state's Correction Commissioner, Russell G. Oswald, who said later that the decision to storm the prison had been his but that it had been "approved by the Governor."

Mr. Oswald took issue today with Vincent R. Mancusi, superintendent of Attica, who told the committee yesterday that he would have gone ahead and attempted to retake the prison without attempting negotiations.

During the recess Mr. Oswald said that he was not surprised by Mr. Mancusi's assertion since "he had mentioned this to me before."

However, during questioning by Representative Charles B.

Rangel, Democrat of Harlem, Mr. Oswald said that while it was true that forces under Mr. Mancusi's direction had retaken portions of Attica prison early on Sept. 9, the day the rebellion began, they had become overextended and then had to stop and he assumed control of the prison.

Mr. Oswald said he decided to negotiate and "that wasn't what Mr. Mancusi wanted to do." He went on:

"It's the easiest thing if you are callous to go in immediately, but I couldn't live with myself if I hadn't tried to negotiate to save lives."

Three of the observers who participated in the Attica negotiations also testified before the committee, of which Representative Claude Pepper, Dem-

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ocrat of Florida, is chairman.

State Senator John R. Dunne, Republican of Garden City, who is chairman of the New York State Senate Committee on Crime and Correction, pleaded for Federal assistance.

He urged that a Federal Academy of Corrections be set up, that national standards be established for prison correctional officers and that additional money from the Departments of Labor and of Health, Education and Welfare be earmarked for the states to develop prison reforms.

Clarence Jones, published of The Amsterdam News, said he despaired of prison reform. He asked rhetorically if prisons would not continue to be "custodial warehouse centers for unwanted baggage," Mr. Jones

noded in agreement as Senator Dunne characterized Attica as "the Siberia of the New York State correctional institutions."

Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve, Democrat of Buffalo, said that true reforms could not come until authorities began dealing seriously with the problem of racism in the prison system.

All three observers disagree with Superintendent Mancusi, who said yesterday that the revolt at Attica had come as a result of a conspiracy that he characterized as Marxist, Maoist and far left. Mr. Mancusi said that the level of despair at the prison had made it a prime site for discontent to erupt into violence.

They also disputed Mr. Mancusi's view that removal of so-

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## Throats Had Been Slit

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called agitators, troublemakers and revolutionaries to a maximum security prison away from the general prison population would reduce tension.

Mr. Oswald and Mr. Dunbar said they believed that the revolt had been too well planned to be spontaneous and that leaders among the inmates had retained strong control over most of the prisoners during the four days of the revolt.

Both said they favored establishment of a supermaximum security prison.

Mr. Oswald also disagreed with Mr. Mancusi who told the committee yesterday that he could determine if an inmate was a revolutionary by the way he spoke and by the literature he read. For his part, the commissioner said, he would judge

a man "by his overt behavior... then he could be removed only after a hearing."

Representative Rangel then said that he felt the inmates at Attica would believe Mr. Oswald's promises of reform "if Warden Mancusi wasn't there."

The promises, which Mr. Oswald outlined today, included reorganization of the state correctional system, an aggressive recruitment program, expansion of training and community sensitivity programs.

Mr. Oswald did not respond to Mr. Rangel's statement. He said later that he could administratively remove Mr. Mancusi, adding that "charges would have to be brought."

The hearings resume tomorrow.

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