

Prison Deaths Remain a Fuzzle

ATTICA, N.Y. (AP) — As guard William E. Quinn was buried on a hillside overlooking Attica state prison today, there still was no firm official explanation of who shot nine hostages in the four-day convict revolt.

"They got too lenient with the inmates," said one woman neighbor of the Quinn family as she stood on the periphery of the gravesite congregation. The guard's widow, Nancy, fought back tears as her husband was lowered into the earth.

State Correction Commissioner Russell G. Oswald, agreeing with a medical examiner's reports, said that the hostages died of gunshot wounds.

OSWALD ALSO said that no fire-

arms were found in the possession of inmates or in the prison after Monday's assault by heavily armed police and National Guardsmen.

The revolt left 42 dead.

Elsewhere, at Great Meadow prison, a maximum security facility in Comstock in northeastern New York, inmates went on a four-hour spree of bottle throwing and fire setting early this morning, Correction Department spokesmen said.

Quinn, 28, died Saturday of injuries he suffered Thursday in the initial riot at Attica.

"HE DIED IN the service of his fellow man, an exemplary father of his

family and a man who abided by the law of God," said the Most Rev. James McNulty, bishop of the Buffalo Roman Catholic diocese, who presided at the Requiem Mass.

THE AUTOPSY reports contradicted another part of the original official report—that hostages' throats had been slit.

The death toll—from the four days of insurrection rose to 42 today—10 hostages and 32 inmates. Officials at a Buffalo hospital said a critically wounded convict died there early today.

Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller, in his first news conference since the Attica

uprising, defended his decision to sanction the use of armed force in putting it down.

"I do not see how I could have done any differently," he said in New York.

ROCKEFELLER said there was no evidence that rebel inmates had shown "a real desire to settle" the dispute by negotiation.

"Their position had hardened, not softened. . . . I did not think my meeting with the prisoners or the observers' committee would serve any useful purpose." Rockefeller said he had talked to members of the observers' committee by telephone during the Attica crisis.

"They (the committee) agreed with me that there could be no further concessions to the prisoners and still preserve the concept of law in a free society," he said.

Rockefeller said his views of the rebellion were "the same as everybody else—one of tragedy."

REACTION AMONG guards at other New York State prisons today grew into dissension.

A correction officers' union at Great Meadow prison in northeastern New York, protesting conditions at the state prisons, has called for Oswald's ouster. They also voted to operate the prison on a restricted basis.

State troopers have been called in to

patrol the walls at Great Meadow prison in Dannemora.

A CORRECTION Department spokesman in Albany said the beefed-up patrols reflected both the Attica situation, transfers of Attica inmates and long-standing vacancies among guard forces.

Hollis Chase, president of the guards' union at Attica, insisted that the original version of the hostage slayings was correct. He said hostages' throats were slit and that officials had photographs showing the bodies with cut throats.

In a statement to newsmen late yes-

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Prison Deaths Still Puzzle

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terday, Oswald said one question was how any of the hostages could have been killed by gunfire.

"The most important and obvious answer is the fact that the inmates had dressed all hostages in prison garb to insure difficulty of identification between inmate and hostage," he said.

"Additionally, hostages could very well have been used as shields or forced forward into gunfire to suggest that they were not hostages and could have been mistaken for such because of their prison garb."

He released a list of weapons found in the prison after the rebellious inmates were routed. The list included gasoline bombs, sharpened spears, metal pipes, straight razors and spiked baseball bats — but no guns.

HE DECLINED to answer questions from newsmen.

The commissioner's statement came several hours after disclosure by Dr. Cal examiner, that the hostages all died of gunshot wounds and that none John F. Edland, Monroe County medic had had his throat slashed.

"There were no cut throats or any kind of mutilation," Edland said after examining eight bodies of hostages. "All eight cases died of gunshot wounds."

A ninth hostage killed during the assault previously had been established as a gunshot victim.

Oswald maintained that "there have been two mis-statements of facts" concerning what happened to the hostages. He said the first was that all the hostages had cut throats and the second was that none had a slashed throat.

DURING THE evacuation of the dead and wounded after the assault, Oswald said, "a number of those evacuated had slashed throats; it has been verified that there were at least two with lacerated throats."

He offered no further elaboration and did not mention any source of information other than the report of "the forensic pathologist," a reference to Edland.

Oswald said one reason for the erroneous reports about throats being slit was that several corrections officers "positively stated that they had seen hostages dropped as their throats were apparently being cut."

He added that there was confusion

when 30 other hostages were evacuated and that those involved reported in the heat of the situation things that might have been erroneous.

Oswald said a preliminary inspection of the bodies prior to any autopsies showed slashes on necks, puncture wounds, apparent broken arms, battered faces and abrasions.

EDLAND SAID his medical examination did find abrasions and other evidence of beatings on some bodies of hostages. But he said only one hostage was cut on the neck, and that wound was a small hole in the back of the neck.

The medical examiner said "There were two types of missiles found in both the inmates and the hostages. Some were buckshot. Some were larger caliber missiles."

State police who charged the prison carried shotguns and rifles.

Asked if any of the gunshot wounds could have been inflicted by "zip" guns — homemade weapons — Edland said he was familiar with "zip" gun wounds and that he found no such wounds.

THE REBELLION erupted last Thursday and the inmates took 38 guards and prison employes as hostages. One guard died Saturday of injuries suffered in the first surge of violence.

The rebels were crushed Monday when heavily armed state police, guards, sheriff's deputies and National Guardsmen moved into the prison under a cloud of tear gas.

After the assault, 40 bodies were found. The dead included 31 inmates and nine hostages. Several inmates could not be accounted for and prison officials suggested they might have been killed and buried.

Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller in a statement Monday, spoke of prisoners having "carried out cold-blooded killings they had threatened from the start."

IN OTHER developments related to the uprising and the decision to storm the prison:

—A federal judge in Buffalo vacated an earlier order that had authorized a group of lawyers, doctors and nurses to enter the prison. State corrections officials successfully fought the order on the grounds that there was still a "state of emergency" at Attica. **NO CONTINUATION?**