

State Troopers Assert They Chose
48 Targets Carefully During
Storming of Prison

State Troopers Asse

Many Are Skeptical Shots Caused Deaths

NYTimes

By FRANCIS X. CLINES SEP 16 1971
Special to The New York Times

ATTICA, N. Y., Sept. 15—
State troopers insisted today
that they had closely followed
orders issued before their as-
sault on the rebel prisoners of
the Attica Correctional Facility
—that they had chosen their
targets carefully.

"I don't believe the Medical
Examiner's report," he added,
echoing the widespread skepti-
cism of troopers over the re-
ports that nine correction of-
ficers and civilian employes
held as hostages had died of
gunshot wounds in the assault.

The troopers' reaction ranged
from scatological expletives to
pleas that the public under-
stand the strain and confusion
of the raid. Some contended
that the Medical Examiner's
report was erroneous or "fixed"
in a conspiracy that they did
not yet understand.

"Everyone blames the police
nowadays," one grumbled.

Some of the hundreds of
troopers who took part in the
Monday assault today began
leaving the motels surrounding
the dairy-country village, where
the walled prison is set.

There was no apparent re-
sentment toward the troopers
from prison guards. Some, in
fact, praised the state police.

"If I got shot, I got shot,"
said Frank Klein, a hostage who
survived the attack. "I was only
hoping the bullet would go
through me and get my assas-
sin."

Another hostage who was
rescued, Philip J. Watkins, said,
"The troopers went in to do a
job and did it."

Oswald Assailed

At the prison gate, correc-
tion officers from various in-
stitutions in the state gathered
to offer support to their col-
leagues and to demand the
resignation of State Correction
Commissioner Russell G. Os-
wald.

"Oswald's a pantywaist,"
said William Wright, a guard
from the Great Meadows Prison
in Comstock, near Lake George.

"When dealing with these
barbarians, they're are not
about to cooperate," Mr. Wright
said of the prisoners. "I know,
I've tried to rehabilitate them."

Racial epithets were heard
among the comments. A large
majority of the prisoners are
Negroes or Puerto Ricans.

One state trooper said that a
fellow trooper had been shot in
the raid on cellblock D. "But he
didn't mind because there was
a nigger on the top of him at
the time," the trooper said cas-
ually.

Mr. Wright denied racial over-
existed in prison confrontations
throughout the state.

"I have black men working
for me and I have the greatest
respect for them," he said. "I'm
trying to make real men of
them."

The troopers repeated today
unfounded rumors that the
Medical Examiner's report of
the gunshot fatalities had been
retracted.

"Go and check," one told a
reporter. "I heard from a wom-
an over by the firehouse."

Mood Changed

The mood of the troopers has
shifted sharply in the last few
days. On Monday night, after
the prison rebellion had been
put down, some of them traded
stories of their parts in it. The
talk in the barroom at the Holi-
day Inn in Batavia was heavy
with memories of warlike darts
and thrusts into embattled cell-
blocks, and through the rebels'
"tent city" in the yard.

The feeling of the troopers
seemed than to be one of re-
lief and relaxation, as glasses
clinked over the songs of the
bar's entertaier, who at one
point stared quietly at the
drinkers and then sang: "The
Green, Green Grass of Home,"
a song written by a convict
about a Death Row inmate's
fantasy of dying.

The marquee outside the mo-
tel said, "Welcome Sylvania"
this morning as troopers hur-
ried down the stairs past guests

for their 8:30 A.M. muster in
the motel's parking lot. Some
seemed resentful of newsmen.

At breakfast, the troopers sat
four to a table in the dining
room as the public-address sys-
tem played gentle tunes. There
were dozens of troopers in the
eating area.

They were crisply dressed in
slate-gray uniforms delivered
freshly cleaned in rolling racks
this morning. A few troopers
had their wives with them.

Troopers on guard outside the
prison still held rifles at the
ready against their hips, but
they leaned casually against the
wall. Other troopers entering
ing the prison wore their West-
ern-style soft hats instead of
helmets, for the first time since
the uprising began.

There have been few non-
white troopers in evidence in
the long ranks of men moving
in and out of they prison all
week. One black trooper served
as an escort for Robert R. Doug-
lass, Governor Rockefeller's
secretary, when he came here
last week to seek an end to the
uprising.