

Investigator of Attica Uprising Is Largely Noncommittal at Briefing for Newsmen

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Investigator of Attica Doctors in Disagreement On Injuries to Inmates

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By FRED FERRETTI SEP 17 1971
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ATTICA, N.Y., Sept. 16 — Deputy Attorney General Robert E. Fischer, appointed by Governor Rockefeller to investigate the tragedy inside the Attica Correctional Facility, held what he called his first actual briefing today and declined to answer most of the lingering questions.

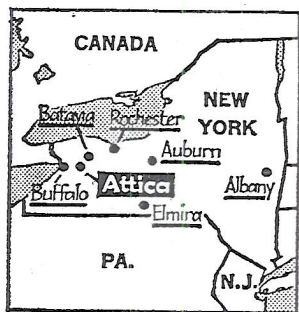
He said that he did not know who had fired the shots that killed nine hostages and 30 inmates inside the wall during Monday's assault, nor did he know how many shots had been fired, or why they had been fired.

Armed state troopers moved into the prison Monday after 1,200 prisoners had refused to end a five-day rebellion. The convicts had held 38 guards and civilian prison workers as hostages.

Photographs Displayed

Mr. Fischer displayed four photographs today showing battle action, the open area of D cellblock that the inmates had captured, and weapons recovered in the prison yet he refused to confirm that weapons had been found.

One photograph showed two tear-gas guns. Mr. Fischer said



he would "not answer" a question on whether tear-gas guns had been found.

At Mr. Fischer's briefing, one picture was shown to reporters but not released for publication. It appeared to show a man in convict's garb menacing another man in convict clothing. It was produced when Mr. Fischer was asked what made law-enforcement authorities decide to attack when they did.

Mr. Fischer's aide, Emerson Moran, said: "I think this might be a good time to show this picture."

Mr. Fischer was asked if the photo showed an apparent hostage being menaced by an apparent convict. "I'm not going to answer that," he said.

Mr. Fischer's observations came at a meeting with a reporter's pool in the first-floor locker room for guards in the prison's Administration Building. Joining him in what he called the first of many "orderly" briefings was Maj. John W. Monahan, commander of Troop A of the state police, who was officially identified as a senior commander of the assault team.

As Mr. Fischer and Major Monahan were holding their briefing, a team of doctors from the E. J. Meyer Memorial Hospital in Buffalo went through the crowded cellblocks, searching for inmates who might be diabetics and asthmatics in need of medication.

One of the doctors, Anthony Kulczycki, said that his team had given physical examinations to virtually all of the 1,200 inmates who had taken part in the rebellion and had found them not too seriously injured. Other doctors dis-

Injury Reports Cited

Dr. Alyce Gullattee, who heads a six-man team of doctors from Howard University Hospital in Washington, said that information she had received from doctors and nurses in the prison indicated that scores of prisoners were still suffering from broken limbs; that others had had bullets in them since Monday, and that others were being beaten.

Prison authorities refused to permit Dr. Gullattee and her colleagues to enter. She said: "I think they're in a state of post-siege shock. They had a far more serious crisis than they thought."

She pointed out that Dr. Kulczycki had said that 90 per cent of the convicts he examined were "all right." She asked: "How can they know?"

Dr. Gullattee said that prisoners' chests were being examined through cellbars. "They are asked to cough, then stand back, and they're looked at," she said. "That's not an examination, it's an inspection."

She did not name the doctors and nurses who had given her the information.

A black registered nurse from Bronx State Hospital in New York City, George Nicholas, said he had been asked by the state to come here. He displayed a plane ticket paid for by the state and said he had been told, "We want blacks and Puerto Ricans up here." He spent a few hours in the prison yesterday but was barred today, he said.

Mr. Nicholas confirmed Dr. Gullattee's allegations. Reporters saw white doctors and nurses enter the prison freely during the day.

Clubbing Is Charged

Another doctor, Lionel Sifontes of the University of Buffalo, who is black, was initially denied admission to the prison. But when officials determined that he was the head of a disaster team, Dr. Sifontes was permitted in.

He told reporters when he came out that many prisoners "told me they were being clubbed; I saw physical evidence of it."

During the briefing Major Monahan said that before Monday's assault, he had ordered troopers massed on the lawn before the Administration Building. "We had intelligence that hostages were being held in D yard," he said.

A 27-man rescue squad, consisting of 25 state troopers and two guards charged with identifying hostages, made a rush toward the hostages, Major Monahan said. He was asked if he considered the rescue attempts successful.

"We recaptured 29 hostages out of the 38 being held," he replied.

The major was asked to describe the factors that had decided the timing of the attack in light of the fact that Correction Commissioner Russell G. Oswald had said that each of the hostages was being menaced with a knife. He said it was "difficult" to reconstruct exactly what had happened at that point.

Autopsy Findings Checked

Mr. Fisher, asked why he had asked an assistant New York medical examiner, Michael Baden, and the Westchester County Medical Examiner, Henry Siegel, to come here and over the autopsy findings of Dr. John F. Edland, he said he wanted to be sure that "very qualified men" had looked at the bodies.

Dr. Edland, the Monroe County Medical Examiner, said that all nine hostages killed in the assault had died of gunshot wounds. Correction officials had said initially that several guards had died of slashed throats and were victims of other atrocities.

"Were any throats slashed?" Mr. Fisher was asked.

"I do not have the reports," he said.

He was asked about Dr. Edland's findings. "In all of the deceased persons," he said, "there were some physical pictures which indicate cause of death or serious injury in the throat area."

"Were any inmates' throats slashed?" Mr. Fischer was asked.

"I can't make a conclusion," he replied.

Two inmates did die from slashed throats, and two guards suffered nonfatal cuts on the throat, according to officials at hospitals that treated the men.