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A Brief Florida Prison Rebellion

Raiford, Fla.

Six prisoners armed with homemade knives held four Raiford State Prison guards hostage for three hours early yesterday before other guards broke through a door and captured the inmates, officials said.

The prisoners surrendered "without a blow being struck" and no one was injured said Louie Wainwright, director of the Florida Division of Corrections.

He said the guards were taken hostage by the six after they failed in an attempt to flee the maximum security prison, Florida's main correctional institution. The rescuing force carried no firearms, spokesman said.

INMATES

Wainwright and Raiford Superintendent L. E. Dugger gave this account of the incident:

The six inmates were pa-

tients in the prison hospital when they got the drop on two guards and locked them in a maximum security cell. The six then fled the hospital and headed for a prison fence that was shrouded in fog.

The two guards, however, yelled across a courtyard and extra guards rushed to cover the fence area.

Apparently finding escape routes blocked, the prisoners returned to the hospital, overpowered two other officers and barricaded themselves and the hostages in the hospital ward.

DEMANDS

The inmates issued five demands in return for release of the guards and Dugger went to the prison to talk to the six.

While Dugger was talking to the inmates, an emergency squad of about 20 guards removed the hinges from a locked door at the rear of the ward. The guards then broke

through the door and rushed the ward.

A prison spokesman said the specially-trained emergency squad carried no guns. Each man was armed with a baton, a small tear gas canister and wore a helmet. The leaders of the squad carried a canister of chemical riot gas, but neither the tear gas, riot gas nor nightsticks were used, the spokesman said.

Last spring, Raiford became the center of a controversy when guards opened fire with shotguns and a sub-machine gun on a group of prisoners who were staging a sit-down strike in a prison yard.

A state investigation determined that many of the 70 prisoners wounded were lying on the ground when they were shot.

None of the prisoners was killed, and most suffered slight wounds from shotgun

pellets. Two prisoners were struck by submachine gun bullets, but they recovered.

Associated Press