

DOCTOR TESTIFIES ON ATTICA ABUSES

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Surgeon and 3 Aides Tell
of Seeing Guards Attack
Wounded Inmates

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By MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN

A surgeon and three medical corpsmen who were assigned to treat the wounded in the state's retaking of Attica prison last September told the McKay Commission yesterday that they had seen correction officers beating wounded inmates with sticks and cursing them.

In one case, they said, guards attacked an inmate on a stretcher with a screwdriver.

"That day tore from those guards the shreds of their humanity," said Dr. John Cudmore, a surgeon who is also a major in the National Guard. "For the first time I understood what had happened at Mylai."

Dr. Cudmore testified that for reasons he did not understand his unit of seven doctors and supporting litter bearers did not arrive at the prison last Sept. 13 until 10 A.M., almost a half hour after the assault had ended.

He said that at the units' arrival, there was no one to direct them and no one to report to—"we had to fend for ourselves." He said had their

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been prior indication of the numbers of casualties, helicopter evacuations could have been prepared and a tent hospital set up.

Dr. Cudmore said that on his first entry into D yard, where 1,238 inmate rebels has just been routed by heavy firing, the scene reminded him "of a painting of Gettysburg on the third day—debris, physical and human, was everywhere."

The 33-year-old surgeon said he had ordered medical triage, a procedure in which first treatment and evacuation priority is given to those who are seriously wounded but judged to have a chance of survival. Second priority is for those who are seriously wounded but probably won't survive. And third priority is for those whose wounds are not mortal.

In all, about 130 inmates and hostages were struck by bullets or buckshot pellets. Of these, 29 inmates and 10 hostages died.

'Excessive Force' Witnessed

As he directed the litter removal to the hospital, Dr. Cudmore said, he saw inmates shoved and beaten by guards as they were herded into a yard and forced to crawl. He reported that as the men passed from D yard, they were "struck with blows to the elbows and genitalia."

One inmate, he said, had his leg fractured by such a blow.

Dr. Cudmore said he was so

disgusted by what he termed "the excessive use of force" that he remembered discussing with a regular Army major who was in the yard the possibility of asking that the institution be placed under martial force. He said he was sorry now that he had let the matter drop without making the request.

Throughout that September day, the doctor said, he could

hear racial slurs and epithets directed at the inmates by the correctional staff.

The three other guardsmen who testified detailed a half dozen instances of harassment and atrocities by guards.

One, Mark Futterman, 27, a nursing student, told of being in the prison hospital when a badly wounded inmate was brought in. Mr. Futterman testi-

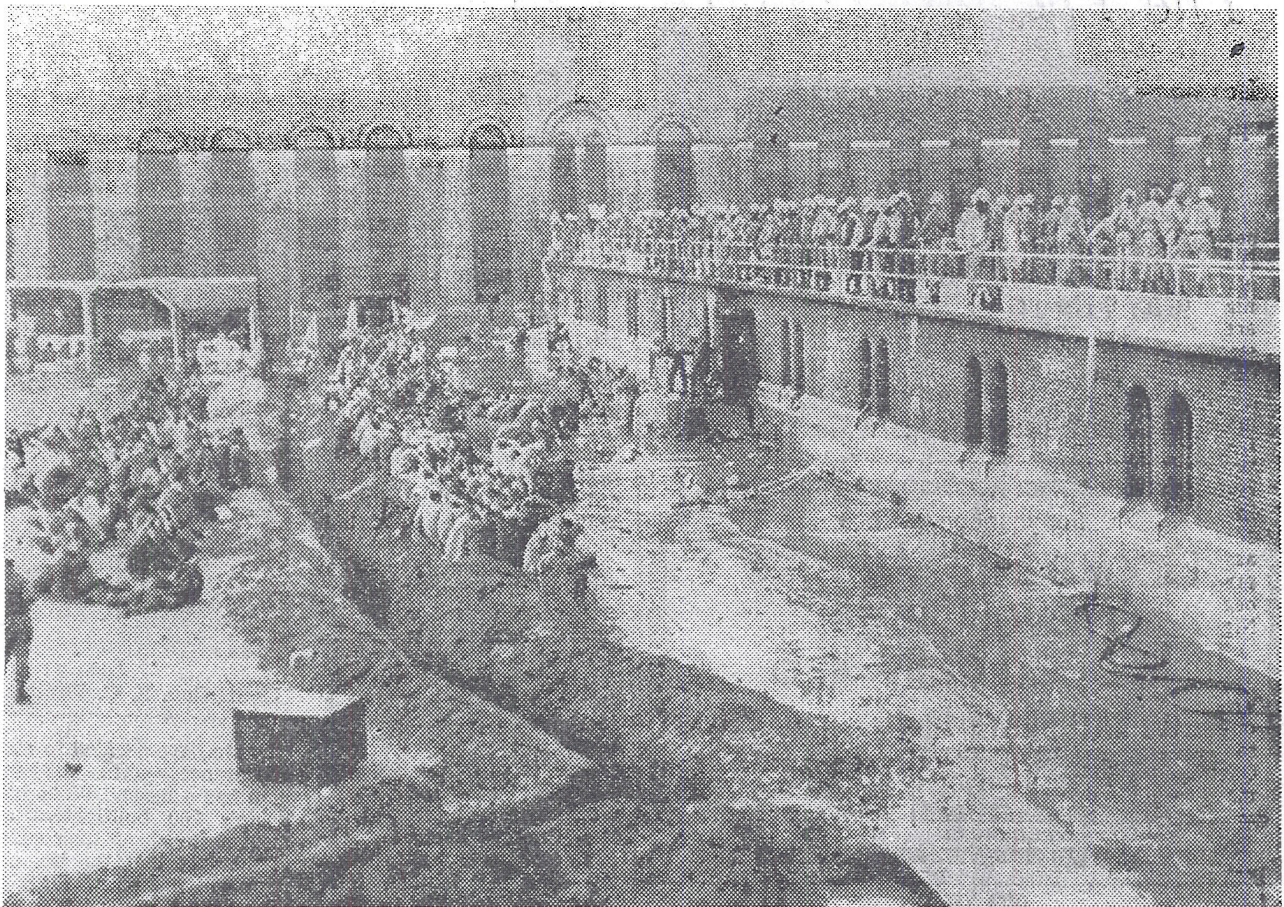
fied that the "prison doctor" looked at the man and, using an obscenity, called him a "nigger" and said, "Don't treat him."

The other National Guard witnesses, Ronald Dill and James O'Day, both college students in Buffalo, detailed several episodes they had witnessed in which wounded inmates were dumped from

stretchers by guards and beaten.

In one such occurrence, Mr. O'Day said, a man in a gray uniform stabbed one of these inmates several times in the rectum with a Phillips screwdriver.

All of the witnesses said they had seen inmates who were not wounded beaten as they entered a housing unit near the hospital.



N.Y. State Special Commission on Attica via United Press

RELEASED BY COMMISSION: Photograph taken shortly after state police assault on Attica prison on the morning of Sept. 13. Photo was part of film put together by state officials and released by the McKay Commission.