

TROOPER CHARGED IN ATTICA REVOLT

OCT 4 1975

Indictment Says He Fired

His Shotgun Recklessly

NYTimes

By TOM GOLDSTEIN

A state trooper was charged yesterday with having recklessly discharged a shotgun—creating “a grave risk of death to another person” — during the retaking of Attica prison from rebelling inmates in 1971.

The trooper, Gregory Wildridge, 38 years old, was the first law enforcement officer to be indicted for a crime in connection with the uprising.

During the retaking of the prison on Sept. 13, 1971, 39 prisoners and hostages were killed by gunfire from law-enforcement officers and 80 suffered gunshot wounds.

In Warsaw, N.Y., yesterday, Trooper Wildridge, a 14-year veteran of the force, pleaded not guilty to reckless endangerment in the first degree, a Class D felony that carries a maximum sentence of seven years on conviction.

The 40-word indictment, handed up Thursday by a special Wyoming County grand jury, was unsealed in court yesterday. The office of the special Attica prosecutor declined to provide any details.

Commanders Present

At his arraignment yesterday before Justice Carman F. Ball of State Supreme Court, Mr. Wildridge was flanked by several state troopers, including Anthony L. Bardossi, commander of Troop A in Batavia, where he had been assigned, and Henry P. Williams, who commanded the state police during the take-over of the prison.

Mr. Wildridge, who lives in Lancaster, a Buffalo suburb, remained silent during his brief arraignment, except to identify himself. He was released after posting \$1,000 bail.

In Albany, Robert Quick, the first deputy superintendent of the state police, said Mr. Wildridge would not be suspended while the charge was pending.

Patrick J. Carroll, president of the State Police Benevolent Association, said it was “a travesty of justice to indict a trooper who was risking his life to quell a prison riot.”

Jury's 120th Session

The indictment came during the 120th session of a Wyoming County grand jury that was impaneled in April, 1974, to hear evidence about possible crimes by law enforcement officers. Another grand jury, which still sits occasionally in Warsaw, has handed up indictments charging 62 Attica inmates with more than 1,400 crimes.

Many of the 587 state troopers who took part in the retaking of the prison came from Troop A, where Trooper Wild-

ridge was stationed. In 1972 the special Attica commission, headed by Robert McKay found that “there was much unnecessary shooting” in the retaking of the maximum-security facility.

Bernard S. Meyer is expected in a few days to complete his report on how the Attica prosecution has been handled. Mr. Meyer, a former State Supreme Court justice, was appointed after Anthony G. Simonetti, the chief Attica prosecutor, was accused by Malcolm H. Bell, one of his former assistants, of covering up possible crimes by law enforcement officers.