

1 somebody hadn't accidentally shorted 69

2 you because if you sat down and the utensils weren't  
3 there, you are hurting because you have to come up  
4 with a spoon or form or knife, whatever is missing.

5 Q Is it hard to come up with a spoon, fork  
6 or knife at Attica?

7 A If it isn't there, it's hard to come up  
8 with.

9 Q After breakfast, what would you do? You  
10 finish your breakfast about what hour?

11 A Around 7:30, between ten to 8:00. It always  
12 varied because they would be running the galleries  
13 or maybe they was late tallying the count. We would  
14 get back to our cells.

15 Q How would you get back?

16 A Line up, march back to the cells and lock  
17 in again. And stay locked in various times until  
18 8:00, a quarter after.

19 Then they would let you out for your par-  
20 ticular job assignment.

21 Q How would you go to your job assignment?

22 A Usually all the men that work on the same  
23 assignment, they will be put in adjoining cells so  
24 this way, like the hospital where I worked last, they  
25 will open 20 cells who work in the hospital and we

1 would all line up according to height

70

2 and march to the hospital.

3 Q How long would you work at your job in the  
4 morning?

5 A We would--maybe 8:30 we would get there.  
6 Between 8:00 and 8:30. And we would work until around  
7 11:00 or ten after.

8 And then we would--they would say going  
9 back, time to line up. We would line up and march back  
10 to our cells again.

11 Q How long, what would happen to you then when  
12 you marched back to your cells?

13 A They would march us back, lock in again for  
14 the noon count. They would have to get ready for noon  
15 count. Between 25 after 11:00 and a quarter of 12:00.

16 Q In the summer, you would be allowed out in  
17 the yard during this period, if you wanted?

18 A Not before lunch. It would be right after  
19 lunch. The summer schedule there would be two periods  
20 where you would be out in the yard for 15 or 20 minutes  
21 directly after meals prior to going to your job assign-  
22 ment.

23 Q Getting back to the regular schedule, you  
24 would be marched to lunch at what hour?

25 A They would run the count. Then they would

1 tally it and it would be usually, noon, 71  
2 a bell would ring signifying the count was all right  
3 and they would start the running of the galleries  
4 again, opening the cells up and lining up according  
5 to height.

6 Q Was lunch the big meal of the day at Attica,  
7 generally?

8 A Yes, it was usually the largest meal. It  
9 was the best meal, if there was one.

10 And you would line up then and we would all  
11 march, it would be around 12:00 or ten after 12:00  
12 and go to the mess hall, usually, to eat.

13 It would be 12:30, maybe 12:40 and we would  
14 line up and march back to our cells and lock in  
15 again.

16 Q How long would you stay locked in?

17 A Until they called your particular group to  
18 go to work again. It would be approximately 1:00,  
19 ten after.

20 And they would open up, like where I worked  
21 at the hospital, they would open the cells up again.  
22 And you would line up according to height and march  
23 to the hospital.

24 Q How long would you remain at work then?

25 A You would work until 3:00 or--between a

1 quarter of 3:00 and a quarter after.

72

2 It varied then, too.

3 Then they would tell you to line up and you  
4 would line up again and you march back to your cell  
5 block.

6 Q Then what?

7 A This time I worked in C-block and they had  
8 a closed cell system. You had to get your water for  
9 the night, your hot water and you would water up and if  
10 you wanted to, you could go to the yard until a little  
11 after 4:00.

12 Q What do you mean you would water up and  
13 have to get your water for the night?

14 A Well, the cells, you don't have any hot  
15 water. If you want to shave or wash your clothes  
16 or wash yourself, wash your body, clean up, you had  
17 to get your hot water at 3:00 o'clock. This is the  
18 only time you could get it.

19 Q How, physically, would you get the hot  
20 water?

21 A They sell these plastic buckets in the  
22 commissary. I believe they are regular sized plastic  
23 buckets and you get one or two of those and you go  
24 down this water room and fill up your bucket with water  
25 and take it back to your cell.

1 Q Would that be the only hot

73

2 water that you would have for the whole day except  
3 on your day to go to showers?

4 A Right. This had to suffice until you got  
5 out again.

6 Q You said you would get your water and then  
7 if you wanted to go in the yard, you would go in the  
8 yard?

9 A It was optional. You could go to the yard  
10 or you could lock in your cell.

11 Q If you chose to go to the yard, what would  
12 you do?

13 A You could walk around the yard. They have  
14 sports. In the fall they have football. In the  
15 winter they have volleyball. The spring they had  
16 baseball. They had one handball court. Or you could  
17 play checkers or cards.

18 Q Did you go to the yard much?

19 A Not too much.

20 (Continued on page 74.)  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 Q Did you go to the yard often?

74

2 A No, not myself. I didn't go to the yard very  
3 often.

4 Q If you did not go to the yard, yyou would be  
5 locked in your cell from what hour?

6 A Usually I would be around twenty after 3:00,  
7 3:30 I would lock in for the evening.

8 Q Didn't you go to supper?

9 A No. Supper was optional and I usually passed  
10 on supper.

11 Q Were you unique in that respect?

12 A No. I would say supper, they used to use  
13 one messhall because at least 50 per cent wouldn't go  
14 to supper.

15 Q What did you get to eat for supper generally?

16 A I would get visits from my wife and she would  
17 bring up packages and I got supper with her packages  
18 and what I could buy in the commissary. Items--I would  
19 buy cheese, make cheese sandwiches.

20 Q What did they serve in the dining hall, if you  
21 did go?

22 A It was usually the same coffee. A bowl of  
23 soup and possibly some cold cuts.

24 Q Do I understand that if you did not go to sup-  
25 per and you could not go to the yard, you would be locked

1 in your cell from approximately 3:30 on?

75

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q Until 7:00 the next morning?

4 A Yes, sir.

5 Q What did you do with your time?

6 A Well, at the time I used to--prior to the  
7 uprising, I done hobby work. I done leatherwork and  
8 some painting. I would read books. Listen to the ear-  
9 phones. Things like this.

10 Q Were you provided with a radio?

11 A No, not a radio. It was an earphone. A plug-  
12 in jack like.

13 Q How many channels could you get on that?

14 A It was like three channels. You would have--  
15 the first channel would be rock and roll or sports. The  
16 second channel would be TV audio and the third channel  
17 would be like Muzak or easy listening music.

18 Q Was there any television available for you?

19 A Well, there is television, but they had one  
20 TV set in each yard for all the inmates.

21 Q If you wanted to watch television, where would  
22 you have to go?

23 A You would have to go out in the yard. I went  
24 out a couple of times, you know, and you could only watch  
25 out--like I worked, so I would get out there maybe at

1 3:30 and ten after 4:00 I would have to go in 76  
2 or twenty after 4:00. So you would go out there and  
3 all that's on at that time is soap operas. They are not  
4 too interesting to watch for me, you know. And it gets  
5 cold out there. In the wintertime we used to go out  
6 and watch like a football game, you know, and prior to  
7 the uprising we would take a thermos of coffee and go  
8 out and either watch a football game or a special movie  
9 or something, and see what was going on, but it gets  
10 pretty cold out there, sitting out in the cold watching  
11 TV.

12 Q This would be in the yard time you talked about  
13 that you could watch TV?

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q How late could you keep your lights on?

16 A The electricity was shut off at 11:00 o'clock.

17 Q So that, from approximately 3:30 to 11:00  
18 o'clock you would be in your cell with your lights on,  
19 able to do hobby work or reading?

20 A Right.

21 Q And was there a time after which you were not  
22 supposed to talk?

23 A At 8:00 o'clock they rang a bell which meant  
24 you weren't allowed to converse with anybody else. So,  
25 you had--everybody was quiet then.



1 Q How did you converse with other inmates 77  
2 when you were locked in your cell? Each person is in  
3 his own cell, I take it?

4 A Right. It's all separate. In C block you  
5 have a real small window you look out of the cell. You  
6 just holler out, if you want to get a hold of somebody,  
7 you know. Holler out their name and maybe they will  
8 hear you and come to the door and you talk for a couple  
9 minutes. Some of the other blocks, A, D and B have  
10 what they call open cells. One side, one of the walls  
11 is all bars.

12 In other words, the whole cell, the front of  
13 the cell is just bars, so it's a little easier on them,  
14 but you can't see the man.

15 Q I take it that the sides of all of the cells  
16 are solid walls, am I correct?

17 A Right.

18 Q The difference between the types of cells in C  
19 block and A, B and D blocks is that in the case of A,  
20 B and D blocks there were bars in front?

21 A Right.

22 Q In the case of C, there is a little window?

23 A A solid door with a little window in it.

24 Q You have more privacy in C block?

25 A Well, not only that. C block is like a prefer-

1            ential block for an inmate to get into, because        78  
2            in C block there is more privacy.    The door is--like if  
3            you want a little quiet, you've got it for reading.    Or  
4            if you play a musical instrument, you won't be disturb-  
5            ing everybody and also it's got its own radiator and a  
6            window that looks out on the yard.    This is a premium  
7            because the other galleries, the windows are across the  
8            hall from you.

9                            As the steam heat comes on, it cooks you one  
10            night and freezes you the next.    It's pretty bad, so  
11            at least when you have a window and a radiator, you can  
12            regulate your heat.

13                          Q    Did you ever compute how many hours you would  
14            roughly spend in your cell each day?

15                          A    I would go 16--if you count all the little times  
16            you had to go back for the counts, you would go in maybe  
17            15, 20 minutes for each count.    You could go as high as  
18            18 hours, easy.

19                          Q    If you didn't take yard?

20                          A    If you didn't take yard, you could be in 18  
21            hours a day.

22                          Q    How did this affect you, this routine over two  
23            and a half years?

24                          A    It gets kind of--I don't know, it's like--you  
25            just get into a rhythm and you just do the time, that's

1 all. You get used to it and you keep doing the 79  
2 time. Because you know, one of these days you'll get  
3 out, that's all you can do.

4 Q What about your jobs, what did you do in your  
5 inst job at Attica?

6 A We worked in the silk screen area. This---they  
7 made the road signs for like the Thruways, these great,  
8 large green road signs, stop signs, curve signs, all  
9 these type of signs for the state. We made these up at  
10 the silk screen shop.

11 Q What did you get paid?

12 A A nickel a day.

13 Q Did you--how many hours a day did you work?

14 A About four and a half.

15 Q Did you learn a trade?

16 A No.

17 Q Why not?

18 A The silk screen, after I got into it, I was  
19 reading some books on it. It's all a hand-method. They  
20 do it all by hand. They have the labor available, so  
21 they just use all hand processing. And anybody can  
22 pull a squeegee over and make the sign. It's all hand  
23 work. And there really isn't nothing you can learn. It's  
24 antequated. The whole system has changed now.

25 Q After your job in silk screening, where did

1 you work?

80

2 A I requested a transfer and went to the print  
3 shop. This was in the same area. It was in the school.  
4 I went to work in the print shop.

5 Q What did you do there?

6 A I was running a printing press or compositing  
7 type. This kind of work.

8 Q Did you learn a trade there?

9 A No. They have no--no Linotype or any modern  
10 things. This is the old method Guttenberg had. You  
11 set the type by hand and this is what we did.

12 Q What did you get paid at the print shop?

13 A Started out at a nickel a day and they had a  
14 strike over in B block and at this time they changed the  
15 pay scale and it went up to a quarter a day.

16 Q You say they had a strike, you mean the in-  
17 mates?

18 A Yes, the inmates in B block that worked in the  
19 metal shop had a strike that they were protesting because  
20 of their work in the metal shop.

21 Q Incidentally, what was your trade before you  
22 entered prison?

23 A I was doing factory work. Metal work. Machine  
24 work is what I was doing.

25 Q Was there some reason that you did not ask to

---

1 be assigned to the metal shops since you had been in 81  
2 that trade before?

3 A Yes. When I was over in the reception com-  
4 pany, I found out that the B block or the metal shop area  
5 was notorious for what they call bandits. These homo-  
6 sexuals. They try to make people into homosexuals and  
7 everything; so I just stayed away from the whole area. I  
8 didn't want nothing to do with it.

9 Q You say that after the strike your pay scale  
10 went up to 25 cents?

11 A Yes, sir.

12 Q How did you get the jobs? Do you ask for a  
13 particular job?

14 A You ask and--you find out possibly through  
15 inmate rumors that there is a job coming open and after  
16 I was in the print shop, I wanted this job in the identi-  
17 fication office. So, I put in a tab and went to the  
18 law library, which is by the identification office, and  
19 went and talked to the officer, and I put in a slip for  
20 it, and he went and said that he would like to have me  
21 for the job. You got to go see the officer or talk to  
22 him.

23 Q What did you get paid when you book a job in  
24 the identification unit?

25 A That was 80 cents a day.

1 Q Was that one of the best paid jobs in 82  
2 the institution?

3 A Yes, it was. That's the highest rate right  
4 there. It takes you like two years and you could be up  
5 to a dollar a day. It's the best job in the institution.

6 Q You said you put in a tab. What do you mean by  
7 put in a tab?

8 A Everything you want in the institution, you  
9 write a tab for. You write a little slip like if you  
10 like to talk with the chaplain or something or talk with  
11 somebody, you write it out on a slip of paper and drop  
12 it in the mailbox.

13 Q You said before, Mr. Jackson, that when you  
14 came to Attica you had to buy your water bucket and you  
15 mentioned also that you supplemented your diet by buying  
16 things at the commissary.

17 Can you tell me whether you felt you were pro-  
18 vided with all the necessaries by the institution?

19 A Prior to the uprising, you had to buy your  
20 toothpaste. You had to buy your own soap. You had to  
21 buy your laundry soap. If you wanted deodorant, you had  
22 to buy that. If you needed a bucket, you had to buy  
23 that. They provided you with a towel when you went in  
24 there, about this size. It wasn't even a Canon towel.

25 Q Could you hold your hands up?

1 10

2 A About here. It's a small white towel 83  
3 and it isn't even a Canon towel, won't even absorb. You  
4 have to buy all these items. It's expensive to live in  
5 a prison.

6 Q What about toilet paper?

7 A They provided you with a roll every five weeks.

8 Q Did you supplement that in some way?

9 A You had to. If you don't, you are hurting.

10 Q So you bought toilet paper, also?

11 A Yes, I had to.

12 Q I have here a commissary price list of June  
13 1971. I don't know whether it can show on the screen.  
14 Just going over some of the items that were sold, you  
15 could buy coffee. You talked about the fact that coffee  
16 was not well brewed. Would you buy coffee there?

17 A Yes. I would either buy coffee in the commis-  
18 sary or I would have my mother bring it up in the  
19 packages.

20 Q On this price list it refers to a 10-ounce jar  
21 of coffee, \$1.37. You also could buy soup there?

22 A Yes, sir.

23 Q And other things that would have to be heated?

24 A Yes. You could buy soups. They had like--  
25 there was one kind of a rice you could get and you could,  
you know, could buy

1 cans of this spaghetti all prepared. Things 84

2 like this. You would have to heat them to eat them.

3 Q What were you provided with to heat these foods  
4 that the prison sold at the commissary?

5 A Nothing.

6 Q How, in fact, did inmates heat the coffee and  
7 the soups and the other foods that were bought at the  
8 institution?

9 A Well, almost everybody--I will say 75 per cent  
10 of the inmates there have what is referred to as a drop-  
11 per. They heat up everything with this.

12 Q A dropper is not legal, am I correct?

13 A No, this is contraband. Illegal heating device.

14 Q There is no heating utensil that's legal at  
15 Attica, am I correct?

16 A No, nothing like that is legal.

17 Q How are you--if you want to abide by the rules  
18 on the book, how are you supposed to heat things that  
19 they serve in the commissary--that they sell in the com-  
20 missary?

21 A I don't know. They never told me about that.  
22 They sell them there. If you want them, you can buy them.  
23 And you figure out how to heat them.

24 Q You talked about a dropper, an illegal heating  
25 device. How are those made?



1 A I made one last night. 85

2 Q You made one last night at our request?

3 A Right. This is commonly referred to as a  
4 dropper.

5 MR. LIMAN: Get the camera on it close  
6 so it can be explained.

7 A You use two razor blades and you put sticks or  
8 matchsticks between it, wrap string around it or thread.  
9 You hook your wires to it. You just get a piece of lamp  
10 cord and what we always used to use is paper clips. You  
11 put some tape around them. You drop it into the water  
12 and plug in these two paper clips, and it works by  
13 electrolysis.

14 The water acts as a conductor and this is how  
15 you make hot water.

16 Q What would you plug the two paper clips into?

17 A You get what they call these female clips.  
18 You plus out your light bulb, you drop this in the  
19 water and plug these in one at a time, because they will  
20 shock you if you get them both in at the same time.

21 Q You said about 75 per cent of the inmates used  
22 a device like this. Was the device, in fact, tolerated  
23 at the institution?

24 A It depended on who the officer was, if he found  
25 it. Some officers would walk right by your cell and it's

1 in the water and its bubbling away and he wouldn't 86  
2 say nothing. The next one would come down and have  
3 him hit your door and take it away from you and you  
4 could be keeplocked for a few days.

5 Q Would it depend, also, on who the inmate was?

6 A Definitely. If you are what they considered,  
7 you know, you didn't bother nobody, they would let it  
8 slide a little more. But if you were--spoke out against  
9 them and all, they got a perfect bust then, because this  
10 is an illegal device and they got you there.

11 Q In talking about things you had to buy at  
12 Attica, what did you do about shaving?

13 A Well, we had to buy our own razor blades. You  
14 are required to shave and you had to buy or have your  
15 razor blades sent in.

16 Q What about lather?

17 A Use hand soap or you could buy brushless shav-  
18 ing cream at the commissary. They would sell all the  
19 items at the commissary like that.

20 Q In fact, have there been changes in this since  
21 the uprising?

22 A Yes. Since the uprising, now they provided  
23 one of these lather machines like it is in a barbershop,  
24 at the end of the gallery, and they will give you razor  
25 blades and they will give you toothpaste now. They give

1 you toothpaste, toilet paper and these other 87  
2 items, soap, on request now.

3 Q And how often were you granted the privilege  
4 of taking a shower?

5 A Nearly every place in the prison it's one  
6 shower a day.

7 Q One shower a day?

8 A Excuse me. One shower a week. And then when  
9 you moved to a different job, this identification job,  
10 they changed it and they let me have two showers a  
11 week. But nearly like the whole metal shop, the  
12 school, all of those was, you know, unchanged and they  
13 got one shower a week.

14 Q There were some jobs where there was a shower  
15 on location. In those instances how frequently could you  
16 take a shower?

17 A E block, they would let them have showers there.  
18 It was nearly every night or when they needed one.

19 Q But in the general population, if you were  
20 not in a place in which there was a shower on the job,  
21 at your job location, you would be restricted at that  
22 time to one shower--

23 A A week. You would have to march with the com-  
24 pany and go to the shower room.

25 Q Where did inmates get the money from to buy

1 these things which you have described as neces- 88  
2 saries, prior to September: shaving cream, razor  
3 blades, additional foodstuffs, toilet paper, toothpaste,  
4 et cetera?

5 A Well, like myself, I got money from home in  
6 packages and I had--like I say, I had the highest paying  
7 job in the institution.

8 Q With the highest paying job in the institution,  
9 could you afford to buy what you needed or did you have  
10 to supplement it from hom?

11 A My wife sent me money. I sent for books or  
12 things I wanted to read, because the library was--there  
13 was nothing there.

14 Q Did you say before how often you got the toilet  
15 paper?

16 A Once every five weeks.

17 Q Now, how did you keep in touch with home?

18 A I would write home. The institution provided one  
19 letterhead per week with postage paid and this one was  
20 free and if you wanted to send any other letters, you  
21 had to buy postage, too. You used to buy four, five  
22 dollars worth of postage at a time, so you had sufficient  
23 postage. If you don't have the money to send the letters,  
24 you don't mail your letters out.

25 Q What about visiting?

1           A     I was getting visits once a month.           89

2     Some people, you can get them up to five times a month,  
3     but the visits are--well, it's set up like a U-shape.  
4     The inmates are on the outside of the U and the visitors  
5     are on the inside of the U. There is a wire mesh that's  
6     about maybe six, seven foot high, dividing the two parts  
7     and I have two children and during the entire time that I  
8     was in Attica or in prison, I didn't have any children  
9     visit me because if they want to see an animal, they  
10    could go to a zoo. You couldn't even touch them. The  
11    gate is in the way, and how are your children going to  
12    understand?

13                My children at the time were three and four  
14    years old and to try to explain to them why I am in a  
15    cage, I just couldn't do it. So, I never seen them  
16    during this entire time.

17           Q     You have been painting word pictures of Attica,  
18    Mr. Jackson. I think it would probably be useful at  
19    this time if we could show a movie that the Commission  
20    made under the supervision of Judge Willis, who is the  
21    First Deputy General Counsel, and who is sitting on my  
22    left, and Judge Willis can describe and narrate the  
23    movie.

24                I refer to Charles Willis as Judge Willis be-  
25    cause that was his position before he joined the Com-

1 mission and took over supervisory responsibili- 90  
2 ties.

3 MR. MC KAY: Before we do that, I  
4 wonder if it wouldn't be appropriate to introduce  
5 Mr. Henix, who has now come.

6 Is this microphone live?

7 MR. LIMAN: Yes.

8 MR. MC KAY: Mr. Amos Henix, who has  
9 now made it here, gives us 100 per cent attendance  
10 by all members of the Commission and we are glad to  
11 welcome you, Amos.

12 MR. HENIX: I am glad to be here.  
13 Late, but I am here.

14 JUDGE WILLIS: Perhaps we should be-  
15 gin by telling what Attica is before we show the  
16 film.

17 Prisons are often remote places easily  
18 ignored. The Attica Correctional Facility lies  
19 next to the Village of Attica in rural Wyoming  
20 County.

21 The principal industry of this village  
22 is the correctional facility. Few of us have seen  
23 a prison or correctional facility close up. We  
24 tend to imagine prisons as we have seen them in film.  
25

1                   To provide a basic understanding of 91  
2 what Attica is, we have made some film of our own.

3                   Attica does not attract tourists. For  
4 those who must come here to visit inmates, the journey  
5 to the main gate is long and expensive. No bus or  
6 train or plane runs to Attics.

7                   The walls completely surrounding Attica are  
8 30 feet high. They are sunk 12 feet below the ground,  
9 built of stone blocks overlaid with concrete. But  
10 they do not directly enclose inmates.

11                  Behind the wall is a wire fence. Behind  
12 the fence, the walls of the cell blocks. And with-  
13 in the blocks, the barred cells, where inmates spend  
14 most of their time.

15                  A prison is a series of boxes within boxes.  
16 The walls are the outermost box. Across a strip of  
17 empty green lawn behind the wall is the administra-  
18 tion building, the prison's operational center,  
19 separated from the prison proper, that lies beyond  
20 a series of gates.

21                  It is part of prison lore that the former  
22 inmates finds it hard to learn that, on the outside,  
23 no one opens doors for him. Inside, a guard must  
24 unlock, open, shut and lock these doors and gates  
25 every time a person or group passes through.

1                   Between the administrative of                   92  
2                   fices and the prison itself is the visiting room,  
3                   where an inmate may see visitors only once a week  
4                   on any day of the week. Inmates and visitors speak  
5                   to each other, under the surveillance of a guard,  
6                   through heavy wire mesh. Inmates are stripped and  
7                   searched before and after each visit.

8                   Beyond the administrative area begins a  
9                   series of electric gates that whirr open and shut  
10                  as one passes through them deeper into the tight se-  
11                  curity of the inner prison. By the time one has  
12                  passed through all of them, seven gates in all have  
13                  sealed the path back to the main gate in the outer  
14                  wall and one more mechanical gate must open to al-  
15                  low entrance to A-block, one of the four largest  
16                  residential units.

17                 We have now entered the third of the series  
18                 of boxes. The first sight is the block's office  
19                 that manages the daily life of its occupants.

20                 These posts are manned by uniformed of-  
21                 ficers and clerks who are inmates--inmates who hold  
22                 one of the most sought-after jobs in the prison.

23                 A tier of cells is a prison neighborhood,  
24                 a street of close acquaintances.

25                 There are three types of cells in Attica.

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1 The most common is five by eight feet, with 93  
2 blank walls on three sides and a barred sliding  
3 gate. The closest window is across the corridor.

4 For all inmates, the cell is central to  
5 life. They spend from sixteen to twenty-three  
6 hours per day every day in these cubicles.

7 One of the residential cell blocks contains  
8 a different type of cell, no larger, but with a win-  
9 dow cut into the back wall, providing a view for the  
10 inmate to contemplate. These cells have solid doors,  
11 not barred gates, providing a greater degree of pri-  
12 vacy.

13 In E-block the cells have hinged doors and  
14 are almost like private rooms. This block houses  
15 an experimental prison program--the Division of  
16 Vocational Rehabilitation--financed by federal funds,  
17 which will be described in detail later in these hear-  
18 ings.

19 When inmates move from place to place  
20 throughout the prison, they march informally, two by  
21 two in companies guarded by correction officers.  
22 Most inmates walking to personal appointments can  
23 move only under guard.

24 Twice a week, the companies of inmates are  
25 marched to a central shower room. Before the events

1 of September 1971, inmates bathed once 94  
2 a week. Since then a one hundred per cent improve-  
3 ment has been made--showers twice a week.

4 Three times a day the inmate companies  
5 march to one of two messhalls. Stools and tables  
6 are fixed to the floor. The table settings are  
7 simple: the sugar shakers are a recent innovation,  
8 the spoons, the only cutlery at most meals, are  
9 equivalent to a pass for leaving the messhall--no  
10 one may leave without turning in a spoon.

11 When inmates apply for medical attention,  
12 they pass through the dispensary for preliminary  
13 diagnosis. If medical personnel determine nothing  
14 more elaborate is required, simple medications, such  
15 as aspirin, laxatives and tranquilizers are ad-  
16 ministered on the spot. Attica's medical services  
17 will be described fully in the course of these hear-  
18 ings.

19 Most inmates hold jobs. Some of them, such  
20 as the laundry jobs, serve Attica and its population--  
21 this is a self-contained society in many respects.  
22 This huge industrial plant washes, dries and presses  
23 the clothing and linen of the entire institution from  
24 the plainest cells to the superintendent's house.

25 About 15 per cent of the inmate population

1 works in the metal shops. These are really 95  
2 huge factories with giant machines for metal fabri-  
3 cation. They can take sheets and bars of metal and  
4 punch, bend and well them into almost any configura-  
5 tion. The shops are set up to make lockers and  
6 filing cabinets for state institutions.

7 A few inmates perform automotive taks in  
8 the prison garage, which serves two purposes: it  
9 maintains the prison's own vehicles and also provides  
10 a limited training program for inmates wishing to  
11 acquire automotive skills. Inmates working here hav  
12 access on the job to shower and toilet facilities,  
13 functional if not exactly private.

14 When work is done, recreation means the  
15 yard during specified periods. There are four of  
16 these yards in the space enclosed by the four largest  
17 cell blocks and no matter what the reason, they are  
18 the only recreational spaces, the only spaces for  
19 socialization among the inmates.

20 The surface of the yard is part-concrete,  
21 part-bare earth and part-grass. Two of the yards  
22 are equipped with some creational equipment. There  
23 are basketball hopps, a volley ball net, a concrete  
24 pylon that serves as a handball court, which was built  
25 by inmates. There are benches and tables for checkers

1 and chess. All exercise and outing take 96  
2 place in these yards.

3 There is television, too, in the recrea-  
4 tion program, but the sets are mounted in the open  
5 air and may be watched only during the daylight  
6 hours, regardless of the outside temperature,  
7 which drops below zero during the winter.

8 Prison ingenuity is well known and even  
9 through prisoners locked in their cells cannot see  
10 each other, some find ways to share a game.

11 We have seen a glimpse of Attica in these  
12 pictures, but as our presentation proceeds, we will  
13 gain much greater insight into prison life.

14 All of the aspects of prison life that the  
15 film touched on briefly will be presented in detail.  
16 What will emerge from our presentation, therefore,  
17 is not only a picture of the events at Attica in  
18 September 1971, but also an intimate look at what  
19 prison life is like and how prisons are run.

20 Thank you.

21 BY MR. LIMAN:

22 Q Mr. Jackson, in that film that we saw, there  
23 was a glimpse of some hands through the bars. Did you  
24 see that?

25 A Yes, sir.

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1 Q Tell everybody what that is, because 97  
2 it was very hard to view it on this film.

3 A Many times if you have two adjoining cells,  
4 men will go to extremes to get adjoining cells and en-  
5 joy like cards or chess. What they will do, they will  
6 set it out there, even though they can't see each other,  
7 they will play a game of cards or chess. This is their  
8 activity in the evening. Something to do, and it's a  
9 recreation.

10 Q You would see the hands outside the cells?

11 A Right.

12 Q What about checkers, how are checkers played  
13 at night during these hours that you are locked in the  
14 cells?

15 A I have seen men play them like maybe five or  
16 six cells apart. They will have two checkerboards.  
17 One checkerboard in each cell. The man will holler like  
18 "Queen on knight." The other guy will holler back, and  
19 they both are playing the checker game.

20 Q They have a numbered checkerboard?

21 A Right. This way they can make their moves.  
22 This is how they have the chess games.

23 Q What about mirrors as a way of seeing what's  
24 going on in the--down the gallery. You can only look  
25 out in front in C-block. Otherwise, you don't have full

1 vision. How would people look to see what was 98  
2 happening?

3 A The best way is--you got a mirror, but this  
4 here they complain about the mirror sticking out, so  
5 you break one and you get a little piece and you stick  
6 it out there and you can look--I can look at the mirror  
7 here and you can see what's going on down the hallway,  
8 who is out there, who is talking, what's going on, be-  
9 cause you can't see out and especially in C-block, your  
10 restriction--your vision is restricted to an area like  
11 this (indicating); so you can only see like maybe 10  
12 cells across the hall.

13 You don't know what's going on, so you use a  
14 piece of mirror. You can see when the mailman is coming  
15 by, when the count man is coming by.

16 Q Where did you get the mirrors from?

17 A You buy them from the prison commissary.

18 Q Is there a lot of hustling going on at Attics  
19 for people who can't get money from home and whose jobs  
20 pay the lower pay scales?

21 A Oh, yes. You have gambling or--some guys, like  
22 a man works in the laundry, he makes money doing this. A  
23 man who may be does hobby work or something. He can  
24 sell or trade for cigarettes. Any items. Possibly like  
25 a watch is sold for cigarettes. Or a wallet is sold for

1 cigarettes. This is the medium of exchange. 99

2 It's in cigarettes.

3 MR. LIMAN: I see we're coming toward  
4 the lunch recess, and I think, Dean McKay, if it  
5 is agreeable to you, that we could stop Mr.  
6 Jackson's testimony now and resume after the recess.

7 MR. MC KAY: We will resume the testi-  
8 mony of Jackson after the lunch recess at 2:00  
9 o'clock.

10 Thank you.

11 (Time noted: 12:30 p.m.)

12  
13 AFTERNOON SESSION

14 2:00 p.m.

15  
16 MR. MC KAY: This is the afternoon  
17 session of the first day of the hearings of the  
18 Attica Commission. We resume continuing the testi-  
19 mony of Mr. William Jackson.

20 W I L L I A M J A C K S O N, resumed the stand  
21 and testified further as follows:

22 MR. LIMAN: I should say that on my  
23 left is Charles Willis and on my right is Stephen  
24 Rosenfeld, two of my colleagues. Over on the  
25