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Trooper's bloodied body described by detective

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NEW BRUNSWICK — A state police detective yesterday testified at the trial of JoAnne Chesimard that he removed the blood-stained equipment of slain trooper Werner Foerster after his body was brought to Middlesex General Hospital.

Mrs. Chesimard, 29, is accused of Foerster's murder and the attempted murder of Trooper James Harper on the East Brunswick stretch of the N.J. Turnpike on May 2, 1973. She is also accused of the felony murder of James Costan Jr., one of her companions on the night of the killings.

Det. James Challender said he observed the body of Foerster, noting "his entire front body was splattered with blood, his face was covered with dried blood. His right chest was totally saturated with blood and blood was matted in his hair," he said.

"There was a protrusion on the top of his head, a hole on his neck, and a cut or laceration under the throat area," Challender said in the most dramatic testimony of the day.

Challender said he removed a belt, holster and cross strap, handcuffs, whistle, identification tag, necktie and tie tack from the trooper's bloodied body.

He said the items were placed in brown paper bags after being wrapped in white paper wrappings to preserve them for laboratory testing.

Challender also testified that he re-

ceived the clothing taken from Mrs. Chesimard, who was also taken to the hospital for treatment of wounds suffered in the shooting. He identified the clothing as a pair of brown shoes, brown socks, black slacks, a red shirt, a black body shirt, and purple panties.

The witness said the shoes, socks, pants, and shirt appeared to have blood on them. Challender also identified Mrs. Chesimard as the wounded black woman whom he observed in the hospital emergency ward.

Under cross-examination by defense Attorney William Kunstler, the detective said there was blood on her face that night. "Her eyes were open and she just stared when I asked her name and address," he said.

Challender said it "was obvious" that she was the only live persons in custody when he was sent to the hospital with the primary responsibility of interviewing Harper. A co-defendant, Clark Squire, was not apprehended until the following day.

The detective said Harper was questioned as he lay on a hospital bed. "He was pale, appearing traumatized or in shock," Challender said during the direct questioning by First Assistant Prosecutor Edward J. Barone.

"He was staring into space, grimacing. He frequently closed his eyes," Challender said of the initial 45 minute interview with the wounded trooper.

Challender, who said he was a good friend of Harper's, testified that he had a

difficult time hearing his account of the shootings.

Kunstler hammered away at Challender's account of the Harper interview, particularly in areas where the detective's version differed from Harper's own testimony at the trial.

In particular, Challender said that Harper described Mrs. Chesimard reaching into her purse while the trooper himself conceded that he did not see her purse.

Challender also quoted Harper as saying he placed his hand on his service revolver when he directed her to remove her hand from the purse. Harper, in his testimony, said he did not touch his weapon until he retreated behind his unmarked cruiser after being wounded.

"He said he sensed he was going to be shot and the black female made a sudden move," Challender said. "He told me the black female fired the gun once, the projectile striking him in the left shoulder."

Harper said he did not actually see Mrs. Chesimard fire the shot although he testified that Costan, sitting in the rear seat, had heeded his command to put his hands in view. The shooting erupted moments after Foerster held up an ammunition clip, allegedly confiscated from Squire, who was the driver of the car and who later was seen struggling with the trooper as Harper exchanged shots with Mrs. Chesimard and Costan, both of whom had exited the vehicle.