

New Judge Named for Soledad Brothers Trial

Superior Court Judge S. Lee Vavuris was named yesterday as the fifth judge to hear the Soledad Brothers murder trial.

The trial of the two surviving Soledad Brothers, John Cluchette and Fleeta Drumgo, on charges of murdering a Soledad prison correctional officer in January 1970, is set to begin September 20.

But four judges have been disqualified and the trial date repeatedly reset during the long intricate court maneuvers in the case.

It was not immediately known if defense attorneys would challenge Vavuris on grounds of bias as they did

the other four judges, or if the lawyers would seek a delay as a result of the death of the third Soledad Brother, George Jackson, in an alleged escape attempt at San Quentin August 21.

Vavuris, 58, was appointed to the Municipal Court here in 1966 by Governor Edmund Brown, and elevated to the Superior Court in February of this year.

Presiding Judge Francis McCarty yesterday named him to hear the Soledad Brothers case in a specially-built courtroom that features a bulletproof screen separating spectators from the defendants and court officials.