

Western and Red Press Differ on Angela Verdict

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Washington

The acquittal of Angela Davis touched off a wave of praise for American justice in Western Europe yesterday while Soviet bloc nations declared that charges against her represented a frame-up too offensive to be accepted by even an all-white jury.

While Western European comments saw the verdict as proof that United States courts will not condemn out of hand persons who are black, militant or both, the Communist press came close to claiming credit for the verdict.

The implication was that the vast propaganda effort mounted by the Communist press on Miss Davis' behalf had helped foil officially sanctioned efforts in the United States to make her the victim of a rigged trial.

BRITAIN

Britain's morning newspapers prominently displayed accounts of Miss Davis' acquittal, with several photographs of her embracing a friend in court.

Most comments centered on the verdict as disproving assumptions that a controversial black cannot get a fair trial from all-white jurors in a middle class area.

Rome's biggest newspaper, the *Messaggero*, called the acquittal a "reconfirmation of the democratic validity of the most sacred institution" in America.

Expressen of Stockholm, the largest newspaper in

Scandinavia, concluded that all those who argued that a black Communist could not get justice before an American court had been proven wrong.

TRIUMPH

In Soviet bloc countries — where government propaganda had transformed Miss Davis into a folk hero and where the public had been deluged with posters, public rallies and lapel buttons emphasizing the theme "Free Angela Davis" — the acquittal was described as a great triumph for the progressive peoples of the world against racism and imperialism.

The Soviet government news agency Tass said the verdict came "in the face of unsupportable charges" rejected "even (by) the carefully selected jury, which did not include a single Negro or a poor man."

"The persecution of Angela Davis touched off a wave of public anger in the United States and throughout the world, and gave rise to a mass movement for her release," Tass said in a dispatch from New York. "This struggle of the people helped wrest Angela from the hands of reaction. Now freed, Angela continues her fight."

DELAY

The Soviet media, which have reported extensively on Miss Davis in the past, delayed news of her acquittal for several hours. The jury's decision was not reported in yesterday morning's papers

though it was announced well before their final deadlines.

East Germany's newspapers promptly reported the verdict, however, and the party newspaper *Neues Deutschland* said it was "a victory of the truth over the lie."

The paper said Miss Davis' acquittal was made possible "because millions throughout the world came out in time in support of Angela Davis and because the threads of the racist, anti-Communist plot was specifically made clear for all to see."

The East German regime had engaged in elaborate negotiations with the U.S. government to enable the foreign editor of the party paper to visit San Jose, Calif., and report on part of the trial. The two countries have no diplomatic relations.

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