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Civic Center

Marin to Ease Tight Security

By Jim Brewer

Security measures apparently are about to be relaxed at the Marin Civic Center, where the nationwide move toward guards and searches at the entrances to many public buildings started nearly two years ago.

Following a sometimes-bitter debate between county supervisors and security-conscious Superior Court judges, the Marin Board of Supervisors agreed yesterday to remove guards and metal detectors from civic center entrances on all but "sensitive trial days."

The decision could be reversed, however, by the judges themselves, who have the authority under state law to establish the level of security for buildings in which they hold court.

Tight security measures were established at the Marin Civic Center in August, 1970, after Superior Court Judge Harold Haley and three other persons were slain in an escape attempt by some San Quentin prisoners.

The security was further tightened after a bomb wrecked a courtroom in the civic center complex in October of that year. Since then, anyone entering the complex during normal business hours has had to pass through a metal detector, and submit to a personal search if deputies or matrons on duty saw fit.

Unless the judges decide otherwise, that will all end on July 1 as a result of yesterday's unanimous vote by supervisors to reduce the sheriff's security budget and remove the guards and metal detectors from the doors.

Yielding to strenuous arguments by the judges, however, the board agreed to re-establish the security measures on days immediately preceding and during "sensitive trials."

Those would include the coming trial of six San Quentin prisoners charged with murder in connection with the slayings of three prison guards and three inmates — including black revolutionary George Jackson — during an alleged escape attempt last year.

Calling that one a "leftover celebrity case," Judge E. Warren McGuire told the board, "I want you to realize that the courts have cer-

tain inherent powers in these matters to insure the safety of the courts."

Resisting the judges' insistence that tight security

*including county public library

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should be kept on a full-time basis, Board Chairman Peter Arrigoni observed that the Superior Court system is a state function and declared:

"I'll be damned if I'm going to vote dollars which are the responsibility of the State of California."