

Guard Off in Acquittal of Soledad Pair



JOHN CLUTCHETTE'S MOTHER OVERJOYED
Doris Maxwell exults on hearing jury's verdict
—Examiner Photos

By Harold V. Streeter

The six-months-old security barriers were down today in front of Department 21 on the third floor of the Hall of Justice.

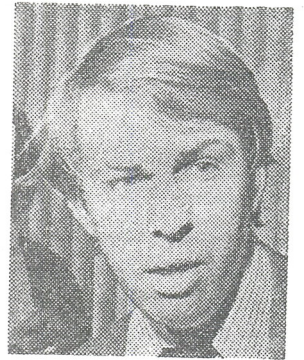
The Tac Squad's blue-uniformed men with their sidearms, their riot batons and their walkie-talkies were gone.

Only the \$15,000 bullet-resistant glass and metal barrier in the courtroom remained as a reminder of the heaviest-guarded murder trial in San Francisco's history.

It all became no longer necessary yesterday after an all-white jury found two black convicts, Fleeta Drumgo, 26, and John Clutchette, 28, not guilty of charges they helped kill a white guard, John Mills, at Soledad Prison Jan. 16, 1970.

The high-priced security stemmed directly from ramifications of the militant movement which had as its slogan "Free the Soledad Brothers."

Aug. 7, 1970, after Drumgo, Clutchette and George Jackson were at San Quentin — because the trial had been moved here from Monterey County on a change of venue — four men, including a judge, were killed in a shootout at Marin Civic Center. Authorities said it was an abortive attempt to win



JOHN CALLAHAN
"No case"

release of the accused Soledad trio.

Last Aug. 21, Jackson and five others died violently at San Quentin — slayings for which six convicts now stand accused, one of them Drumgo. Authorities said Jackson tried to escape, using a smuggled gun.

"There was no case against them," said airlines ticket agent John Callahan, one of the three men jurors.

"They (the two defendants) said 'thank you' to us but I said 'I should thank you.'

"We (the jurors) suffered through five months just to get the truth. But they suffered through two years to get justice."

"The trial was legally fair but morally unfair because there were no blacks on the jury," reacted another male juror, Harry Diethelm, a design engineer.