

# Jacksons' Father Held in Contempt at Davis Trial

NYTimes

MAY 31 1972

By EARL CALDWELL

Special to The New York Times

SAN JOSE, Calif., May 30—

The state closed its case against Angela Davis today after a surprise last-minute effort to force testimony from the father of George and Jonathan Jackson.

But rather than answer even one of the prosecutor's questions, Lester Jackson, the father, chose to accept a contempt of court citation and the risk of imprisonment.

"I have lost two sons," he told the court in a voice that was filled with emotion and barely audible. "I just don't want to take part in this proceeding."

His voice dwindled to a whisper and he said something about "my mental health."

The prosecutor Albert Harris Jr., asked Mr. Jackson if he had driven his son Jonathon, and his wife to the airport on the Aug. 1, 1970. He never answered the question.

## Slain Men Mentioned

The jury was not in the courtroom when Mr. Jackson was called to testify. He came into court accompanied by his attorney, Jack Tenner of Los Angeles and his position was outlined to the court in a chamber session that preceded his courtroom refusals.

Judge Arnason gave Mr. Jackson several opportunities to change his mind, but when he continued to refuse to answer any questions the judge cited for contempt. He was \$100.

Since the trial began here

## State Closes Case as Parent of Slain Men Refuses to Answer Any Questions

10 weeks ago, Mr. Jackson's two slain sons, Jonathan and George, have been mentioned as often as the defendant herself.

It was Jonathan, then 17 years old, who allegedly conspired with Miss Davis to smuggle guns into a Marin County courtroom, free several black convicts and take hostages who would be used later to bargain for the freedom of George Jackson.

Jonathan was killed at the Civic Center in the aftermath of the escape attempt.

George Jackson, said by the prosecution to be the focus of the courtroom raid, died at San Quentin prison last August. Prison officials said that he was shot and killed while attempting to escape.

It was never learned just what testimony Mr. Harris, the prosecutor, had hoped to elicit

from Mr. Jackson. However, the witness's lawyer said that his client would not answer any questions.

Judge Arnason said that final arguments, expected to last at least two days, would begin at 9 A.M. tomorrow.

Before he passed sentence after citing Mr. Jackson for contempt, Judge Arnason asked him if he wanted to make any statement.

"Maybe this is an old-fashioned way of doing things," judge Arnason said.

"But is there anything that I should know?"

"Because of the death of my sons. . .," Mr. Jackson began. "I hope you will understand my position. . . as a family man."

Judge Arnason said that while he recognized "full well the trauma you've been through," he could not permit him to refuse to answer proper questions. He then passed sentence, passing up incarceration in favor of the \$100 fine.

Two other rebuttal witnesses offered only brief testimony. The defense offered no rebuttal. The case now is expected to reach the jury by Friday.