

Cheers, Tears and Laughter in San Jose

The Joy Outside the

By Kevin Leary

When the "not guilty" verdict was announced at the Angela Davis trial yesterday, it was as though an electric current shot through the crowd of about 300 at the San Jose Civic Center Plaza outside the courtroom.

Stunned silence gave way to cheers, tears and laughter when the verdict reached the crowd, seconds after the jury returned its decision about 12:30 p.m.

A middle-aged woman, tears streaming down her face, stood in the middle of the pulsating crowd and cried, "This has to be the greatest moment in the history of the world. Oh God! It's just ..." then her voice choked off and someone hugged her.

ATTORNEY

When defense attorney Leo Branton Jr. came out of the courtroom the cheering, applauding crowd surged toward him, everyone trying to touch or kiss the man who had become the hero of the defense team.

He stood on the court steps with both hands raised and told the crowd: "It was your victory ... It's Angela's day."

Another roar went up when Howard Moore Jr., co-defense counsel, came out and announced "She's free. She's free."

Someone yelled "Power to the people," and the crowd took up the chant.

Then Miss Davis appeared, surrounded by a

dozen young blacks who built a wall of muscle between her and the pressing crowd. Pandemonium broke out until she stopped to speak.

'HAPPIEST'

"This is not only the happiest day of my life, but people all across the country and world who worked for

my freedom see this as an example of things to come," Miss Davis said.

"From this day on we are going to work to free every political prisoner and oppressed people around the world."

Nearby, Miss Davis' sister, Fania Jordan, laughed and cried in a moment of

emotional release before she appeared with her family in a press conference at which she denounced the Reagan administration as an example of repression and "encroaching facism."

Before the bitterness set in, Mrs. Jordan's first reaction was one of joy.

And Angela's brother, Ben



By Vincent Maggiora

The crowd pressed close to the fence to welcome Miss Davis

Court

Davis, defensive halfback for the Cleveland Browns, also reflected the family's mood: "It's beautiful, beautiful — I couldn't take the news standing up."

As Miss Davis left the crowd to appear at a press conference, the cheering and chanting in the racially mixed throng changed to a civil rights spiritual:

*"Woke up this mornin'
with my mind set on
freedom.*

*"Woke up this mornin'
with my mind set on
freedom.*

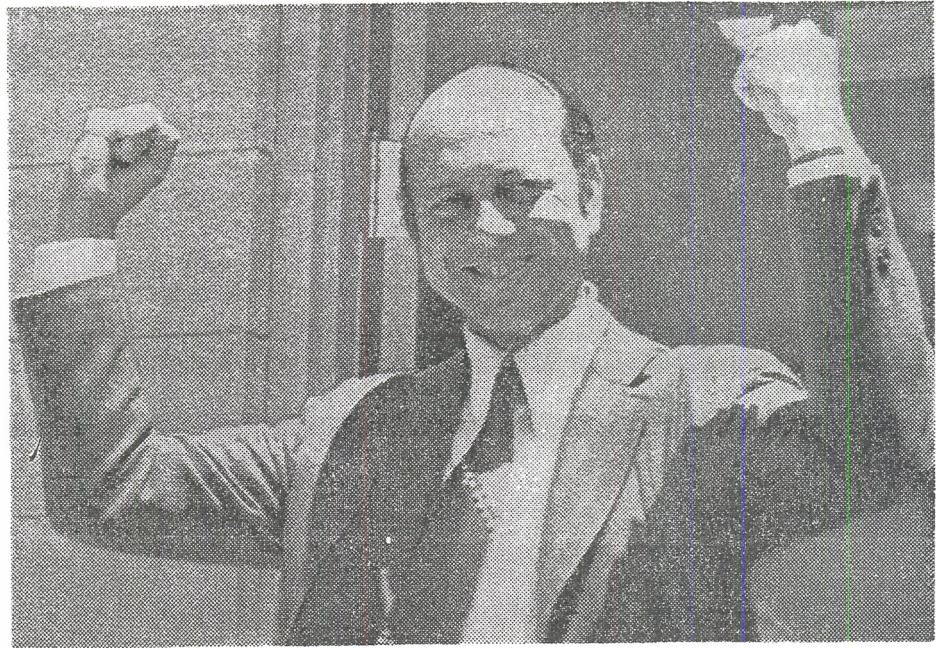
Hallelujah, Hallelujah."

After Miss Davis left, someone shouted: "If (chief prosecutor Albert) Harris comes through this crowd, we're gonna make a citizens' arrest." But the crowd was still riding a happy emotional wave.

Before she was whisked away by her security-minded bodyguards, Miss Davis spoke briefly once more to her supporters. She thanked them "for working so long and hard for my freedom." She promised "many more sweet victories for the people."

There were more cries of "Power to the People" as she stepped into the back seat of the car and left through the large cyclone gate set up by Santa Clara county authorities specifically to provide security for the trial.

A sheriff's deputy gave Miss Davis a small salute as her car passed.



AP photo

Defense attorney Leo Branton Jr. had a victory gesture after the verdict . . .



UPI photo

. . . and so did his colleague, chief defense counsel Howard Moore Jr.