

Hanigan verdict stirs call for U.S. inquiry

By JUDY DONOVAN
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The acquittal Friday of two Douglas ranchers in the 1976 beating of three Mexicans drew a demand yesterday by several local Mexican-American and religious groups for a federal investigation of the case.

The Spanish Speaking Council of the Catholic Diocese of Tucson sponsored an ecumenical prayer service yesterday in both Spanish and English in protest of the Cochise County jury decision Friday that freed suspects Tom and Pat Hanigan after a three-week trial.

Held at the plaza outside St. Augustine Cathedral, the service was attended by about

100 persons and was followed by a news conference.

Ten organizations joined a call for U.S. Justice Dept. intervention, including the diocese's Senate of Priests, the Tucson Ecumenical Council, and the Hispanic Community Ministry of the Lutheran Church.

Tucson School District One board member Raul Grijalva called the trial's outcome "racist, frontier justice" and said undocumented aliens deserve protection from attack.

Douglas City Council member Francisco Barraza said Douglas residents feel "left out and insecure" about the future of justice in Cochise County.

The Hanigan brothers and their father George, who died of a heart attack last March, were charged after three Mexican aliens said they were kidnaped, beaten, robbed, branded with irons, threatened with castration and pelted with buckshot by the Hanigans before they escaped across the border in August 1976.

Sunday night, at a meeting at the Cochise County Courthouse in Bisbee where the trial took place, more than 200 families signed a formal civil rights complaint and a demand for federal indictments of the Hanigan brothers.

Margo Cowan, Manzo director, said she will deliver the complaint to the U.S. Attorney's Office at 1 p.m. today, escorted by a motorcade of Bisbee and Tucson residents.

The Incorporated Mexican-American Government Employees urged the public yesterday to participate in a statewide boycott of Dairy Queen stores because the Hanigan family holds all the company's Arizona franchises except in Maricopa County.

Most of the angered groups pointed out that none of the jurors on the Hanigan case were Mexican-American even though a large percentage of Cochise County residents are of Mexican descent.

In Bisbee, meanwhile, an alternate juror who served on the case, Alan R. Lewis of Sierra Vista, said the evidence presented by the prosecution was not enough to convict the brothers and that he also would have voted to acquit them.

An investigator on the case, Frank Gonzales of the Cochise County Sheriff's Dept., admitted there were a number of errors in the police reports used in the trial but he said he believed there was enough evidence presented to convict the Hanigans.