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Anniversary: The Deveaux case

We are pleased to wish our founding partner **André Soulier** a happy anniversary. The ruling of acquittal of Jean-Marie Deveaux, a 27 year old butcher assistant accused of having slit the throat of his employers' daughter, was indeed issued by the Côte-d'Or Criminal Court in Dijon on September 27, 1969 after eight years of court battle and three appeals before the *Cour de Cassation* (French Supreme Court), the last two of which were lodged by two Ministers of Justice. So... 50 years ago!



Jean-Marie Deveaux



• André Soulier

This case had a considerable impact because, until then, a person who had been sent to prison but who had subsequently been cleared of all charges pursuant to a dismissal, discharge or acquittal ruling, was asked, with his innocence, to “get lost”.

Under the presidency of Georges Pompidou, who had succeeded General De Gaulle two years earlier, René Pleven, a great Resistance fighter and Minister of Justice, had Parliament pass a law creating a Compensation Board with the *Cour de Cassation* for those who were so far left by the wayside “without a cent”. Since then, a few people wrongly prosecuted have been able to benefit from the results of this great legal battle. Happy anniversary André!



Jean-Marie Deveaux and André Soulier after the issuance of the acquittal ruling

On this occasion, French magazine Paris Match, which, like all other French media, had covered the battle for a new trial and acquittal, has published a special feature at the beginning of this month. André Soulier is particularly happy to find in this feature the name a great press photographer, Gérard Géry, now deceased, who had demonstrated exceptional courage and an extraordinary talent in all theatres of operations around the world where men struggled and are still struggling.

[Read Paris Match's special feature](#) (in French only)

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