

Around the Nation

Evers Figure Free Of Bomb Charges

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NEW ORLEANS—A federal jury found Byron De La Beckwith, 53, innocent yesterday on all three firearms charges lodged against him after his arrest last September with what police said was a ticking timebomb.

The jury deliberated for two hours before returning the verdict in favor of the man accused—but never convicted—of slaying civil rights leader Medgar Evers in 1963. The U.S. District Court jury had deliberated for nine hours Friday.

Beckwith, a farm machinery salesman from Greenwood, Miss., had been charged with possessing an unregistered bomb, possessing a bomb without a serial number, and carrying an unregistered pistol during the commission of a felony.

Beckwith was tried twice but not convicted in the Evers slaying. Both trials ended in hung juries.

Police stopped Beckwith's car as he entered New Orleans last September. Officers said they found on the front floor of his car a timebomb set to go off.

Police said he intended to bomb the home of A. I. Botnick, a leader of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Judge Jack Gordon, however, instructed the jury to ignore all references to Botnick, saying he didn't think the testimony was indisputably relevant to the charge of possession.

Beckwith maintained during the course of the five-day trial that he came to New Orleans to sell treasured family mementos. Included, he said, was a China plate straight from the table of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy.



BYRON DELA BECKWITH
... acquitted again