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Around the Nation

Berrigan's Defense Loses Bid to Query Prosecutors

HARRISBURG, Pa. — A federal judge ruled yesterday that defense attorneys for the Rev. Philip Berrigan and Sister Elizabeth McAlister could not question the chief prosecutors in the case of the Harrisburg Seven.

But Judge R. Dixon Herman agreed to study the prosecution files in the case to determine whether the government brought the Catholic nun and priest to trial as punishment for their antiwar views.

The defense, led by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, had asked to question U.S. Attorneys William Lynch and S. John Catton, who prosecuted the Harrisburg Seven. Both prosecutors objected.

"If they don't want to testify," Judge Herman said, "I'm not going to permit them to be called. But I am ordering that the prosecution file be submitted to the court."

FBI agents Charles Durham and William Anderson, both of Philadelphia, were called in the final post-trial hearings for Sister Elizabeth and Father Berrigan to give information about a wiretap the government admitted it used to gather evidence against them.