

Misc II

17 APR 1967

EA147 BEN BARKA 230

PARIS, APRIL 17 (AP)-THE BEN BARKA AFFAIR WENT BEFORE A PARIS COURT TODAY FOR THE SECOND TIME. LAWYERS FOR THE BEN BARKA FAMILY IMMEDIATELY DEMANDED THAT THE TRIAL BE POSTPONED FOR A MONTH IN ORDER THAT THEY HAVE MORE TIME TO PREPARE THEIR ARGUMENTS.

THE REQUEST WAS BASED ON THE FACT THAT THREE LAWYERS FOR THE FAMILY HAVE DIED SINCE THE FIRST TRIAL. THE REQUEST WAS TAKEN UNDER ADVISEMENT BY THE COURT.

SEVEN MEN ARE ON TRIAL IN THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MEHDI BEN BARKA, MOROCCAN OPPOSITION LEADER.

THE 46-YEAR-OLD LEFT-WING OPPONENT OF MOROCCO'S KING HASSAN II HAS NOY BEEN SEEN SINCE TWO FRENCH POLICEMEN PLUCKED HIM FROM A BUSY PARIS SIDEWALK 18 MONTHS AGO. HE IS THOUGHT TO BE DEAD.

THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT VERSION OF THE AFFAIR--PRONOUNCED BY NO LESS THAN PRESIDENT CHARLES DE GAULLE--IS THAT BEN BARKA WAS KIDNAPED WITH THE AID OF LOW-RANKING FRENCH POLICE OFFICIALS AND TURNED OVER TO MOROCCAN AUTHORITIES FOR A SETTLEMENT OF ACCOUNTS.

ACCORDING TO DE GAULLE, MOROCCO'S INTERIOR MINISTER, MOHAMED OUFKIR, IS THE PRINCIPAL PLANNER. OUFKIR, WHO DENIES INVOLVEMENT, IS SAFELY ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN, OUT OF REACH.

THE FIRST BEN BARKA TRIAL LASTED ALMOST SIX WEEKS AND WAS READY TO GO TO THE JURY LAST OCT. 19 WHEN MAJ. AHMED DLIMI, HEAD OF MOROCCO'S SECURITY POLICE AND OUFKIR'S DEPUTY, FLEW INTO PARIS AND SURRENDERED, SAYING HE WANTED TO "CLEANSE MY COUNTRY'S HONOR."

THE TRIAL WAS THUS ABORTED AND A NEW INVESTIGATION WAS STARTED.

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