Mostefa Ben Boulaïd

World War II

Ben-Boulaid was born in Arris, Batna Province, Algeria. In 1939, he underwent mandatory military service and was mobilized to fight for the allies during the Second World War. In 1944, during the Italian campaign, Ben-Boulaid exhibited courage, which earned him the Military Medal and the Croix de guerre. He was demobilised with the rank of adjutant, returned home, and joined the Algerian People's Party (PPA).

Revolutionary figure

Ben-Boulaid became an important political and military figure in the Special Organization (OS). He bought weapons with his own funds, supported militants being pursued by the French authorities and distributed arms. Ben-Boulaid contested the Assembly of Algeria election of 1948 and won decisively. However, the results were falsified by the French authorities.[citation needed] He was a founding member of the Revolutionary Committee of Unity and Action (CRUA). From 22–25 June 1954, he chaired a crucial meeting which aimed to unite the revolutionary forces. He became a member of the "Committee of the Six" (the insurgent leaders). During the Algerian war, Ben-Boulaid was responsible for Area I (Aurès). He engaged heavily armed French forces and suffered heavy losses. In 1955, he traveled to Libya to purchase arms. He participated in the battle of Ifri el blah and the battle of Ahmar Khaddou near Batna.

Arrest and escape

On 11 February 1955, Ben-Boulaid was arrested in Tunisia. Ben-Boulaid was imprisoned at

"Coudiat Aty" Central Prison in Constantine and was sentenced to death. In November 1955, with the complicity of a prison warden, Djaffer Chérif, who was from Ben-Boulaid's home town, Ben-Boulaid escaped, along with other prisoners. One of the other prisoners was Tahar Zbiri, who went on to initiate a failed coup against President Houari Boumediene in 1967. During the escape, one of Ben-Boulaid's comrades was injured, recaptured, and subsequently decapitated.

Death

On 22 March 1956, Ben-Boulaïd died in the blast of a parachuted French radio [[bomb].