



Ordeal over

John Aruns Callery reaches to shake hands with well-wishers and Robert E. Nims, with his wife at his side, talks to newsmen after their acquittal of bribery charges. (States-Item photos by Pat Patterson and Charles Bennett.)

Bomb 'target' in hiding

9-29-73 FI

By ALLAN KATZ

Where is A. L. "Bee" Botnick?

Botnick, head of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League in New Orleans, apparently went into hiding after learning he was the target of a ticking time bomb carried into the city by outspoken segregationist Byron de La Beckwith.

Beckwith, 52, twice tried but not convicted of the 1963 murder of civil rights leader Medgar Evers, was arrested as he crossed the twin bridges into New Orleans yesterday.

Police said they found a ticking time bomb and an arsenal of weapons in Beckwith's car.

Beckwith, held on \$53,000 bond, told reporters he had come to New Orleans to sell historical artifacts but had no explanation for the bomb, a .45 caliber pistol, three rifles and a machine gun beyond the assertion he is a gun collector.

POLICE INTELLIGENCE sources confirmed they set a trap for Beckwith when they were warned he was en

route to New Orleans to kill Botnick.

A police source here also said that Beckwith was overheard making a threat against Botnick at a recent Citizens' Council convention in Jackson and that led to the investigation which ended in the trap at the Twin Bridges.

Police sources said they do not know the specific reason Beckwith might have wanted to kill Botnick, who for several years has headed the New Orleans office of the ADL. The ADL is an organization founded to oppose discrimination in any form.

Botnick and other ADL members were active in advising civil rights advocates during the stormy desegrega-

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Beckwith 'target' hiding

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tion crises of the 1960s in Mississippi.

ADL sources in New York denied reports Botnick had gone into hiding because of threats made against him by Beckwith. An ADL source said Botnick often is out of town on special assignments and it is not unusual for him to take business trips to neighboring states.

NEITHER BOTNICK nor members of his family could be located for comments on the alleged murder threat.

Sources said Botnick had moved his family from the city several days ago after learning of the threat. Although there was activity in Botnick's house last night, no one would respond to the doorbell.

Beckwith's bond originally was set at \$8,500 yesterday by Magistrate Robert F. Collins, then raised to \$53,500 by Collins at the request of Police Supt. Clarence B. Giarrusso.

A preliminary hearing was set for Oct. 9, to see if there is enough evi-

dence to hold Beckwith, who lives in Greenwood, Miss., for trial. He has been charged with attempted aggravated arson in connection with possession of the bomb. He also could be charged in federal court for violation of the Gun Control Act of 1968.

He is being held on state charges of aggravated assault and carrying a concealed weapon.

IN 1963, Beckwith twice was tried in Jackson, Miss., for the sniper slaying of Medgar Evers, a field secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Both efforts ended in mistrials.

Beckwith told reporters, "I came to town to sell some china that came from Beauvoir, which was the last home of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy."

Of the guns, Beckwith said, "I'm a gun collector. I've been trading guns since I was five years old."

Police said the bomb they found in Beckwith's car consisted of sticks of dynamite connected to a timing device which could have been activated.