

Botnick '68 Tipoff Recalled

Alleged Beckwith Target Had Meridian Role

By W. F. MINOR and JOHN McMILLAN

If, as police claim, Byron De La Beckwith was on his way to bomb the New Orleans home of A. I. "Bee" Botnick, the case revives memories of a bizarre incident in Meridian, Miss., on June 30, 1968.

Botnick, director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith here, has admitted paying \$36,500 to Ku Klux Klan informants for information on a planned bombing of the home of Meyer Davidson, a prominent Jewish businessman in Meridian.

Law enforcement authorities have said they have information Beckwith was headed to New Orleans to bomb Botnick's home when they arrested him on Interstate 10 near New Orleans Thursday.

In the case in Meridian, Thomas Albert Tarrants III, a self-styled "guerrilla fighter" for the Ku Klux Klan, was captured by police after placing a powerful home-made bomb at

Davidson's home.

TEACHER SHOT

In a gun battle between Tarrants and police, Mrs. Kathy Ainsworth, a 26-year-old Jackson public school teacher in Tarrants' automobile, was shot to death.

Mrs. Ainsworth, formerly from Miami, Fla., carried identification cards stating she was a member of the Americans for the Preservation of the White Race and a Klan auxiliary.

During the gun battle, Tarrants, a policeman and a bystander, were wounded. Tarrants is now serving a 30-year sentence in Parchman Penitentiary for his role in the attack.

RAISED BY LEADERS

The money Botnick said then he paid Raymond and Alton Wayne Roberts for the information of the planned bombing was raised by alarmed Jewish leaders in Meridian after the bombing of Temple Beth Israel there.

(Since October of 1967 Alton Roberts has been serving a 10-year prison sentence for his role in the murder of three civil rights workers in Neshoba County, Miss.)

The bomb authorities said Beckwith was carrying in his automobile at the time of his arrest closely resembled the bomb with a clock mechanism which was placed at the home of Davidson by Tarrants in 1968.

Authorities said Friday they were seeking to determine where the bomb Beckwith reportedly had was assembled.

Beckwith, under \$53,500 bond after his arrest by New Orleans police Thursday, was charged Friday with violating the National Firearms Act. A detainer was placed on him by U.S. Magistrate Morey L. Sear.

Officers said Beckwith had in his possession six sticks of dynamite, a five-pound stick of nitromon (a highly explosive concoction), a clock, an electrical cap, a mercury switch and other weapons.

Beckwith, according to authorities in Mississippi, has been spending part of his time in the past year in the Tampa, Fla., area as a salesman for an equipment company, and showing up every few weeks at the apartment he keeps in Greenwood, Miss.

Three weeks ago, he was spotted at the National Leadership Conference of the Citizens Council of America in Jackson, Miss. where Alabama Gov. George Wallace was the main speaker.

STATEMENTS HEARD

Authorities said Beckwith was heard to make some anti-Semitic statements at the meeting. Several Mississippi political figures, including State Agriculture Commissioner Jim "Buck" Ross, took part in the Citizens Council meeting.

Beckwith has recently been distributing copies of a book by Gary Allen, "None Dare Call It Conspiracy," with a notation signed by Beckwith: "Dear Friend, I am presenting you with a copy of a book which I think you should read. This book documents in interesting detail the conspiracy which seeks to change our form of government."

The book names a number of prominent Jewish leaders in the United States as aiding the rise of Communism abroad.