

# Jury Selection 5-1 11-2568 Begins in Bomb Attempt Trial

MERIDIAN, Miss. (AP)—Selection of a jury was scheduled for today in the trial of Thomas Albert Tarrants, III, accused of trying to bomb the home of a prominent Jewish businessman last summer.

Tarrants entered a plea of "not guilty by reason of insanity" at his arraignment before Circuit Court Judge Lester Williamson last Monday. The charge is a capital offense and carries a possible death sentence under Mississippi law.

The 22-year-old Mobile, Ala., man also is charged with three counts of attempted murder arising from the bomb attempt and an ensuing gun battle with police.

A motion for a change of venue by one of Tarrants' attorneys, Thomas Haas of Mobile, was turned down by Williamson during arraignment proceedings. Haas claimed that prejudicial and inflammatory publicity had preceded the trial and asked that it be moved to some "remote county" where there had been less publicity.

Tarrants was wounded and a female companion killed on the night of the gun battle. Also wounded were Meridian Policeman J. M. Hatcher and Robert E. Burton, a bystander.

The attempted bombing incident occurred June 30 as 15 policemen were staked out at the home of Meyer Davidson, 51.

Police said a man carrying a box—found to contain 29 sticks of dynamite and a timing device—stopped his car near the Davidson home and began walking toward the house.

He was ordered to stop, police said, but instead drew a gun and fled to his car and drove off. Police followed for some 15 blocks and forced the fleeing auto off the road. In the shooting that ensued, Tarrants, Hatcher and Burton, who had just stepped out of the front door of his home, were wounded.