

11/17/68

Murder Case Resumes 5-1

MERIDIAN (AP) — Arraignment proceedings for Thomas Albert Tarrants, III, resumed here today after a weekend recess to allow a Mobile psychiatrist to testify.

Tarrants is charged with three counts of attempted murder and the June 30th attempted bombing of the home of Meridian Jewish leader Meyer Davidson. The arraignment began Friday morning but was delayed after defense attorney Thomas Haas moved for a continuance on the grounds that Dr. Claude Brown, a Mobile psychiatrist, had examined Tarrants but had not had time to complete his examination. Haas also claimed that the defense had had insufficient time to prepare its case and that publicity in a local newspaper had prejudiced Tarrants' position.

Circuit Court Judge Lester Williamson delayed a ruling on on the motion and recessed in order to allow Dr. Brown to testify.

The charges of attempted murder stem from a running gun battle, in which police say they exchanged gunfire with Tarrants. Wounded in the chase were Meridian police officers Mike Hatcher and Tom Tucker and a bystander. Tarrants was also seriously wounded, but he recovered and has remained in jail in Meridian. A woman companion in Tarrants' car, former Jackson schoolteacher Mrs. Kathy Ainsworth, was found dead on the floorboard of the auto when officers finally stopped it.