

# 'A Routine Job But I'm Scared to Death'

Chicago

"It was a routine job . . . but I'm still shaking," Fred Cutler said.

Cutler, 29, is a locksmith who was called to open a safety deposit box containing a bomb at the Northern Trust Co.

It was one of eight such boxes in Chicago, New York and San Francisco. There was no key to the Northern Trust box in a letter telling of the bomb, and Cutler, who regularly does the bank's locksmithing, was summoned.

Safety deposit boxes have to be drilled open when renters lose or misplace their keys.

Cutler arrived at the bank at 9:30 a.m., carrying a small leather valise with a drill and special tools he designed for deposit box locks.

"I'm scared to death," he told newsmen in the lobby of the downtown bank.

## ESCORTED

Cutler was escorted to the basement-level vault where he was surrounded by FBI agents and members of the Chicago police bomb and arson unit.

"I milled off the nose of the customer's key entry with the drill. Then with the special tool I picked the tumblers and removed the lock. It took about five minutes," he said.

Cutler, a stocky man with reddish hair, does routine deposit box work for the Northern Trust and usually charges \$10.

"This will cost a little extra," he said.

Cutler was not present when FBI agents opened the box.

## LEAVE

"They told me to leave as soon as I had drilled through the lock," he said. "I didn't wear any protective clothing. I don't want any more jobs like that. I was very frightened."

The safety deposit boxes were contracted for at a yearly rental of about \$15 a year ago this week in the name of Christopher Charles Mohr.

On contract cards he filled out, he described himself as 25 years old, 5 feet 11 inches tall, weighing 165 pounds, black hair, brown eyes, a native of Los Angeles and a writer. He did not specify his race.

As a measure of the extreme cunning behind the bomb plot, bank officials said there was virtually no way the bombs could have been detected without the warning provided by the perpetrator.

"The whole principle and concept of safe keeping is

that we do not know what is inside a box and we don't want to know," said Robert Decker, executive vice president and controller of Marine Midland in New York.

## PRIVACY

"A person is entitled to store his valuables in strict privacy," agreed a First National City spokesman in Manhattan.

The New York Clearing House said it is arranging a meeting of representatives from its 11 member banks to discuss countermeasures against any future planting of bombs on their premises.

The magnitude of the problem was underlined in the case of Chicago's First National, which has nearly 42,000 safe deposit boxes.

A First National City spokesman in New York said the bomber picked out a \$15-a-year deposit box, rather than those in the \$13-and-\$10-a-year range. The latter are shallower and would not have allowed room for the bombs.

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