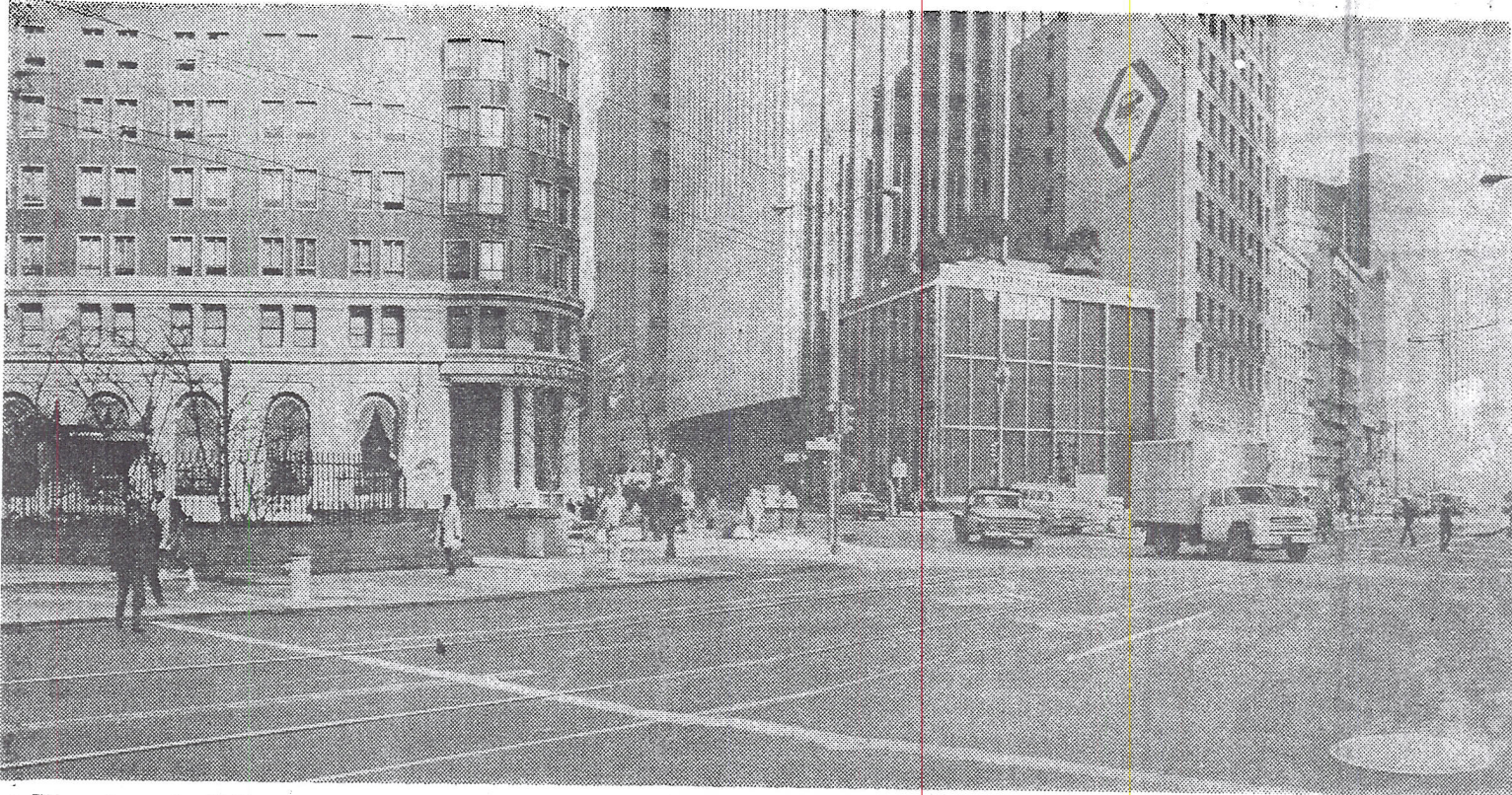


The S.F. 'Bomb'



The three buildings involved in the bomb incident are the Crocker Bank (extreme left), Wells Fargo's highrise

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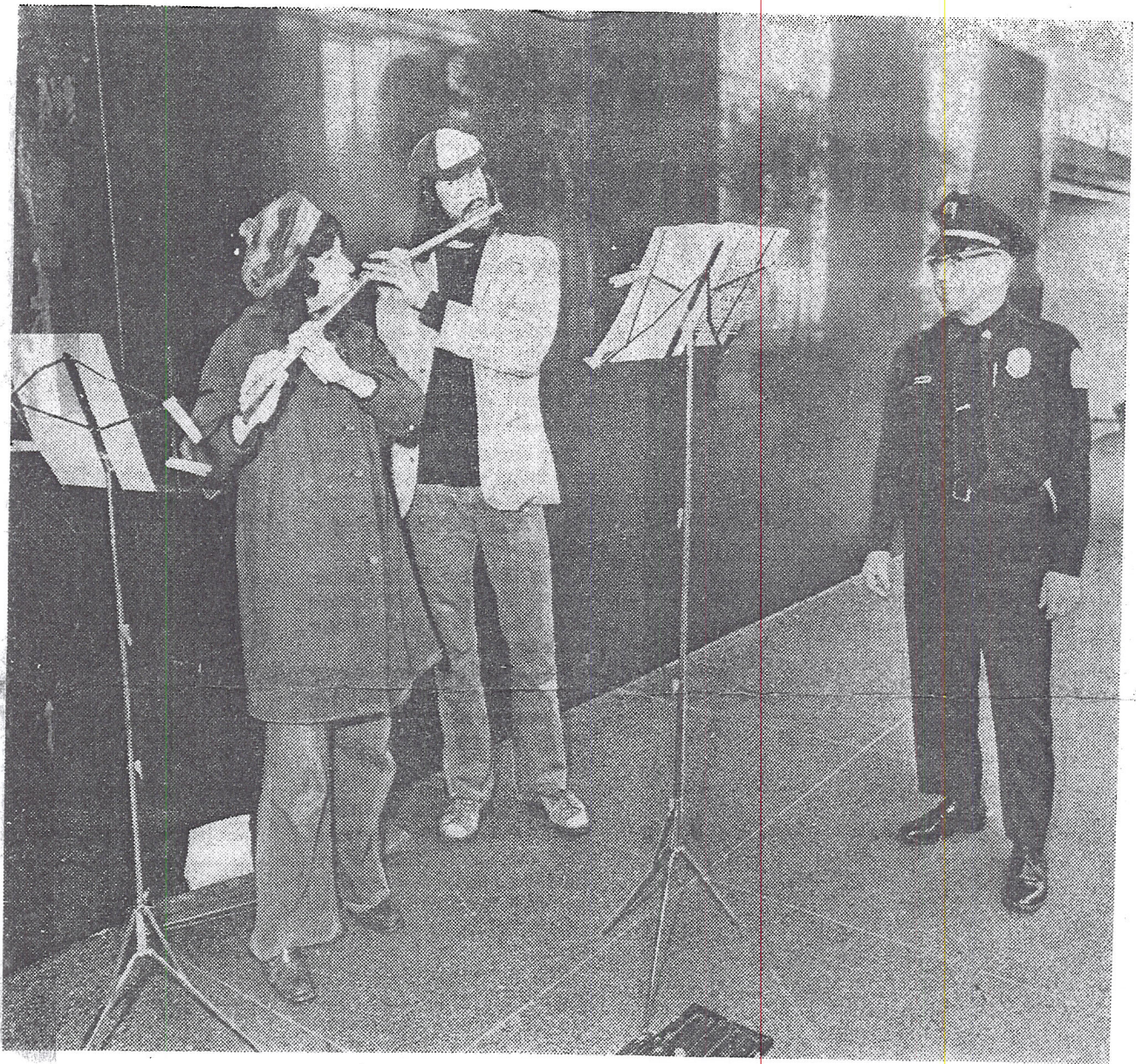
Banks

San Francisco Chronicle 3
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(center, behind its small branch bank) and a Bank of America branch (right)

An Anxious Time at Wells Fargo



Street musicians Hannah Morton and David Smith entertained security guard Lawrence Jacobs outside the Wells Fargo office — after the commotion was over.

Drilling To Remove The Bomb

By Michael Grieg

A top security official for Wells Fargo yesterday described the tense 12 hours spent waiting for a bomb to be found in the bank's safety deposit vault at Market and Montgomery streets.

Jack Ricaud, vice president in charge of security at the branch, sighed in relief when the first depositors were let into the bank at 9:30 a.m. — a half hour later than the regular opening time.

FBI agents had just carted off two cardboard cartons containing the explosive device and the deposit box — number 3114 — in which it had been found.

"I'm told it had very sophisticated wiring, a clock to match, and would have shot out like a cannon, damaging this whole place," Ricaud said.

LOCK

He was standing tensely in front of "the whole place," the bank's lower terrace vault, where officials and bomb experts had waited until the heavy metal door's time lock went off at 8 a.m. and allowed them to enter.

"It was a pretty scary moment," he said. "We didn't know for sure what we'd find. . . . And, you know, Monday's my 50th birthday. What a birthday present!"

The bespectacled executive said he had first heard about the bomb possibility at 9:30 p.m. on Thursday when police here told bank officials of the letter received by The Chronicle detailing the nationwide explosive threat.

A key received by The Chronicle to a Crocker Bank deposit box had been turned over to police officials. The same had been done by radio station KSAN with a Bank of America key.

PLAN

The security executive said that a Wells Fargo box key reportedly had been sent with a letter about the bombing plan to The Tribe, the Berkeley underground paper. But the key never reached Wells Fargo.

"We received the communiqué," said a spokesman for The Tribe. "But we don't know what happened to the key—if we got one."

Ricaud said the box at the Wells Fargo branch had been rented by "someone named Christopher Mohr of Chicago." It was a \$9-a-year box that measured 3½ inches deep 5 inches wide and 23 inches long.

The FBI has "put a clamp on other information" so he was unable to tell when the user was in the vault last, Ricaud said.

"We had the vault guard's key to the box but it takes the other one, too, to get it opened," he said.

DRILL

So we had to get the Mosler Safe Company to drill it open and for that we needed authorization from banking officials with the Treasury Department here."

Usually, he said, it takes a court order to open a safety deposit box. But a Treasury Department order is sufficient in emergency cases, he added.

Blinking his eyes, the security executive said he had managed to "get some sleep last night while the wheels went into motion" and officials waited for the order and the timelock to unsnap.

"At home, my wife seemed more nervous than I was," he said. "She wanted me to call the first thing in the morning."

CLOSED

Bank officials closed the building's lobby and lower terrace in fear the bomb might go off, Ricaud said, but they decided against having the sidewalk cleared or closing upper-floor offices in the huge Wells Fargo building.

"There's quite a protective shell around the vault area," he said. It would have taken a really enormous explosion to affect the street outside."

Is the bank going to beef up security measures in the vault area?

Ricaud blinked his eyes again. "What can we do? We can't check what people put in their boxes. It's strictly

their business, according to Treasury Department rules

...
"I'm afraid we'll just have to wait until the political and social situation calms down — if that's what's causing all this."

ANXIETY

Nearby, in the coffee snack lounge a few yards from the vaults, a receptionist for the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company, which has offices in the 44 Montgomery street building, talked about the anxiety-ridden minutes she had spent.

"They shouldn't have let the people in the building at all," said Kay Steffens. "The

first I heard about the bomb was when I came in early to pick up the mail at the post office substation. It's right next to those vaults.

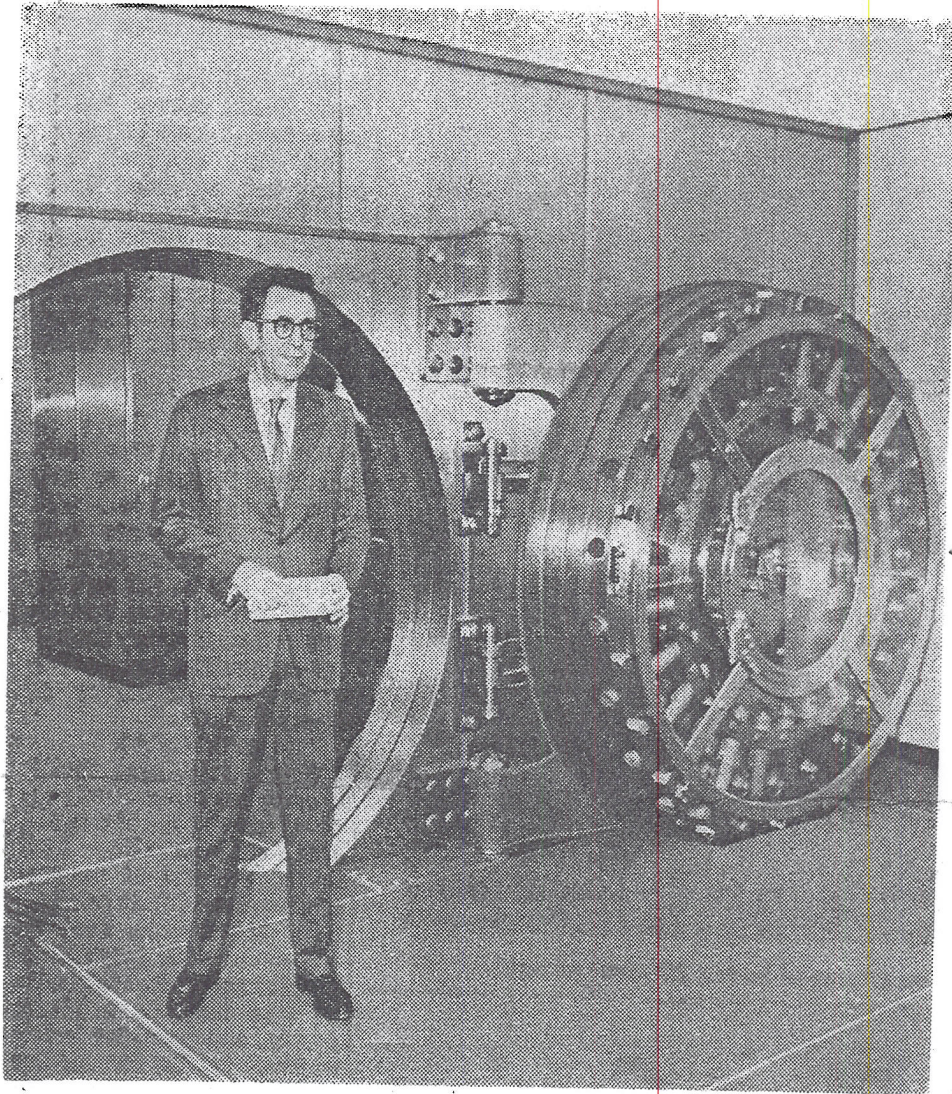
"Let me tell you, we've been pretty nervous all morning. Our office is up on the 13th floor. That's unlucky right there. And, remember, a building falls from the bottom."

But one secretary in the building said the whole thing was "even more exciting" than last New Year's snowfall of calendars. "Anything to break the monotony," she said.

Adding a serene note to the morning's tension were Han-

nah Morton and David Smith, two street musicians who were playing a Mozart flute sonata outside the Wells Fargo building while security guard Lawrence Jacobs paused in his rounds.

"We hope the music will bring good vibes to the place," said Smith.



Jack Ricaud, in charge of security at the Wells Fargo building, allowed depositors to enter the vault after the bomb had been removed