

# Bombers: Only 10% Caught

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By Will Ellsworth-Jones

In America's pioneer days guns talked — now it's bombs. Statistics show that the bombers can strike almost anywhere they want, their chances of getting caught are slim and the blast makes headlines.

In 1970 there were nearly 1100 bombings and the 1971 total is expected to be 50 percent up on that. Almost a third of all the reported blasts take place in California.

The advantages of bombing for the "cause" were shown last week when time bombs were found in two banks here and six banks in New York and Chicago. They were planted there only to show the power at the disposal of the successful bomber who so far remains free.

Figures show that so far only about 10 percent of the bombers have been caught. And this is despite the fact that the bombers have even taken to bombing places like the Senate wing of the Capitol in Washington.

The bombings seem to fall into two categories. When bombs are placed in police stations, the bombers seem happy to see police injured or killed. When the bombs are placed in public buildings, usually warnings are given before the explosion.

There is still \$38,000 in reward money waiting for the conviction of the killers who bombed the Park Police Station here in February, 1970, killing a police sergeant and

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Berkeley when a bomb exploded in the police parking lot.

In October 1970 a bomb exploded in the entrance to St. Brendan's Church in The City. As far as the bombers were concerned the occasion was auspicious — the start of a funeral service for a San Francisco policeman killed in the line of duty.

### Little Warning

Usually though the plotters give a warning, or time the bomb to go off when the building is not occupied. Thus they gave 30 minutes warning to evacuate the Capinjuring seven others.

In that same month six police officers were injured in

itol.

But sometimes the warning is tragically too short. In August, 1970, police were called to be told that a bomb was going to explode in the University of Wisconsin's Mathematics Research Center.

Two minutes later the bomb went off. A graduate student who was in the building doing research was killed.

In 1969, San Francisco State College was the target of bombers. Last year they turned to Stanford. In December two explosions caused \$45,000 worth of damage to the university's atom smasher.

In April last year a bomb in the attic of the Inner Quad

did \$25,000 worth of damage to buildings housing the office of President Richard W. Lyman. In July a pipe bomb exploded in the house of the university's personnel director. It caused an 18-inch hole in the wall of his daughter's bedroom.

### Favorite Target

The Bank of America has become the bombers favorite target. The campaign started with the burning of its Isla Vista branch in February 1970. Since then 52 of its 954 branches have been attacked.

The bank estimates total damage at \$780,000, including \$600,000 for the Isla Vista building.

In 1968 a Pacific Gas &

Electric Co. transmission tower was blown up in the Oakland hills. Since then PG&E says it has been the target for 18 incidents of sabotage.

A company spokesman put their problem clearly when he said last year, "We're upset, of course, but we're terribly vulnerable — with 80,000 plus miles of (transmission) lines and too many substations."

The Federal government

has started training police officers in bomb disposal. The City has its own bomb unit and is now asking for special bomb disposal trucks. The Bank of America has increased security but still hopes that the threat "fades away."

But while the Bay Area was the prime target of bombers in 1969, New York now is No. 1. One of the two men memorialized in the bomb threat letter sent to the

media last week was Samuel J. Melville.

Melville was convicted of bombing eight government and private New York buildings in 1969. He was killed in the Attica prison riot.

The bombings caused damage estimated at \$250,000 as he hit such buildings as General Motors Headquarters, the Chase Manhattan Bank, the Criminal Courts buildings and the Federal Building. But they caused no deaths.