

# 'Live' time-bomb is disarmed at Biscayne Blvd. airline office

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A large dynamite time bomb, set to detonate at midnight, was still "live" at 8 a.m. today when it was found outside the Dominicana Airlines Biscayne Boulevard office just as 150 school employees were reporting for work in the same building.

Miami police said the bomb had apparently malfunctioned.

The bomb, hidden in low shrubbery between sidewalks at the entrance to the 1440 Biscayne Blvd. building, was quickly disarmed by Tom Brodie and Newt Porter of the Metro Bomb Squad.

"It would have done considerable damage if it had gone off," Brodie said.

Brodie said he couldn't say why the bomb had malfunctioned.

"We'll have to look at it in the lab," Brodie said. "All I'll say is it was live and dangerous."

The bomb apparently consisted of six pounds of dynamite wrapped in black tape with a small alarm clock affixed to the top of the bundle. Red wires ran from the clock to the detonating cap.

The first person to see the bomb was apparently an unidentified school employe. Maintenance man Manuel Valdez said the man just said, "Hey, did you see that stuff outside the front door, looks like a bomb."

Valdez went to tell his boss. Meantime, a contractor working on the building saw the bomb.

"I walked right up to it," said David Gothels. "You could see the little clock and the sticks of dynamite easy."

Gothels, his brother Daniel and brickmason Joe Cravero began running through the corridors of the four-story building telling people to get out.

"There must have been 200 people in the building by then," Cravero said. "At first people thought we were kidding."

Cravero said he watched from the front steps while Brodie and Porter disarmed the bomb.

"They were sure fast," he said. "Took maybe a minute and a half from the time they got to it."

Luis Fernandez, the building superintendent, said he walked around the front of the building at 6 a.m. and didn't think the bomb was there then.

"But it was dark," Fernandez said.

Scores of people outside the

building could have been hurt by the blast if the bomb had detonated.

The stretch of sidewalk in front of the 1440 building is heavily used by pedestrians going to work and traffic on the major downtown artery was bumper to bumper when the bomb was discovered.

Police diverted motorists and buses around the entire 1400 block for about 21 minutes at the height of the morning rush.

School officials said that 153 employees work in leased offices in the 1440 building. The Division of Instruction supervised by Dr. Leonard Britton, an associate superintendent of schools, is there along with various other school administrative programs. The building also contains numerous private business offices.

Fernandez said Dominicana Airways moved there about four or five weeks ago.

"There was a city policeman on duty 24 hours a day until about two weeks ago," Fernandez said.

A mystery bomb blast wrecked a locker at Miami International Airport near the Dominicana counter on Friday.

No group has claimed credit for that bombing. But a group calling itself the "Youth of the Star" took responsibility for a bombing near the Broward County jail a week ago and also a bomb blast that damaged the Dominican consulate here at 1038 Brickell Ave. on Oct. 6. No one has been injured in any of the bombings.

The bombings have been linked to the jailing of Cuban terrorist Humberto Lopez who is awaiting trial on federal firearms charges.

Lopez was extradited from the Dominican Republic to face the charges in the United States and certain anti-Castro Cuban groups blame the Dominicans for this.



Miami News Photo by KATHY WILLENS

Metro's Newt Porter removes bomb from bushes