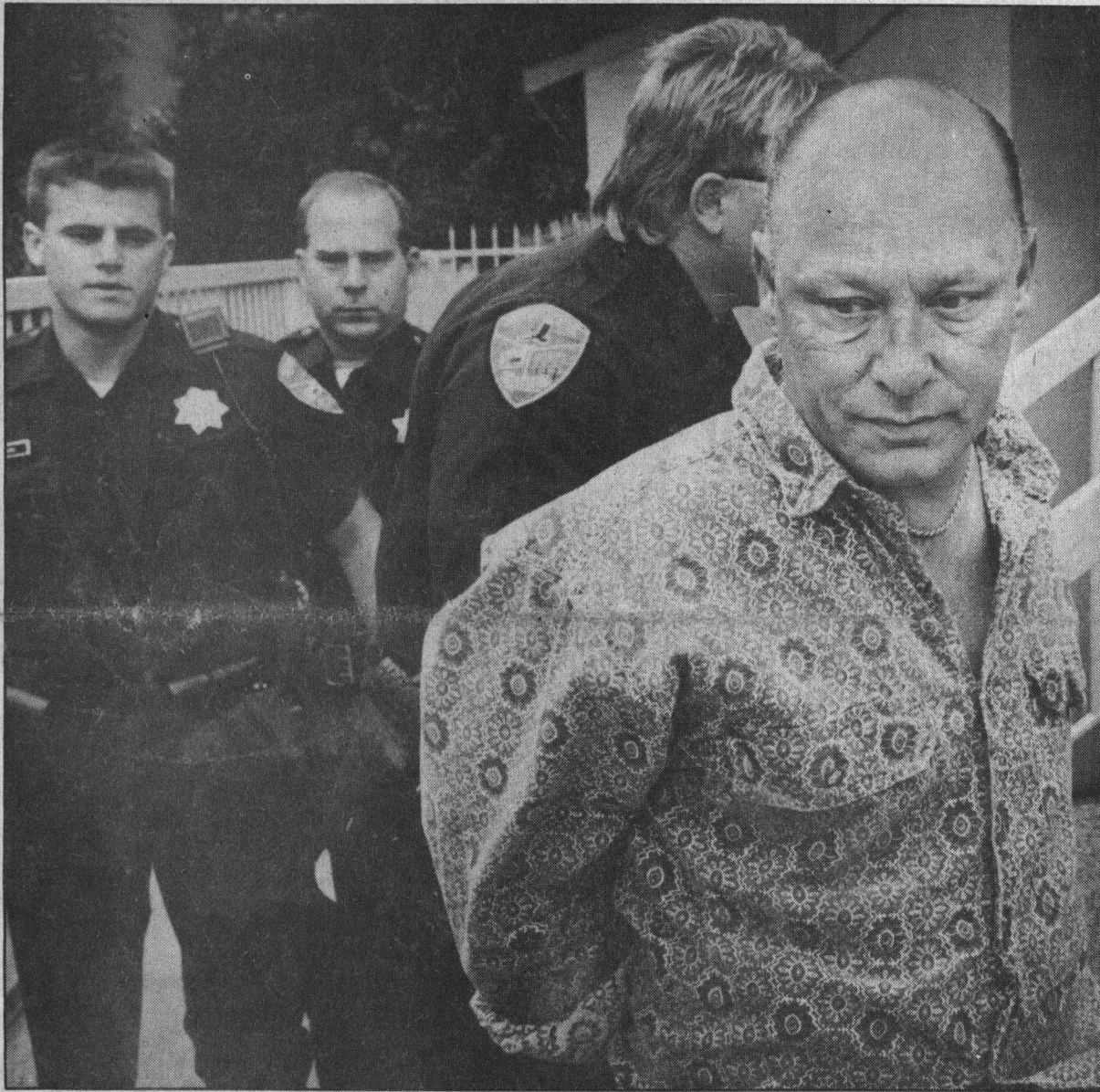


pute.

VCF CRIME & CRIMINALS RP 9/9/91 P.1

Bank robbery in Freedom



Kurt Ellison

Bank robbery suspect Wilmer C. DeWolfe is led away from motel in handcuffs by Watsonville police this morning.

An hour after the Freedom branch of the Wells Fargo Bank was robbed this morning, Watsonville police had arrested a man and woman at a local motel.

Officers arrested the couple at the Best Western motel on Freedom Boulevard at 11:06 a.m.

The man, believed to be Wilmer Charles DeWolfe, 48, was being held on bank robbery charges. His woman companion, whose identity was not known at press time, was being detained but police Capt. Charles Carter said he did not know if she would be charged.

The robbery took place at approximately 10:30 a.m. at the bank at 1501 Freedom Blvd.

Preliminary reports indicated that a man in his 40s told a teller that he had a gun, ordered her to hand over her cash and then walked out of the branch, carrying the money in a brown briefcase.

The branch was closed while Watsonville police and FBI agents interviewed customers and bank employees.

Police Sgt. Jim Ihlen said that the robbery suspect's description answered the general description of the man being sought by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office for the holdup last month of the Pacific Western Bank branch in Aptos' Rancho del Mar.

Sheriff's deputies last Friday said they were seeking an arrest warrant for DeWolfe. DeWolfe was also believed to be responsible for bank robberies in the Santa Clara Valley.

After this morning's robbery, de- See BANK page 9 ▶

BANK

VCF CRIME & CRIMINALS RP 9/9/91 P.9

▶ From Page 1
tective began checking local motels, looking for men answering the description of the bank robber.

At the Best Western, they hit paydirt. Police surrounded a room at the rear of the two-story motel and made the arrest.

In the man's pockets, officers said they found cash and a note similar to the note handed to the bank tellers.

-Bob Smith