

THORESEN FILE  
(HAL VERB'S)

BERKELEY (CALIF) DAILY GAZETTE 7/22/67

# Berkeley Firm Tips FBI to Arms Cache

The FBI threw a veil of secrecy over the seizure yesterday of a 30-ton arms cache that had been sent via a Berkeley drayage company to a plush San Francisco Pacific Heights mansion.

Mrs. Louise Thoresen, arrested in the raid at the mansion at 2801 Broadway, was taken before the U.S. Commissioner on a charge of interstate shipment of weapons. She was held for further proceedings.

Officials at the Coast Drayage Co. of 1595 East Shore Highway said that for the last month and a half the firm had been receiving crates of ammunition addressed to Mrs. Thoresen. They became suspicious and notified the FBI after a shipping label indicated there were two cannons in one of the crates.

Shipping labels indicated that the ammunition was sent from a firm called Sacro, Inc., 192 Central Ave., Sterling, New Jersey.

Other arms also were being

seized in Oakland, according to the U.S. attorney general's office. However, U.S. Attorney Cecil Poole, presumably still working on the case, was unavailable for comment last night on why Mrs. Thoresen ordered the shipments or their ultimate destination.

A spokesman said the cache of ammunition and arms included 1,200 rounds of .38 calibre ammunition, 1,000 rounds of .45 calibre ammunition, four machineguns, and a number of operative cannons.

Mrs. Thoresen was arrested in New York last December 20 on

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a charge of illegal possession of arms. Authorities found a quantity of arms, including pistols, machineguns and flamethrowers stored in her airline baggage which accidentally opened in the baggage center at Kennedy International Airport. She was freed on \$12,000 bond.

Her husband, William B. Thoreson, 30, is being sought by police. He was a suspect in the dynamite bombing of a radio station in Tucson, Arizona, but the charges were later dismissed.

A drayage company serves as a warehouse and relay point for the transshipment of freight according to the information on the shipping label.

The night watchman at Coast Draying Co., who declined to identify himself, last night said that he had been directed by the FBI not to discuss the incident reportedly because the bureau didn't want to upset an "open and shut case."

He said that Mrs. Thoresen would come to the company to identify the freight. But frequently the company was unable to effect delivery at the San Francisco mansion because Mr. Thoresen wasn't at home to sign for the arms. That added to the suspicion of company officials.

"She was dressed in old clothes, but evidently she was a pretty smart woman, at least until they caught up with her," he commented.

He declined to say whether any of the arms shipments still remained at the company's warehouse, however, or the total number of crates involved in the shipments.

Federal alcohol and tobacco tax unit officers had gone to Mrs. Thoresens' home with a search warrant. They said the machineguns were found in metal strapped cases which they broke open.

Officers explained that

possession of automatic weapons is not unlawful. However, they cannot be shipped across state lines without a license and payment of federal taxes.

Under federal law the alcohol and tobacco tax unit,—division of the Dept. of Internal Revenue, is charged with enforcing the National Firearms Act.

Ollie Heins, enforcement area officer for the alcohol and tobacco tax unit, was unavailable for comment last night. His wife said that he was expected home quite late since he was working on a case, presumably in connection with the raid.

Berkeley Police reported they had not assisted the alcohol tax unit officers in a local raid, and that no arrests were made in Berkeley to their knowledge.

Late yesterday afternoon an officer at the local FBI office said the bureau here had no knowledge of the case.

A U.S. Army truck hauled away the seized weapons from the San Francisco mansion.

As she was taken to a police car, Mrs. Thoresen was joined by her five-year-old son, Mike, who was held in protective custody. He wore a toy gun belt with two toy pistols in holsters.

Jack Ehrlich, attorney for the Thoresens, said that "Thoresen is kind of a screwball in some ways—he just likes to collect old weapons."

Mrs. Thorsen posted \$1,100 bail and was released. She will be arraigned Saturday before U.S. Commissioner Richard Goldsmith on a federal warrant issued in New York in connection with the weapons cache uncovered there.

Thoresen, still being sought by Federal agents, is the son of the President of Great Western Steel Corporation in Chicago, and heir to a gigantic steel fortune. He has a long face, long black hair, and dresses in "extreme British style," according to federal officials.