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A Possible Legal 'Out' For Thoresen

A prank theft of a travel poster may be the foundation for the Government's charges of illegal gun possession against the William Thoresens.

And, Thoresen's attorney P. Basil Lambros told Federal Judge George B. Harris yesterday, that prank theft and subsequent felony conviction, may be erased by Maine courts.

Judge Harris asked Jerrold Ladar, an assistant U.S. Attorney, "If that is true, the superstructure of this case is at stake?" And Ladar responded, "Only part of it, your honor."

Judge Harris granted Thoresen until October 19 to settle the felony conviction and be ready to plead.

Lambros contends that a search warrant, which subsequently turned up some 77 tons of guns and ammunition from the Thoresen residence at 2801 Broadway here, and from several Bay Area warehouses, might be knocked out as illegal.

The warrant was based on Thoresen being convicted of a felony, for theft of pictures worth \$150 from a Ferry Terminal in Bar Harbor, Maine, in 1959. It is against the law for a felon to ship weapons in interstate commerce.

"Mr. Thoresen pleaded guilty, but we now believe he was improperly advised. We are satisfied," Lambros said, "that a maximum value of the picture and frame was \$26.30. We are preparing action to set aside that conviction."

The painting, Lambros

outside court, is a simple travel poster, put out by a railroad. And the poster, in a frame, is back on the terminal wall now.

If the conviction is removed, he said, "that removes the basis for the search warrant, and counts 12 through 22 against Mr. Thoresen would have to go out."

Most of the charges in doubt, Lambros said, concern Thoresen, not his wife, Louise. But a faulty search warrant could knock out a lot of her charges, too.