

More Munitions Seized As Arms Czar Surrenders



WILLIAM THORESEN III AS HE SURRENDERED ON FIREARMS CHARGE
With him were his wife and son and attorney J. W. Ehrlich (left)

Heir Says He's Just A Collector

By Charles Howe

The mysterious William E. Thoresen III came out of the cold yesterday and, accompanied by his family and a brace of lawyers, surrendered to the United States marshal on a variety of Federal firearms charges.

The munitions czar was immediately taken before U. S. Commissioner Richard Goldsmith, who set bail at \$55,000. This was posted and he was released.

From there, Thoresen went before Federal Judge Oliver J. Carter for a mental competence commitment hearing. Judge Oliver ordered that he be examined by a psychiatrist but refused to order him committed.

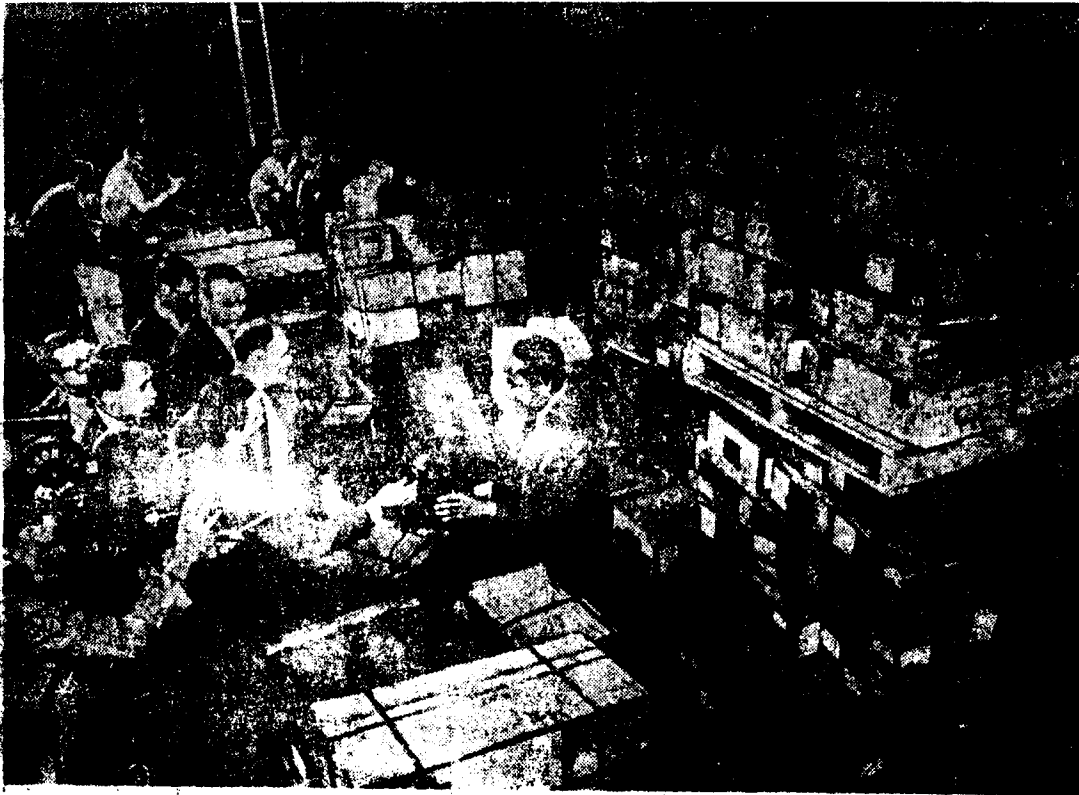
DEMAND

This infuriated U.S. Attorney Cecil Poole, who demanded that Thoresen be committed to the Lompoc Medical Facility for psychiatric observation.

He noted that raids yesterday had produced 63 more tons of munitions consigned to Thoresen.

"He has a history of bizarre and antisocial activities," Poole argued. "These are not simple antics; they are full of potential violence."

"What would a man want with such a collection, such a mountain of weapons and ammunition?"



The seized shipment in a Berkeley warehouse — U.S. Attorney Cecil Poole talked with reporters

ATTORNEY

But Thoresen's attorney, J. W. (Jake) Ehrlich, told the judge Thoresen should remain free.

"He was going to open a business," Ehrlich said. "The judge was going to shoot anyone."

"If this man is crazy, ...
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is mentally incompetent. When he has made an awful mistake in trusting me with \$50,000 in bail money."

During the hearing, Poole revealed — and Ehrlich later verified — that Thoresen had been in San Francisco since last Monday. Ehrlich said he was here "tending business affairs."

EXAMINATION

Under the provisions of Judge Carter's order, Thoresen will be examined by a psychiatrist who will be picked from a panel of 50 Federally approved doctors. The doctor's report is to be returned to the court on May 10.

'ORNAMENTS'

"I just collect cannons as ornaments," Thoresen said as his fingerprints were being taken. "Every lawn ought to have one."

Attorney Ehrlich agreed with his opponent. "He's just a collector," Ehrlich said, and he'll be ammunition he has in 30 years old. It can't even be fired."

Thoresen's son, 16-year-old Michael, tugging at the arm of his mother, Louise, alternately said "I'm scared" and "I eat flowers, white flowers," as he followed his father into the U.S. Marshal's office.

Thoresen volunteered "I also collect rocks and stamps." He was clad in a conservative dark blue and striped suit and, standing an erect 6 feet, 2 inches, looked more like a junior executive than a fugitive from justice charged with massive munitions dealings.

As he was booked, Federal agents were sorting through some 28 tons of munitions they had seized at two East Bay locations earlier.

Aided by Army military policemen with trucks, the agents confiscated from two freight terminals an incredible array of explosives, which included:

- A French 25 mm anti-tank gun, vintage 1936.
- More than 250,000 rounds of mouldering 7.92 mm ammunition of German and French manufacture.

- A 81 mm mortar capable of demolishing a well-built 6-room house from a distance of several hundred yards.

- World War Lewis Machine gun magazines plus at least a ton of .303 ammunition used by the weapons.

- A .50 caliber machine gun barrel.

- Assorted explosives, including magnesium parachute flares and mortar flares, United States .30 .45 and .50 caliber machine gun bullets.

The raids were made on Coast Drayage at 1595 Eastshore freeway in Berkeley and Ringsby Systems Inc., at 949 Ferry street in Oakland. Officials of these two trucking firms had earlier alerted Federal and police agents that munitions had been arriving in massive quantities addressed to Thoresen at 2801 Broadway here.

Thoresen's attractive wife, Louise, remained free on more than \$20,000 bail on assorted Federal and State charges ranging from unlawful possession of machine guns to violating State and local laws on storing explosives.

MUNITIONS

United States Attorney Poole said munitions seized

in connection with the Thoresens now totalled 45 tons and added he still had no idea why they were collecting them.

Many of the crates were shipped from the Service Armament Company in Ridgefield, N.J. In addition to these shipping tags they bore markings, in German or French.

Other firms shipping a variety of military hardware to Thoresen included Navy Arms also in Ridgefield, Hunters Lodge and Potomac Arms — both of Alexandria, Va. — and the world's largest private munitions dealer, International Armaments Company.

Called Interarmco for short and headquartered in Monte Carlo, it is owned by Sam Cummings, 39, former CIA agent who set up business in California in 1953 on a \$25,000 shoestring and who now, by his own admission "sells guns to anybody, no questions asked."

SUPPLIES

Interarmco is a major supplier for Navy Arms, Potomac Arms, Hunters Lodge and Service Armaments Companies.

Drew Pearson, special reporter, has accused Interarmco

of being a part-time front for the CIA, charging it not only supplied Fidel Castro but also had a hand in furnishing Cuban exiles with guns and military hardware for their disastrous Bay of Pigs raid.

The CIA has never confirmed nor denied these charges. CIA spokesmen yesterday said they had no evidence which showed either of the two Thoresens had any link with their agency.

As Poole poked through the bullets the machine gunners immediately began yesterday's report. The Thoresens, a Chicago couple, may be "empire

ATLANTA (AP)—A report that the CIA was providing arms to the Cuban revolution was quoted in a magazine. The magazine cannot feature the report because it could be an embarrassment for guns to be shipped out of the country.

The quality of yesterday's search varied from good to poor. Many of the bullets were at least 30 years old and the trench mortar was badly pitted and scored. The trench gun-tank gun seemed to be made of being much better than a loud bang. The lot appeared to be bullets of various calibers, hermetically sealed in metal tins, much like sardines.

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—An Indian police yard will be searched for arms and equipment. The equipment is believed to have been shipped to the police where it was used in the raids. A million-dollar bounty was offered by Judge Carter's courtroom where he was ordered to take a psychiatric examination. His flamboyant attorney kept a Perry Mason-style tight rein on him. He announced to reporters

that any questions he had for his client would be submitted to him. He refused to answer many of the questions.

As the police searched down the hall, the press following, Thoresen told a Chicago reporter, "God, I'd love to tell you about all of this." He said he was sure that his client had a second-hand gun shop

that he sold the cannons and anti-tank weapons as "house ornaments."

But as his attorney spoke, Thoresen was shaking his head negatively.

"Jake, I'd like to let it straight," Thoresen pledged. "I'm not in the business of selling second-hand guns. I'm..."

"Shut up," Ehrlich snapped. "I'm your attorney. Keep your mouth shut."