

Mrs. Thoresen On Trial Today

Special to The Examiner

FRESNO — Mrs. William Thoresen III goes on trial today charged with murdering her wealthy, artillery collecting husband last June 10 in their Fresno home.

Last week the 34-year-old Louise withdrew her insanity plea, and is now expected to take the stand to tell the jury "It was my life or his."

At a preliminary hearing, testimony showed the frail Mrs. Thoresen was suffering from two broken ribs and numerous facial and body injuries on the morning she ran across the street to ask friends to call an ambulance and police.

Choking

"I just shot William," she told Mr. and Mrs. William McDermott, the friends who called police for her.

She told Mrs. McDermott that earlier that morning her husband tried to kill her by choking her, and tried to force her to swallow the contents of a bottle of tablets.

McDermott, a lawyer, had gone to the Thoresen's home the previous evening to congratulate Thoresen because a federal appellate court in San Francisco had ruled in his favor.

Brother Slain

The court had ordered a review of his 1967 conviction on charges of possessing 77 tons of weapons and explosives at his San Francisco mansion and in Bay Area warehouses in 1967.

Both Mr. and Mrs. McDermott are expected to testify.

Mrs. Thoresen will claim that she shot her husband in the back as he lay on their bed in fear that he would kill her to keep her quiet.

She will claim that he had told her during an early morning argument on June 10, that he had hired a killer to shoot his brother, Dick, in Lake Forest, Ill., in September, 1965.

Chicago police never determined whether he killed himself or was murdered.

Mrs. Thoresen will claim that Thoresen, in a fit of rage, boasted that he disposed of his brother's hired killer.

The two brothers were the only children of a self made steel magnate and his wife, who had just visited the Thoresens before Thoresen was shot.

The younger Thoresen son, Michael, now lives with the grandparents in Chicago. Mrs. Thoresen drove him to school before she shot her husband.