

Thoresen Arsenal Trial Tomorrow

By TOM HALL
Examiner News Staff

FRESNO — The long-delayed mysterious gunshipping case of San Francisco millionaire William E. Thoresen III and his wife, Louise, is scheduled to go to trial here tomorrow.

But whether a jury will be selected immediately is questionable.

Defense attorneys are expected to renew motions for

a continuance and a change of venue, both of which were denied last Thursday by U.S. District Judge William N. Goodwin without a hearing.

John J. Flynn, Phoenix attorney for Thoresen, and Peyton Ford, Washington, D.C. attorney for Mrs. Thoresen, claimed Senator Robert F. Kennedy's assassination made it impossible to get a fair trial currently.

They also said "prejudicial pre-trial publicity" has been

just as intense as in San Francisco, and that the case should be transferred to either San Diego or the state of Washington.

Goodwin, 58, who calls himself a "sod-buster judge" from Tacoma, was assigned the case because San Francisco judges' calendars were already heavy.

He was formerly the U.S. attorney in Seattle, receiving the judgeship April 27, 1966.

Goodwin ordered the case

transferred to Fresno last May 27, saying "certain matters indicate that prejudicial publicity would taint these proceedings" if the trial were held in San Francisco.

UNUSUAL RECORD

The record of getting the Thoresens to trial has been almost as unusual as the Treasury Department raid on their 2801 Broadway mansion April 21, 1967, in which some 70 tons of firearms and ammunition was found.

Included in the arsenal were machine guns, anti-tank guns, automatic rifles and a small cannon along with various hand guns.

They were first indicted June 28, 1967, 11 counts against her and 22 against him.

Last February that indictment was dismissed against her and 11 of the 22 counts against him were dropped. The U.S. Supreme Court had ruled in another case that re-

quiring registration of certain guns was unconstitutional in that it was a self-incriminating act.

NEW INDICTMENT

U.S. Attorney Cecil F. Poole returned to the grand jury and March 6 obtained a new 10-count indictment that named her in seven counts and him in eight.

At least a dozen attorneys have appeared in the case at one time or another, including such prominent names as F. Lee Bailey, J. W. Ehrlich and George T. Davis.

Flynn, Ford and Ford's associate, Urban A. Lester, now represent the couple. At one time during the Truman Administration, Ford was deputy U.S. attorney general.

Poole and Jerrold Ladar, assistant U.S. attorney in charge of the criminal division, will prosecute the case.

THE CHARGES

The counts charge either illegal interstate shipment of firearms and ammunition or aiding and abetting such an act.

They are based on other criminal charges or activities involving the couple.

Federal firearm laws make it illegal for any person convicted of a felony or under indictment to ship any firearm or ammunition interstate.

Thoresen, 30, was convicted in 1959 of stealing travel posters from a Bar Harbor, Maine, railroad station.

BOMBS ALLEGED

Mrs. Thoresen, 31, was under indictment in New York City for illegal possession of "a quantity of bombs and bomb shells" and also for violating that state's gun law, when the alleged offenses occurred here.