

Gun Figure's Wife

No Death Bid in Thoresen Trial

Fresno

The State will not ask for the death penalty against Louise Thoresen, on trial in Fresno for killing her millionaire, gun-collecting husband, it was learned as her murder trial began yesterday.

Mrs. Thoresen, 34, is accused of firing five .38 caliber bullets into the back of William E. Thoresen III, 32, while he lay nude in bed on June 10.

News that the death penalty had been ruled out came before six jurors had been empaneled, before noon, at the Fresno County Courthouse, during the questioning of a prospective juror who said she harbored religious principles against capital punishment.

Charge

Superior Judge Joseph L. Joy told Mrs. Myrna Scott, the prospective juror, that "you will not be called upon to fix any penalty in this matter."

Court attaches later ex-pressed by eputy district attorneys Frank Wells and Stephen Henry, will ask the jury at the conclusion of the trial that Mrs. Thoresen be found guilty of "an open charge of murder" which carries a life sentence as a maximum penalty.

Kenneth Devaney, attorney representing Mrs. Thoresen, told the prospective jurors that her plea of self-defense

is based upon her contention that Thoresen had repeatedly threatened her and she was in fear of her life.

Parents

Devaney also said he is attempting to subpoena Thoresen's parents, believed to be in Europe, to testify that the heir to a Chicago seel fortune was subject to "wild, erratic behavior" that included an attempt to push his mother from a second-story window.

Thoresen first came into prominence in California in 1967, when state and Federal agents raided his posh Pacific Heights home in San Francisco and seized more than 80 tons of guns and munitions.

He was convicted in Fresno on Federal charges of violating firearms laws and his conviction was reversed for a new trial one day after his death by a Federal appeals court. His wife was also convicted of violating Federal gun laws, although the prosecution had implied she had been something of a pawn in her husband's munitions dealings.

ARSENAL

No reason was ever given for Thoresen's collecting tons of weapons that included bazookas, hand grenales and machine guns.

Following Thoresen's death in Fresno, local authorities discovered a small arsenal in his home along with 50 pounds of marijuana. An au-

topsy revealed numerous needle marks on his arms and legs.

After she shot her husband Mrs. Thoresen told neighbors he had repeatedly beaten her and had attempted to make her swallow a bottle of sleeping tablets. Last week she changed her plea of not guilty by reason of insanity to plea of self-defense.

Thoresen, who had had repeated brushes with the law since young manhood, was the son of William Thoresen II, president of Great Western Steel Company of Chicago.

Our Correspondent