

CF

DRUGS

Good Times 11-13-92

## UP FRONT

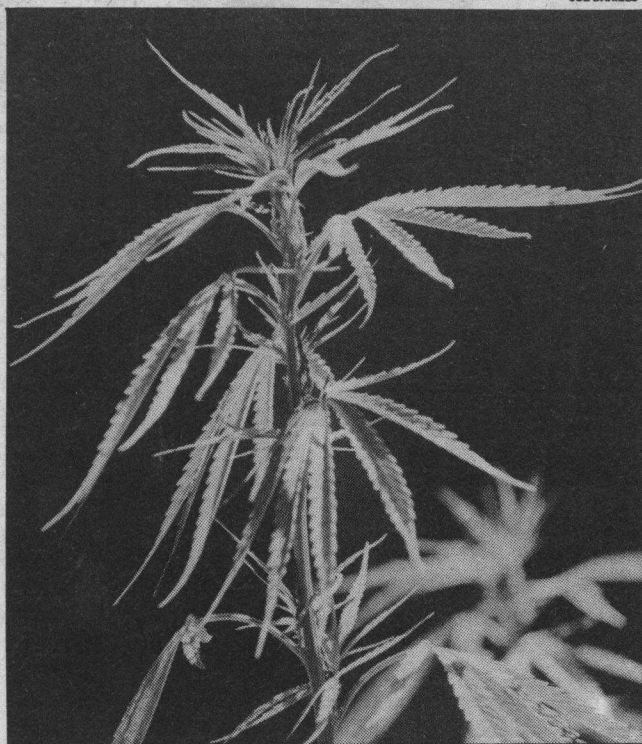
## High Approval for Pot Law

**MEASURE A**, THE medicinal marijuana initiative that won in a landslide on county ballots, made headlines across the country last week. Seventy-seven percent of the county residents who went to polls voted in favor of the initiative, making Santa Cruz the second city in the state where voters have expressed overwhelming support for the medical use of marijuana.

The victory was covered on the *CBS Evening News* and on the *Today Show*. Scott Imler, the Santa Cruz resident who led the campaign, was even interviewed by a radio station in Canada.

But the initiative won't allow the medicinal use of marijuana. It only directs the Board of Supervisors to inform state and federal authorities about the measure. The measure also requests that the sheriff and district attorney "adhere to the spirit of the ordinance," or, in other words, show restraint when investigating marijuana users who need the drug for medicinal purposes.

Imler's next step will be to take his campaign to the nation's capital. "I think we're going to take a group of patients to Washington," Imler says. "Our plan at this



JOE DANIELS

Nov. 24.

Imler hopes that the passage of Measure A will convince local police to show restraint when investigating medicinal marijuana users — in other words, ignore the marijuana if they can see that the user is clearly terminally ill. But the county sheriff says don't count on it. "Are we going to break the law?" says Sheriff Al Noren. "The answer is, 'No.' What if someone says, 'I'm in pain, so I need to take heroin.' I don't think people want law enforcement to be a judge and jury. State law is the law that's binding, and I would never think of asking my officers to not enforce the law."

Imler believes this kind of reaction to the

**Measure A, a county initiative that supports the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes, won handily in the last election and made headlines across the country.**

point is to deliver Measure A to the president and the Congress."

Dozens of county residents have risked arrest and used the drug to control the symptoms of a variety of ailments, from AIDS to epilepsy. One user, north county resident Valerie Corral, made headlines when she was arrested this year for growing the drug in her front yard. Corral, who used the substance to control her epilepsy seizures, faces arraignment on

initiative shows just how much education the community still needs regarding marijuana. "We thought that once we got 12,000 signatures to put the initiative on the ballot, people would feel safe to talk about it," Imler says. "But that wasn't the case. ... We received a reasonable amount of endorsements for the proposal. But even some of the groups who endorsed it didn't want to talk about it."

— Erik Espe