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Increase In Crime Blamed On Increase In Drugs

(First of two articles.)

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Narcotics arrests in the City of Santa Cruz are up 106 per cent over last year, according to Police Chief Geno Pini.

Arrests in the first six months of 1970 totaled 211. From January to June 1969, there were 103 arrests.

Sheriff's cases in all categories of crime are nearly double what they were last year.

In misdemeanor cases alone, city police have arrested 217 more people in the first six months of 1970 than last year. Well over a third of them were juveniles.

Everybody from the cop on the beat to Municipal Court Judge Donald May blames the

spiraling increase of all crimes on narcotic traffic and transients.

"Today's young people are living off the land, just passing through places," said Sheriff Doug James. "They contribute to the increase in crime as does the existing drug culture here."

James said that drugs were probably the underlying cause

of car clouts, burglaries and other crimes.

The district attorney's office often finds drugs to be at the root of armed robberies and kidnaps which happen with alarming regularity in the county.

It is a new wave of crime, brought about by a new wave of youth and changing mores and attitudes, but it is remi-

niscent of the crimes of the '20s. Then it was alcohol. Now it is drugs.

The attraction of drugs for youth is pointed up in a recent survey by distillers and brewers, who find their sales suffer near college campuses whenever a big shipment of marijuana is in town, according to The Associated Press.

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with older people," James said, "but now, they are generally younger people." He smiled. "But you know, it could just be because there are a lot more younger people here now."

The increase in young population, and the different mode of living and new style crimes have placed a burden on the entire legal arm of the county, both in enforcement and prosecution.

(Tomorrow: The world of the district attorney and judges.)

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