State, county effort

Pot bust sparks new crime force

The Oakland County Prosecutor's Office and the Michigan State Police are setting up another organized crime task force.

The new eight-man force, to be com-posed of investigators from L. Brooks Patterson's original organized crime strike force and members of the state police, will focus on following up on

transportation package recently proved by the state legislature will worth \$4 million to the Oakland unty Road Commission.

That is a 23 per cent increase over e present \$17.5 million the road com-

the present \$17.5 million the road com-mission receives from state gasoline and weight taxes.

But John Grubba, road commission managing director, was highly critical of the package of bills that added a total of \$18.5 million to the renamed state transportation fund. He charged that the northin soline to public trans-

Trans-Pak brings

\$4 million to county

'This is not a street operation. We'd be shirking our responsibility if we did not follow up on it.

-Asst. Prosecutor Richard Thompson

last week's 5 1/2-ton marijuana bust at the Oakland-Pontiac Airport, said Chief Assistant Prosecutor Richard

"We plan to use the \$4 million for safety and maintenance programs primarily. We have to," Grubba said.

"The \$4 million of new money, if put into construction, wouldn't be enough

and construction, wouldn't be enough to do our number one priority project, widening Orchard Lake Road to five lanes," Grubba said. That project qualifies for 70 per cent federal fund-ing, though.

Thompson and State Police Lt. George Gedda.

Thompson said the dope smuggling operation was "obviously the product of organized crime." The pot, which had been unloaded from a DC6A, was a been unloaded from a DC6A, was carefully packaged in sealed five-gal-lon plastic pickle barrels and packed

"This is not a street operation,"
Thompson said. "We'd be shirking our responsibility if we did not follow up on it," he added.

THOMPSON AND Gedda listed a number of reasons behind their suspi-cions of an organized crime con-rection. They included:

•Two persons arrested and arraigned last week were not Mich-igan residents. Roger Joseph Kobusch, 28, came from Chicago and Duihio Thomas Fanti, 38, came from Carbon-dale, Col.

•The DC6A was leased from a the Chicago-based company Hughes Asso-ciates, as were the forklift and truck used in unloading the plane at the airport.

Lie pune's pilot, who remained unidentified, came from Texas.

•Elaborate electronic equipment, used to jam police bugging and signaling devises, was found on the plane.

•The manner in which the pot was puckaged indicated a sophisticated operation.

THE CREATION of a new organized

ume. 1ne existence of ratuersous original crime strike force remains in doubt.

The haddand County Board of Commissioners has still to decide if it with the organized crime strike force that the organized crime strike force that the organized crime strike force that the organized crime unit, even after Patterson trotted out his ace undercover investigator, Vincent Mazzara, to tell commissioners about organized crime in Oakland County.

The new task force, Thompson said, "might or might not" succeed in getting ontinued funding for the strike force.

"I think its going to get its budget back enyway," the chief assistant prosecutor predicted. In addition to drawing investigators from the Michigan State Police and the strike force will get the government of the strike force will get the government of the control of the strike force will get the government of the control of the strike force will get the government of the control of the control of the strike force will get the government of the control of the control

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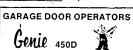
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