

# Pitt Pot Bust

Frederick I (Hohenstaufen)

1967

“There’s something happening here  
What it is ain’t exactly clear.  
There’s a man with a gun over there.  
Telling me I’d better beware.  
It’s time to Stop! Children,  
What’s that sound?  
Everybody look what’s goin’ down.”

(Special to the *Fifth Estate*) The Pittsburgh police’s premature Valentine to the left came in the form of a monster pot (marrywhana) raid on the night of Friday, 10 Feb., that netted a total of 55 arrestees. The bust took place at a reception for the noted anti-war speaker David Dellinger, following a report on his trip to North and South Vietnam delivered earlier at the University of Pittsburgh.

Charged with possession of the dread narcotic was Frank Goldsmith, a research associate with the Steelworkers Union and a behind-the-scenes figure in the local Committee to End the War in Vietnam; it was at his apartment that the reception for Dellinger was being held. (Ironically, Dellinger himself had left moments before the fuzz arrived.)

Better than 45 people turned up to plead innocent at the 16 February hearing. Testimony at the hearing brought out that the police, together with “cooperative” neighbors, had had their eye on Goldsmith’s place for some time. The search warrant for pot was in fact sworn out on the AFTERNOON of the party—like 6 or 7 hours before the alleged complaint of a disorderly party that allegedly brought the police chez Goldsmith.

The rationale for the bust of course was the marrywhana that Goldsmith was supposed to have secreted in his apartment. Much to the chagrin of the heat, the crime lab report demonstrated that pot it was not. Though the police were amazingly reticent to explain what it was they had confiscated that night besides some of Goldsmith’s posters and buttons—irrelevant speculations suggested that they had made off with a quantity of Tetley’s Tea!

But the forces of law and order would be grievously undermined were the police to do anything so reckless as admit to a mistake. Having arrested Goldsmith, a charge had to be found. And so it was. He was charged with and convicted of possession of a “dangerous drug”—5 spantules of Orinate, a prescription cold remedy that is slightly more potent than the patent medicine Contac, regularly dispensed over the counter in any drug store.

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See “Pitt People Freed,” FE #26, March 15–31, 1967.



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