

Weak Statutes Cited In Case Of Strange

Weak sentencing statutes under Indiana law could permit 30-year-old Donald L. Strange, who yesterday pleaded guilty to one charge of sodomy, to be freed from prison after only 18 months, court officials said.

Strange, 4619 East 10th Street, who has admitted to luring more than 25 young boys into his sign shop to engage in unnatural sex acts, entered the plea before Judge John T. Davis in Criminal Court, Division 1.

Judge Davis set July 24 at 1:30 p.m. for sentencing.

The conviction carries a 2-14 year prison term.

Judge Davis suggested reform of state statutes covering sentencings so "a judge's hands won't be tied when cases like this come up."

Although Strange is charged in three separate indictments for sodomy, he could receive no more than the 2-to-14 year penalty provided for in each of the indictments.

STATE LAW requires that such terms must be served concurrently.

Judge Davis said legislation should be enacted in order that determinate sentences may be invoked with the discretion for the time left up to the sentencing court.

Such would be in line with Federal Court regulations in which the function of a jury is only to decide guilt or innocence and leave the sentencing up to the trial court after a background investigation is completed.

Leroy K. New, chief trial deputy prosecutor, said Strange could be back on the streets several months before the minimum two years is completed with good behavior.

"It'll be up to the state parole board," New said, "but they're always anxious to let guys out to make room for one going in."

Strange, a Washington High School graduate, has told

authorities he's had a problem "all my life."

He said all his homosexual activities have been directed toward "young boys."

HE PLEADED guilty specifically to committing an act of sodomy with a 13-year-old boy.

Two men allegedly involved in the same sex ring with Strange, Raymond A. Hardy, 53, 1501 Grant Avenue, and Robert E. Schmidt, 46, 1349 North LaSalle Street, are awaiting trial on similar charges.