

Nab Suspect In Slaying

INDIANAPOLIS (UPI) — Police in Phoenix, Ariz., today arrested a 47-year-old criminal sexual psychopath on a murder charge in the Oct. 3 slaying of Jerry M. Bayles, 10-year-old Indianapolis newspaper carrier.

Robert E. Schmidt, seized on a warrant issued here Monday night, was nabbed shortly after midnight by three Phoenix officers who raided an apartment they said Schmidt had occupied the last five weeks.

Indianapolis police said Schmidt became a prime suspect when it was learned he disappeared from Central State Hospital, a state institution for mental patients, a week after the Bayles boy was killed.

Schmidt was committed in 1969 to Norman M. Beatty Hospital at Westville after he was indicted on charges of sexually molesting many Indianapolis boys.

He was later transferred to Central Hospital spokesmen said he was restricted to the hospital grounds but could have been unaccounted for four hours between checks.

Schmidt was discovered missing at a routine bed check the night of Saturday, Oct. 10, just a week after the Bayles boy's nude body was found along a Henry County road near Knightstown.

The boy was delivering copies of the Indianapolis Star for his older brother in the early-morning darkness when he disappeared. His bicycle and a stack of undelivered papers were found on a Westside street about 300 feet from the main gate of the mental hospital where Schmidt was assigned as a groundskeeper.

Indiana State Police had tipped the Phoenix police that Schmidt might be found in the Phoenix area. Authorities had gathered enough information linking Schmidt to the crime to finger him as the chief suspect, and a murder warrant was issued by Judge Val S. Boring of Marion Municipal Court 4 Monday night.

The senseless killing of the young boy prompted police to devote hundreds of man-hours of work toward solving the crime. Thousands of dollars was contributed in reward money for solution of the slaying.

Among the law enforcement officials indignant over the crime was Robert K. Konkle, superintendent of the Indiana State Police Department.

"It's a vile day when an enterprising kid can't even start in the American tradition of free enterprise without losing his life," said Konkle.