

THURSDAY, MAY 22, 1969

THE INDIANA

## SUSPECT CALLED PSYCHOPATH

*Order Tests In Sodomy Case*

Robert E. Schmidt, recently indicted by the Marion County Grand Jury on three charges of sodomy in a case involving young boys on the Eastside, was termed a criminal sexual psychopath yesterday by doctors at a court hearing.

Schmidt, 46 years old, 1349 North LaSalle Street, and Donald L. Strange, 30, 4619 East 10th Street, were arrested Feb. 12 in connection with their alleged acts of perversion at the Strange Sign Shop, 4619 East 10th Street.

Police said their investigation revealed that 75 youngsters were involved.

**RAYMOND A. HARDY, 52,** 1501 North Grant Avenue, also indicted, allegedly also participated in acts of perversion with many of the same youngsters.

Schmidt's hearing yesterday was held before Special Judge Thomas J. Faulconer Criminal Court, Division 1. The doctor's testifying were Ronald H. Hull and Wesley A. Kissell.

Schmidt who did not take the witness stand, sat disinterestedly during the testimony.

**Judge Faulconer ordered Schmidt placed in the custody of the Indiana Department of Mental Health for 60 days, of further psychiatric tests and observation.**

At the end of 60 days the Department of Mental Health will report its findings to the court. If its diagnosis coincides with that of Drs. Hull and Kissell, Schmidt will be confined in the Norman W. Beatty Hospital at Westville until he is cured.

If the Department of Mental Health rules Schmidt is not a sexual psychopath, he will stand trial on the charges.

**STRANGE, WHO ALSO** faces trial on three counts of sodomy pleaded not guilty to the charges yesterday. The case of Hardy, indicted on two counts, is pending in Division 1.

Schmidt, in interviews with the doctors, told of having his first homosexual experience when he was 9 years old, but halting the intermittent experiences while in the Army Air Corps in World War II.

In 1955 he was convicted on three sex perversion charges, all involving young boys in Illinois, and received two 10-to-20-year prison terms and a 1-to-10 year term.

**Schmidt, paroled after serving nine years, came to Indianapolis in Nov. 1964, believing he was cured, he told the doctors.**

Meanwhile, it was learned

that the Indianapolis Police Department and school officials are doing all they can to provide psychiatric assistance for the youngsters so far implicated in the sex ring.

Parents of all the youngsters were sent letters from Chief of Police Winston L. Churchill and Deputy Chief of Investigations Spurgeon Davenport, in which the police department offered the services of Dr. Dwight W. Schuster.

"We strongly suggest that you take advantage of this service, as the effects of the experiences of these children may not develop until some future time. We believe that psychiatric treatment at this time may prevent this from occurring," the letter said.

**So far, only four parents have responded to the letter. But it was learned that several other families have sought treatment from their family doctors and others have sought treatment from the Marion County Child Guidance Center, 1900 East 11th Street.**

But according to Detective Sgt. William E. Kaiser, who made the investigation, several parents of children deeply involved with Strange and Schmidt have refused to believe the facts and are not seeking treatment for their children.

Yesterday, Dr. Schuster was asked if he believed the young-

sters might later become homosexuals.

**"THE ANSWER** to that is not simple," Dr. Schuster said. "Usually a youngster who gets involved in this sort of situation is pre-inclined to do so . . .

"Usually homosexuals develop where the female is dominant in the family life or in broken homes where there is no male," Dr. Schuster said. (Police report that many of the youngsters are from broken homes.)

"Then too, youngsters from good family situations, but somewhat unstable, could, through curiosity or experimentation, become involved.

**"In either case," Dr. Dr. Schuster said,** professional help would be of great value. But the help must be given to the parent or parents and to the child. Home situations found to be in error must be corrected before the therapy is of value . . ."

Kaiser, who called the case as one of the most sickening he has investigated added, "I have done all I can do and the city has gone so far as to take a personal interest in these youngsters.

"But a lot of these people are embarrassed and ashamed. Some of them have even moved out of their old neighborhoods rather than talk to or face their friends."