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LIE DETECTOR TEST SHOWS BOY SET FIRE

CHICAGO (UPI)—A 13-year-old boy admitted setting a school fire which killed 95 persons when told there were "92 children and three nuns sitting in heaven watching you," a private lie detector expert testified Thursday.

John E. Reid, head of John E. Reid & Associates, appeared as a witness at a delinquency hearing before Family Court Judge Alfred J. Cilella.

Reid said the Cicero, Ill., youth gave him an eight-page statement admitting he set the Dec. 1, 1958, Our Lady of the Angels School fire following a lie detector examination Jan. 12.

After giving the statement, Reid said, the boy "was remorseful."

The boy, a former student at Our Lady of the Angels, whose name has been withheld, sat in the court room while Reid testified. The boy showed no emotion but nervously scratched his knee and shoulder and shuffled his feet during Reid's appearance.

Reid said the boy admitted in the statement that he threw three matches into a basement trash barrel near a stairwell at the school. He said he saw flames leap from the barrel before he ran back to his second floor classroom.

The lie detector expert said the boy told him his teacher tossed him into a fire net and then leaped from a window to safety. The boy's former teacher, Miss Pearl Tristano, denied the boy's account. She said she led her class down the stairs to safety.

Battalion chief James Kehoe, of the fire department investigation unit, said he believed the fire started at the base of the basement stair, where a charred cardboard barrel was found.

Judge Cilella continued the hearing until Feb. 23, when the boy was expected to testify.