

Anti-Draft Dentist

Gets 15 Years

LOS ANGELES — (UPI) — A dentist convicted of fitting young men with unnecessary braces so they could escape the draft has been sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined \$30,000.

But the judge, in imposing the stiffest possible sentence, hinted he might reduce it after a psychiatric study of the dentist's motives.

The crime of Dr. Bernard Bender, 52, of Woodland Hills, Calif., "smacks of treason," said Federal Judge A. Andrew Hauk. Bender misused his professional abilities to commit "sham, fraud and deceit," the judge said.

"But I don't understand his motivation," Hauk said. "I want to find out what makes him tick.

"Did he do it to aid these youths evade the draft? Was it to help young men? Was it to help himself, to help his campaign against the Vietnam war? Was it to help the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, to lend aid and comfort to the enemy? That's what I want to know."

The judge said the prison sentence could be modified after a 90-day psychiatric examination, but that the fine will stand.

Bender's wife burst into tears, and he embraced her, as the judge handed down the sentence.

Bender was convicted Jan. 25 by a U.S. district court jury of conspiracy and two counts of aiding and abetting draft evasion. Witnesses against him said he had fitted young men with braces they did not need so they could claim medical exemptions from the draft.

The prosecution asked for a stiff sentence, saying Ben-

der helped 80 men evade the draft.

Bender and his son Lawrence were arrested by the U.S. Coast Guard on the yacht last year as the sailed away from Cuban waters.

The younger Bender was found innocent of conspiracy charges in the same draft evasion case.

Bender's lawyer asked that he be freed on bond pending appeal. The judge delayed a decision, saying the FBI submitted an affidavit warning that Bender's son was in Florida preparing the family yacht for sailing, and that Bender might flee the country if released.