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Bayh Withdraws as Sponsor of Criminal

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 19— Senator Birch Bayh announced today that he would lead a drive to defeat the proposed revised criminal code if it was not rewritten to eliminate "repressive" provisions restricting availability of Government information.

In an unusual move, the Indiana Democrat said that he was withdrawing his sponsorship of the controversial criminal code legislation to end any public identification with the sections to which he objected.

He denied that his announcement reflected the possibility that he would soon announce his candidacy for the Democratic Presidential nomination. As a purely political matter, he said, he would probably have won more points by opposing rather than seeking to amend the bill.

In response to a question at a news conference, Mr. Bayh said that he would make public his decision on entering the 1976 Democratic competition "in a few weeks."

Mr. Bayh said that he had no objection to most of the 750-page crime bill, which has been more than four years in

the drafting, both in Congress and the Department of Justice, but he said that he would oppose the entire bill if his amendments were not adopted.

Other Changes Sought

Among the other changes proposed by the Senator were the following: Adding a provision to prevent punishment of employes who disclosed information under all but very special circumstances.

Narrowing the definition of conspiracy so a defendant could not be found guilty unless he had engaged in some specific conduct that supported

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Code Bill; Demands That It Be Amended

the objectives of the conspiracy.

Requiring that a person accused of impairing the military effectiveness of the nation in wartime by false statements know that the information was false for the Government to obtain a conviction.

Reducing the maximum sentence that a judge can im-

pose on a party, witness or lawyer in his court for criminal contempt from six months to five days.

Senator Bayh said that he hoped to propose his amendments to a Senate Judiciary subcommittee in late September or early October. If he loses there, he will submit the changes on the floor.

The criminal code revision has formidable sponsors in the Senate, including the two party floor leaders, Senators Mike Mansfield and Hugh Scott; Senator James O. Eastland, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and Senator John L. McClellan, chairman of the Appropriations Committee.