Angela Would End Prison System

PALO ALTO, Calif. (AP) — Jailed revolutionary Angela Davis says if she were free today, her first goal would be to abolish America's prison system.

"I would not really talk about prison reform. I would talk about the abolition of the prison system," said Miss Davis.

"The prison system attempts to completely rob the prisoners of their own humanity ... of the ability of a man to love a woman, and for a woman to love a man.

"But conjugal visits now are rewarded to the prisoners who keep their mouths shut ... who acquiesce to the brutality that goes on. So what appears at first to be reform is used to enlarge on the existing repression."

Miss Davis made the comments during an interview at the Santa Clara County Jail, where she is being held pending a Jan. 31 trial on charges of murder, kidnaping and conspiracy.

She is under court order not to discuss details of the case. But the 27-year-old former university philosphy instructor declared her innocence of accusations she helped plot the Aug. 7, 1970 escape attempt at the San Rafael Courthouse in which her friend Jonathan Jackson, two black prisoners and Superior Court Judge Harold Haley were slain during a gunfight with police.

In her two 6-by-8-foot cells joined by a narrow hallway, the black militant spends most of her days reading, preparing to be a co-attorney at her trial, writing, and smoking four packs of cigarettes a day.

She has a television set, radio, electric typewriter and, from cardboard boxes in which 100 to 400 letters arrive daily, she has fashioned shelves crammed with papers and books. The quarters have a wall toilet, miniature sink and mirror.

Her supporters are conducting an extensive publicity campaign declaring her innocence and seeking her release on bail.

But she thinks too much attention has been given to herself as a person.

"I think one of the problems that exists is the tendency to overpersonalize me ... I try to tell all the people who are behind me that they should also begin to deal with what's happening in the real dungeons ... San Quentin and Soledad."

Miss Davis is confident she will be found innocent if she gets a fair trial, "but you have to realize that so many of the people will come in thinking I'm guilty simply because I'm a Communist."

"There are going to be 12 people sitting there who are going to decide my fate." But she says the jury will not decide "my ultimate fate" and the role she will continue in trying to overthrow the government.

"If I am convicted I will see the jurors as having been willing or unwilling accomplices in a conspiracy presented by the state. If on the other hand I am not convicted, I'll see that as a victory of the people."

ANGELA'S HANDS — Jailed revolutionary Angela Davis uses her hands to emphasize comments during an exclusive interview at the Palo Alto jail where she is being held. During the interview, she said if she were free today, her first goal would be to abolish America's prison system.- (AP Wirephoto)