



STEPHEN BINGHAM
... attorney sought

Suspect in Prison Shootout Still Hunted by Calif. Police

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SAN RAFAEL, Calif.—A year ago this month, attorney and socialite Stephen Bingham was accused of supplying the guns used in a San Quentin prison shootout that left six persons dead.

Authorities say they have found no trace of him since.

The official charges against Bingham, a 29-year-old scion of a wealthy fam-

ily, whose grandfather was Governor of Connecticut, are that he smuggled into the prison a 9-millimeter pistol that George Jackson, a well-known black militant inmate, allegedly used to start a bloodbath on Aug. 21, 1971. By the end of that day six persons had met violent death—Jackson, three white prison guards and two white inmates. [Attorneys for several of the inmates who

were in a position to witness the violence deny the official account and charge that the violence was provoked by guards. Some have contended that Jackson was "set up" to be slain.]

Two days after the shootout, Marin County District Attorney Bruce Bales asked Bingham to contact him. When there was no response, he was charged with

See BINGHAM, F5, Col. 1

five counts of murder on Aug. 31.

Aug. 21, 1971 is the last day anyone admits having seen Bingham. That day he went to see Jackson in prison even though he was not Jackson's attorney. Then he visited with his uncle, Woodbridge Bingham, a retired University of California history professor, in the uncle's Berkeley home.

Later he said he had to go to a political meeting. He left the commune in Berkeley in which he lived, leaving his motorcycle behind him and authorities have not been able to find him since.

Bingham's father, attorney Alfred M. Bingham of Salem, Conn., suggested at the time that his son might have met with foul play. But the FBI, the California attorney general's office and authorities in Marin county apparently do not agree. At any rate they are treating Bingham as a "live case."

"The status is still quo," an FBI spokesman said. "We have the case under active investigation and are still pursuing all possible leads. We are going on the assumption Bingham is still alive."

The California attorney general's office and Marin County authorities also are working on that assumption although they are under a judge's order not to discuss the case with the press since Bingham has not yet been brought to trial.

"But I guess I can say that there is nothing new on the case," a spokesman for the Marin district attorney's office said.

Authorities also are interested in talking to Vanita Anderson, 24, a black woman who accompanied Bingham to the prison on Aug. 21 but did not get in to visit. The address she gave prison authorities turned out to be that of the Black Panther party headquarters in Berkeley. No indictment has been returned against



GEORGE JACKSON
slain in San Quentin

Miss Anderson.

The official version of the events of Aug. 21, 1971, at San Quentin can be reconstructed from the indictments of Bingham and of six of the convicts who allegedly took part in the violence. The six are scheduled to go on trial soon. An affidavit by District Attorney Bales says the Bingham, who had failed in five previous attempts to see Jackson, finally was allowed in early in the afternoon of Aug. 21. The young attorney had with him "a carrying case approximately 18 inches by 24 inches and an expanding folder envelope."

The visit lasted about an hour and authorities said there were no barrier in the visiting room that would have prevented Bingham passing to Jackson the gun and a black wig in which the weapon was allegedly concealed.

After Bingham left, Jackson was returned to the prison's adjustment center by guard Frank P. DeLeon, 44, who noted his hair looked "somewhat different" and started to search as soon as they reached the center.

It was then Jackson pulled the gun, the affidavit said, took several guards hostage and released the 26 inmates of the center.