

Dad Fearful For Lawyer In Q Probe

By Sam Blumenfeld

Fears that missing attorney Stephen M. Bingham met with foul play after Saturday's escape attempt bloodbath at San Quentin were expressed here by his father.

Judge Alfred M. Bingham said last night he believes his son unknowingly brought the gun into the prison when he visited George Jackson, who used the weapon to trigger the abortive breakout that took the lives of three guards and three inmates.

The white-haired, 66 year old elected probate judge of Salem, Conn. said he based his fears and beliefs on what he has learned from authorities and his son's close friends since arriving here Monday.

After a press conference he
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told The Examiner he feared for the life of his son, whom he described as "an extraordinary dedicated do-gooder and non-violent radical" who shunned violence.

"Some of the extremists have been driven to great violence and have even killed their own friends if it placed their movement in jeopardy," he said.

"The whole (escape) plot was lunacy without any chance of success. Stephen would have no part of it."

He said he hoped his 29 year old son was in hiding and alive and not kept a prisoner "by whatever revolutionary group was involved" in the plot.

Earlier, he met with newsmen at the Berkeley home of his brother, retired University of California history professor Woodbridge Bingham.

He said he had been to see

Marin District Attorney Bruce Dales, who is seeking for questioning both his son and the young black woman who accompanied him to the prison Saturday.

Grave Danger

Bingham said Bales felt his son may be in grave danger.

Bales said today, however, that his office is "assuming he's alive" and is continuing to look for him "as hard as we can."

Other sources have speculated that Bingham may have fled, gone into hiding here, or even been whisked out of the country by the revolutionary apparatus working to free Jackson.

Young Bingham's companion, identified as Mrs. Vanitia Witherspoon Anderson, 23, had signed her name on the prison visitors' book and gave 2230 Tenth St., Berkeley, as her residence.

The address is the headquarters of the Berkeley chapter of the Black Panther Party and also the Bobby Seale Clinic and the Angela Davis Defense Committee.

Bingham, member of a distinguished and politically powerful New England family, said he learned the attache case containing the tape recorder — in which the gun was hidden — was carried into the prison by Mrs. Anderson.

Passed Case

She wasn't permitted to go into the interview room to see Jackson, said Bingham, and she passed the case to his son.

"So it was clearly possible he didn't know what was in it."

Asked how it was possible for the gun to get into Jackson's possession without his son knowing it, Bingham said:

"I have reason to believe Steve left the interview room to get cigarettes for Jackson."

He said he got that impression from his conversation with Bales, to whose office he was accompanied by his brother's attorney, Brent Abel of San Francisco.

At Quentin

Young Bingham's actions last Saturday were described by his uncle in a statement released earlier through Abel.

He said he had not seen his nephew for about a year and a half and had invited him for lunch at 1 o'clock that day. He said he received a call at 12:25 from his nephew, saying he was at San Quentin waiting to see a prisoner and that he would be late.

"He arrived on his motorcycle at about 4 p.m. . . . we had a pleasant, relaxed conversation, none of which related to his visit to San Quentin.

"He seemed perfectly normal. He left at about 5:15 p.m., saying that he had an appointment in San Francisco at 6 o'clock . . ."

It was about 3 p.m. that day that the breakout attempt started, perhaps just moments after the attorney had gone out the gates of San Quentin.

With no radio on his motorcycle, it was apparent Bingham may not have known about the escape attempt.

His father said he had spo-

ken to lawyer friends of his son who share the same residence.

"They told me he was acting perfectly normal when he left the house shortly before six."

When he departed, however, he left his motorcycle parked at the house. He doesn't own a car.

Noted Family

The father, a former Connecticut state senator, is the son of the late Hiram Bingham, the state's former governor and U.S. senator. Another brother is Congressman Jonathon Bingham of The Bronx, New York City.

He said he came here "to try to reach Steve directly or indirectly," adding, "I want him to know if he came out of hiding — if that's what he's doing — he would not be alone."

Of his son, a Yale graduate

like himself, Bingham said:

"He is one of the radicals of this generation. But he has been dedicated to non-violent change."

In a telephone conversation with his son about three weeks ago, the younger Bingham, who had been practicing law under a fellowship to work with legal assistance offices, said he planned to branch soon into labor law.

He said his son, the youngest of four children, was on the staff of the Yale Daily News and after graduation came to Boalt Hall here, later passing the bar on his first try.

In 1963, the father said, Bingham became active in the civil rights movement in the South and went to Mississippi in the drive to register black voters.