

Black Militant Now 'Fed Up,' Tells Story

By Ed Montgomery

HOUSTON — Vanita Anderson, long sought for questioning for possible complicity in last August's violence at San Quentin Prison, says she is "fed up" with black militancy and has split with her radical former friends.

She contends she has no idea of the whereabouts of attorney Stephen Bingham, who authorities say may have been accompanied to the prison by Mrs. Anderson.

Bingham is a fugitive from charges he smuggled a gun to inmate George Jackson, triggering an abortive escape attempt which ended with Jackson and five others dead.

Disclaims Knowledge

In an interview after she had been located here by The Examiner, Mrs. Anderson emphatically disclaimed advance knowledge of the smuggled gun or the tape recorder in which authorities say it was concealed.

She also said she knew Bingham but did not accompany him to the prison.

The 9mm pistol had been purchased by Black Panther Captain Randy Williams, now imprisoned for his role in an Oakland police ambush. Mrs. Anderson said she does not know how the gun passed from Williams to Bingham, who is still the object of an international search.

Militant Groups

(At least two prison personnel are known to have given statements that they witnessed Mrs. Anderson in

possession of a tape recorder. One of the two has said he saw her hand it to Bingham in the waiting room.)

"That was a phase in my life that is over with," the 24 year old former Black Panther community worker said of militant groups. "It's not what it's cracked up to be."

Mrs. Anderson intimated it was her interest in black militancy which led to an Alabama divorce obtained by her husband, Julius.

As for the events at San Quentin on Aug. 21, Mrs. Anderson said:

"I didn't go to San Quentin with Bingham. It is my recollection he already was in the visitors' room when I got there.

Lots of Arguing

"They (prison authorities) were not going to let me see Jackson because I had visited him earlier in the week. I was working as an investigator on the Soledad Brothers case.

"Because it was Saturday there were a lot of visitors waiting and only three interview rooms available. Jackson was not allowed in the big reception room.

"I knew Bingham — we were traveling in the same circles — and I talked with him. He was having trouble getting to see Jackson because he was not an attorney of record.

"There was a lot of arguing about it and a long delay. I stayed there to see how he made out. When it appeared he was finally going to see Jackson he said he would only take a few

minutes and that I could have the remainder of his visiting time, which is normally one hour.

Returned to Cell

"But when Bingham came out they still wouldn't let me see Jackson. They said he already had been returned to his cell.

"By that time Bingham had left. I never saw him again."

Mrs. Anderson, who earned teaching credentials in Nashville and later taught in Germany while her husband was stationed there with the military, presently is working for her master's degree in education. She also is holding down a job on the side.

"I want to go back to teaching," she said as she bounced her 11 months old son, Muntu Aluche Witherpoon - Roberts, on her knee.

Won't Return to S.F.

"Oh I'd like to go back and live in San Francisco — it's the most beautiful city of all — but I've split with those people (referring to both black and white militants), and it wouldn't work out. There would be trouble.

"It's costing me \$75 a month to keep the baby in nursery school and with working on the side I don't know how long it's going to take to get my master's degree.

"Meanwhile I plan to stay right here. If the district attorney (Bruce Bales) from Marin wants to question me, he can come down here and talk with my attorney.

"I know there is no warrant out for my arrest. I remained in the East Bay for

several days after the San Quentin episode, but I didn't feel obligated to volunteer any information.

All Behind Me

"I really got a kick out of the report back in January that I was suspected of taking part in hijacking that airplane to Cuba. I sat right here and laughed and laughed. I have no desire to go to Cuba."

Reflecting on her "phase in life" as an activist, Mrs. Anderson displayed a November, 1970, edition of TAN, a black publication, which featured an illustrated article relating her activities as a "firebrand" participating in the black studies program, and as an individual who took pride in who she was and what she was doing.

She said, "That's all behind me now. I'm interested in completing my education."