

Murder suspect tried to hire killer: witness

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

An accused killer offered \$20,000 to a Cornwall man in exchange for committing murder, Superior Court in Milton heard last Friday.

"If I was interested in making \$20,000, I was to find a gun," Mike Fontaine, 39, told the first-degree murder trial of former Milton resident David Fiorino.

"He told me if I would kill this guy, he'd give me \$20,000."

Mr. Fiorino, 27, is accused of murdering Steve Andreopoulos, 36, during a contraband liquor deal in July, 1996.

The Barrie-area man's body was discovered buried in a Derry Road field in February, 1998.

Mr. Fontaine is a childhood friend of Mr. Fiorino's wife Kimberly's family. He testified that the accused had pumped him for both "a gun and a place" in phone conversations to set up what he said was a cigarette smuggling deal.

But defense attorney Robert Nuttall attempted to poke holes in the credibility of the testimony by pointing out the gaps in Mr. Fontaine's memory.

In fact, after more than an hour under cross-examination, Mr. Fontaine admitted that he

never actually heard Mr. Fiorino use the word 'kill' in regards to Mr. Andreopoulos.

Mr. Fontaine testified that when he was asked to find 'a gun and a place' and heard Mr. Fiorino say, "I'll take care of it" in referring to the cigarette deal, he made an assumption about the accused's intentions.

During hours of testimony, Mr. Fontaine swore that his phone conversations with Mr. Fiorino revolved around smuggling cigarettes, not alcohol.

But as a self-confessed alcoholic who frequently smoked marijuana, Mr. Nuttall wondered if Mr. Fontaine had become confused over which product he was peddling.

"If it isn't your memory that's confused, could it be you're telling a little fib just so there could be no association," asked Mr. Nuttall.

But Mr. Fontaine denied he had ever been in the contraband liquor business.

"I can assure you 100 per cent this was a cigarette deal," he said.

"I never had any dealings in alcohol and I am not telling a little fib."

But Mr. Nuttall demonstrated to the jury through transcripts that Mr. Fontaine's testimony conflicted in areas with under oath statements he had provided in the past.

It also collided with the testimony of Mr.

"He told me if I would kill this guy, he'd give me \$20,000."

MIKE FONTAINE

Fontaine's brother Stephan heard earlier in the trial.

At that time, Stephan said he understood that Mr. Fiorino and his brother were setting up a liquor arrangement.

Mr. Fontaine blamed the discrepancies on his memory.

"I don't have a very good memory due to the amount of alcohol I've consumed in my life," he told the court.

On Tuesday, former Alliston resident Mark Bonnell, 30, took the stand. He testified that he hooked Mr. Fiorino up with Barrie resident Dominco Sacco for a large liquor deal that is suspected to have taken place July 2, 1996.

That's the last day Mr. Sacco's partner, Mr. Andreopoulos, was seen alive. After that date, Mr. Fiorino seemed to come into money, buying a house and a new truck.

Mr. Bonnell testified that he set up a meeting with Mr. Sacco and Mr. Fiorino after the

accused mentioned he could get his hands on a large supply of contraband booze from a warehouse in Cornwall.

"I found it hard to believe there was all this liquor sitting there," Mr. Bonnell told the court.

Despite his misgivings, Mr. Bonnell took the accused to Mr. Sacco's home for a meeting.

At some point, Mr. Andreopoulos arrived and joined in the discussion.

Though he was meant to receive a cut from the deal, Mr. Bonnell testified he didn't know when or how the exchange was meant to take place until Mr. Fiorino called him in the morning of July 3, 1996.

"He said the deal went down last night and I'll be up with the money," said Mr. Bonnell.

That phone call was followed by one from Mr. Sacco, who seemed concerned about his partner.

"He wanted to know if I'd heard from Dave," said Mr. Bonnell. "I think he said Steve should have been back by 1:30 the night before."

When Mr. Fiorino made a second call to Mr. Bonnell, he claimed the victim had been stopped by a RIDE program and panicked, Mr. Bonnell told the court.

Shortly after that, the pager, cell phone and home phone numbers of Mr. Fiorino ceased to function, Mr. Bonnell said.

The trial continues today.

THE REAL THING! FACTORY SURPLUS INVENTORY CLEARANCE SALE!!!

**FACTORY
AUTHORIZED
CLEARANCE**

LA-Z-BOY FURNITURE GALLERIES

30-66% OFF!

(our already low regular store prices)

Please Make No Mistake! This is a One-Time Only Factory Clearance Event! We have been chosen as the Exclusive Location to Sell-Off the entire National Factory Surplus Inventory.



These are all Brand New, Factory-Fresh Upholstered Goods, with Full Factory Warranty. Including discontinued styles and fabrics, production over-

runs and cancelled special orders..., all at Factory Clearance Prices..., and all Ready for Immediate Delivery/Pickup. Most pieces/groupings are one-of-a-kind, so shop as early as possible for best selection!

TEMPORARY CLEARANCE SHOWROOM ADDED IN BURLINGTON!

CLEARANCE SHOWROOM
3455 FAIRVIEW ST., BURLINGTON
WEST OF WALKERS LINE (QEW EXIT)
Mon.-Fri. 12 noon-9pm,
Sat. 9:30am-6pm, Sun. 10am-5pm
(905) 331-7600

BURLINGTON POWER CENTRE
Q.E.W. & BRANT STREET
Mon.-Fri. 9:30am-9pm,
Sat. 9:30am-6pm, Sun. 10am-5pm
(905) 331-7600



*Offer does not apply to Dotted/Fiber/Regular merchandise. See store for details. Limited Time Offer.

90 DAYS SAME AS CASH

WE MAKE THE ROOMS THAT MAKE A HOME.

BANKRUPTCY!

GET A FRESH START. Get SOLUTIONS now for:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Credit Card Problems | Loss of Job or Loved One | Repossessions |
| Major Cash Flow Problems | Wage Garnishments | Evictions |
| Persistent Bill Collectors | Judgements, Law Suits | Student Loan |
| Delinquent Taxes | Foreclosures | Divorce Related Financial Problems |

**P4 PADDON +
YORKE INC.**
FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES
TRUSTEE IN BANKRUPTCY

Bankruptcy can be avoided. Call us! No charge for initial consultation!

875-0811

225 Main Street East (Main & Martin St.) Milton

A better solution!

Picture Yourself Here...

**20 POUNDS
LIGHTER in
10 WEEKS**

GUARANTEED!

Call for a Free
Consultation



Free 6 weeks
Weight Loss

Excludes products.
Based on full
program.

BEVERLY HILLS
Weight Management Centres
EMS TREATMENTS & BODY SCULPTING



550 Ontario St. S. Unit 18
875-2889