

Clein Testifies At Pretrial

By COLIN PORRAS
Courant Staff Writer

Defense Seeks To Move Murder-

NEW LONDON — In his heyday, Haiman Clein was a flamboyant shoreline real estate attorney who sat on the board of directors of an Old Saybrook bank and handled dozens of cases in three different courts.

But on Thursday, Clein sat on the witness stand in New London Superior Court: an admitted murderer, drug addict and thief, testifying in a proceeding involving his former mistress.

Clein was called as a witness in an on-going hearing to see whether Beth Ann Carpenter — also his former law partner and alleged co-conspirator in a murder-for-hire plot — can get a fair trial in New London County.

Carpenter's attorneys asked Clein about his notoriety in the area, his numerous connections to banks and other businesses through 17 years of legal work and his extended family [he has

four ex-wives and five children living in the area] to show how difficult it would be to find an impartial jury to hear the case.

Thursday marked the third day of testimony. The hearing resumes Wednesday with more testimony from Clein, 60.

Carpenter, 36, is accused of conspiring with Clein to pay a hit man \$10,000 in 1994 to kill her brother-in-law because she felt he was an unfit stepfather to her

Friday, September 15, 2000 ♦ THE HARTFORD COURANT ♦ A7

CONNECTICUT

Hearing For Former Mistress

For-Hire Trial To Another Court

then 3-year-old niece.

The plot was carried out on March 10, 1994, when Clein's drug dealer, Mark Depres, lured Anson "Buzz" Clinton III, 28, of East Lyme to a secluded stretch of road off 195 near Rocky Neck State Park and shot him five times in the chest. Depres pleaded guilty to murder and is awaiting sentencing.

Clein has pleaded guilty to charges of murder and conspiracy

to commit murder as part of a plea agreement with prosecutors. He is awaiting sentence pending the outcome of the Carpenter case.

Carpenter has pleaded not guilty to charges of capital felony, murder and conspiracy to commit murder. She faces life in prison without possibility of parole if she is convicted. She remains in custody, and bail is set at \$1 million. Carpenter's attorneys, Hugh

Keele and Tara Knight of New Haven, say their client had no role in the murder, and that Clein hired Depres to settle Carpenter's problem and impress the woman he loved.

Keele and Knight want the trial moved to another county where they believe they will have a better chance of finding an impartial jury.

The defense attorneys have argued that widespread media coverage of the case has also tainted any potential jury pool in New London County.