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Lawyer: Client Threatened To Kill Me

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by **Dave Racher, Daily News Staff Writer**

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The lawyer for an accused South Philadelphia killer quit the case yesterday, telling the jury that his client had threatened to kill him.

The act prompted the judge to call a mistrial.

The accused killer, Nicodemo "Nicky Slick" DiPietro, was held in contempt of court, one day after he told the judge that he wanted to fire his lawyer.

His attorney, Earl Raynor, of Chester, disclosed the death threat to a jury during DiPietro's murder trial before Common Pleas Judge James A. Lineberger.

"I can't represent this man," said Raynor. "He's threatened to kill me."

Assistant District Attorney Edward Cameron tried to prevent a mistrial, but the judge had no choice.

DiPietro, 32, of 16th Street near Packer Avenue, had complained about Raynor the day before.

Lineberger discharged the jury and held DiPietro in contempt of court.

A hearing on that charge will be held next week.

DiPietro is accused of murder in the Feb. 28 shooting death of Tad Rice-Green, 33, inside Club Deco, 510 N. Front St.

A 22-year-old former exotic dancer testified that she witnessed the killing. DiPietro ran outside and was caught after he tried to carjack a motorist.

Cameron said DiPietro was trying to shake down Green before shooting him.

Green was heard telling DiPietro, "What are you doing asking for money?" before being shot, Cameron said.

DiPietro had been released on federal parole for carjacking about a month before.

While jurors were out of the room on Thursday, DiPietro asked Lineberger to let him fire Raynor.

DiPietro said he only let Raynor represent him because he didn't think the dancer would appear in court.

The dancer had been threatened by someone else several months ago, and tried to disguise herself in court by wearing a wig.

Shortly after DiPietro asked for a "freakin' new attorney," lawyer A. Charles Peruto Jr. came in to take over the case.

When four jurors said they knew Peruto, he was automatically disqualified.

Raynor stayed put on the case, until he was threatened.

Yesterday, before Raynor's disclosure, DiPietro stood up before the jury and said, "This guy's no good. He won't ask the questions I want. This is a circus."

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