

Surgeon Reports Flynt Paralyzed, May Never Walk

POST 3/10/78
ATLANTA (UPI) — Magazine

owner Larry Flynt, victim of a would-be assassin's bullet, is paralyzed from the waist down and has less than a 50-50 chance of regaining use of his legs, a neurosurgeon said yesterday.

Dr. George Tindall, chief of neurosurgery at Emory University Hospital, issued the diagnosis after removing a bullet and bone chips from Flynt's spinal canal.

Flynt, 35, owner of Hustler magazine, and his attorney were gunned down Monday afternoon on a street corner in Lawrenceville, Ga., 30 miles to the northeast.

After a 2½ hour operation—Flynt's third since the shooting—Tindall came out of the operating room to report "inability to move his lower extremities voluntarily. There are no reflexes in his lower extremities—there is a loss of sensation from the mid-level (waist) down."

The physician said Flynt had "a lot of spirit" and "those nerve roots can regenerate." But he termed chances for Flynt to completely recover use of his legs "less than 50 percent."

He said the operation to remove the bullet and bone chips was successful, and said he considered Flynt to be "in serious condition" rather than critical.

More surgery will be required for the abdominal area because of extensive gunshot damage, but no more neurosurgery is planned, Tindall said.

The bullet was turned over to police for a ballistics examination.

In Lawrenceville, Gwinnett County Police Col. Larry Puckett said, "We feel we've made some progress in the last 12 hours. We've received some information that we think is very encouraging."

Police have been trying to locate a young couple seen near the scene of the shooting. Puckett said "we followed up some new information on them last night." Police hope the couple may be able to provide information about the gunman.

Lawrenceville attorney Gene Reeves, 47, was still hospitalized at Button Gwinnett in satisfactory condition.