

Chotiner Dies of Car Accident Injuries

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MURRAY CHOTINER
... praised by President

Murray Chotiner, 64, Washington attorney and political adviser to President Nixon for almost three decades, died at Washington Hospital Center early yesterday of a massive pulmonary thromboembolism, or large blood clot.

His death was the direct result of a broken leg Chotiner suffered when his car was involved in a collision Jan. 23, Dr. James L. Luke, D.C. medical examiner, ruled after an autopsy yesterday. The accident occurred near the home of Sen.

Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) in McLean.

Doctors had expected to release Chotiner today from Sibley Hospital, where he was taken after the accident.

But complications set in late Tuesday night, it was learned, and Chotiner was transferred to the hospital center about 11 p.m. Time of death was placed at 1:30 a.m. by hospital spokesmen.

With him at the time were his wife, Nancy, his secretary Barbara Higgins, and a former secretary, Yvonne Allen.

President Nixon said Chotiner was a "valued

counselor and a trusted colleague. But above all, Murray Chotiner was my friend."

"While some recoil from the label 'politician,' " Mr. Nixon said, "Murray was rightly proud of it because he was a professional who had the respect and admiration of those who worked with him. He will forever have my gratitude. I shall miss him."

Since March, 1971, Chotiner had been a counsel with Harrison, Lucey, Sagle and Solter, a law firm with offices across the street

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DEATH, From A

from the White House, at 1701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW.

Chotiner had planned to open a new firm, Chotiner and Webster, with attorney George Webster, on Friday, according to Earl Mazo, a Nixon biographer and Chotiner family friend.

The blood clot that caused

death had formed around the fracture, Dr. Luke found, then moved to the lungs, where it interfered with the flow and oxygenation of blood. When a clot migrates, the situation immediately becomes an emergency, medical authorities agreed yesterday.

Chotiner was transferred from Sibley to the hospital center, which has the capability for special treatment with a drug, streptolysin, that can be used to dissolve a clot. The other possible treatment is surgery to remove the clot, but results there are "questionable," a doctor said yesterday.

Blood clotting is a not unusual complication after fractures, medical authorities agree.

The accident occurred about 9 a.m. Jan. 23 in front of Sen. Kennedy's home at 636 Old Chain Bridge Rd. According to Fairfax County police, a northbound GSA truck, driven by Charles Micken, 37, of 1313 Bryant St. NE, crossed the center line and struck Chotiner's southbound Lincoln Continental in the left rear side.

The Continental went into a roll, and came to rest in the northbound lane against a car driven by Dr. Joseph D. McGovern, 51, of 3734 McKinley St. NW. McGovern, no relation to Sen.

George S. McGovern, was not injured.

Sen. Kennedy, who was playing tennis at the time, heard the sound of the impact, sent his gardener to the scene to offer aid while he called police.

Chotiner and Mickens both were taken to Sibley Hospital in the District. Mickens was released yesterday.

Chotiner seemed in good spirits when he talked by telephone to a reporter last Saturday. "I must have been knocked out by the impact," he said, "because the next thing I can remember is the hospital . . . I'm as well as can be expected, I guess . . ."

Kennedy called Mrs. Chotiner the evening of the accident to express his concern, "which was very nice of him," Chotiner said in the conversation.

At the time of the collision, Mickens was hauling furniture for GSA from the Navy Yard in Southeast Washington to Langley. He was charged then with reckless driving, and a trial date was set in Fairfax County for Feb. 22.

County police said last night that they were now listing Chotiner's death as a traffic fatality, but that no decision had been made as to whether a more serious charge would be brought against Mickens. He could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Chotiner was born Oct. 4,

1909, in Pittsburgh. He attended the University of California at Los Angeles until 1926, and took his law degree three years later at Southwestern University in Los Angeles.

He was in private practice in Beverly Hills and active in local Republican Party affairs into the early 1940s. In 1942, he managed Earl Warren's successful California gubernatorial campaign.

"Murray said that people remembered him for making Nixon," Mazo recalled yesterday, "but he would say, 'the real man I created was Earl Warren.'"

Chotiner handled publicity for Mr. Nixon's first congressional campaign in 1946, and was his state campaign manager four years later when Mr. Nixon won election to the Senate from California.

When Mr. Nixon ran for vice president in 1952, Chotiner was his national campaign manager, and in 1968 he was a special assistant to the manager of Mr. Nixon's presidential bid.

Soon after the President's inauguration, Chotiner was named general counsel for the White House office handling trade negotiations. In 1970, he was named special counsel to the President, a post he held until March, 1972.

He frequently was accused by Democrats of engaging in unethical campaign practices. Last summer during the Senate Watergate hearings, it was disclosed that Chotiner had hired two "reporters" to spy on the campaigns of Democratic candidates. Chotiner contended at the time that there was "nothing underhanded or illegal" about the arrangement.

Chotiner is survived by his wife, Nancy, of the home at 1321 Merrie Ridge Rd., McLean; two daughters, Julie and Renee, both of the home; a son, Kenneth, an attorney in Los Angeles, and a brother, Jack, a retired lawyer in Beverly Hills.

The family suggests that memorials take the form of contributions to Children's Hospital.