

Chotiner Eulogized as 'Gifted Lawyer'

By Barbara Bright-Sagnier

Murray Chotiner, the California attorney who launched former Chief Justice Earl Warren and President Nixon into Republican politics, was eulogized yesterday as a "remarkably gifted lawyer and an astutely operational politician."

President and Mrs. Nixon were among some 300 politicians, lawyers and family friends who paid tribute yesterday to Mr. Chotiner, 64, who died Wednesday of complications after an automobile accident near his home in McLean.

Warren was released from the hospital Saturday after treatment for lung congestion and did not attend the 10 a.m. funeral services at the Washington Hebrew Congregation on McComb Street at Massachusetts Avenue N.W.

Political associates of Mr.

Chotiner who were among the mourners included the President's secretary, Rose Mary Woods; former presidential aide Charles W. Colson; Victor Gold, once a speechwriter for former Vice President Spiro Agnew; and Jeb Stuart McGruder, former deputy director of Mr. Nixon's re-election campaign. Former White House counselor Robert H. Finch was one of the 21 honorary pallbearers.

Irving Ferman, a Howard University law professor and a longtime friend of Mr. Chotiner, read the eulogy at the traditional Jewish service. Rabbi Joseph Weinberg was the officiating rabbi.

Ferman, a former chairman of Washington's police complaint review board and member of a civil rights review board of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, recalled Mr. Chotiner "engaging humor,"

his "strong pluralist disposition," his "total lack of and disdain for self-righteousness and hypocrisy," and his courtesy. These were the qualities, Ferman said, that enabled Mr. Chotiner to act as an "astute and highly skilled professional political leader."

Mr. Chotiner, a native of Pittsburgh, managed Warren's first gubernatorial campaign and directed Mr. Nixon's campaigns for the House, the Senate and the vice presidency.

He did not take an active role in Mr. Nixon's 1968 or 1972 presidential campaigns, although in 1970 he was named by Mr. Nixon as special counsel to the President. Since March, 1971, Mr. Chotiner has been associated with the law firm of Harrison, Lucey, Sagle and Solter, who have their offices across the street from the White House.

At yesterday's services, Mr. Chotiner's 16-year-old stepdaughter, Julie, read from an essay she had written in the fall for her high school English class and had sent to her father after the accident.

Calling him "sort of an odd hero," she said her father was "fun, fair, honest" and knew most about politics. "The only bad thing I can think of is his bad memory," she said, and then added, "I respect my dad greatly."

After the services, the President escorted Mr. Chotiner's widow, Nancy, and her two daughters, Julie and Renee, to their car. He embraced the daughters and told Mrs. Chotiner, "He was a great guy."

Mr. Chotiner was buried at the National Memorial Park cemetery in Falls Church.



By Ken Feil—The Washington Post

President and Mrs. Nixon leave funeral with Murray Chotiner's widow, Nancy, and oldest daughter, Julia, right.