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Ex-Nixon Aide

Chotiner Tried To Help Hoffa



MURRAY CHOTINER
Former Nixon aide

Washington

Former White House aide Murray M. Chotiner acknowledged yesterday that he interceded with key presidential assistants to free former Teamsters leader James R. Hoffa from prison.

"I did it. I make no apologies for it, and frankly I'm proud of it," said Chotiner, now in private law practices.

Chotiner told a newsman that among those in the White House with whom he discussed Hoffa's case was H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, who this week resigned as Mr. Nixon's staff chief following disclosures in the Watergate Case.

Hoffa was sentenced in March, 1967, to eight years in Lewisburg, Pa., on two separate convictions for jury tampering and pension fraud.

FREED

Two days before Christmas 1971, Mr. Nixon freed Hoffa on a grant of clemency with the stipulation that

the former labor leader refrain from union activities until 1980.

Columnist Jack Anderson reported yesterday that Hoffa had been promised his release by Thanksgiving, 1970, but that the Justice Department balked at parole until Chotiner complained to Haldeman in a note dated Nov. 3, 1971.

The note, according to Anderson, said: "It appears that nothing substantive has occurred. It is suggested that it should not take this long to perform if there is going to be any performance."

STATEMENT

Chotiner, who was Mr. Nixon's longtime campaign adviser and special presitme he (Hoffa) was resigned in March 1971, said:

"I don't know if I helped — all I can tell you is what I did. I know that I brought matters to the attention of the proper people and in due time he (Hoffa) was released. I don't say that it's because of anything that I

did. But again, I repeat, that if his name weren't Hoffa, he'd have been out before that."

Chotiner said he acted after Hoffa's son, James, came to see him "and left the matter with me." Chotiner said he received nothing for his efforts, acting only because he felt Hoffa should have been released.

Columnist Anderson wrote that Hoffa's sentence was commuted after thousands of dollars had been contributed to Mr. Nixon's 1972 presidential campaign and after Hoffa pledged to deliver the Teamsters vote to Mr. Nixon.

Hoffa's successor, Frank E. Fitzsimmons, strongly supported Mr. Nixon's reelection.

Associated Press