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Carl Channell, 44, Fund-Raiser For Conservatives, Dies of Injuries

By [MICHAEL WINES](#) and SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMESMAY 9, 1990

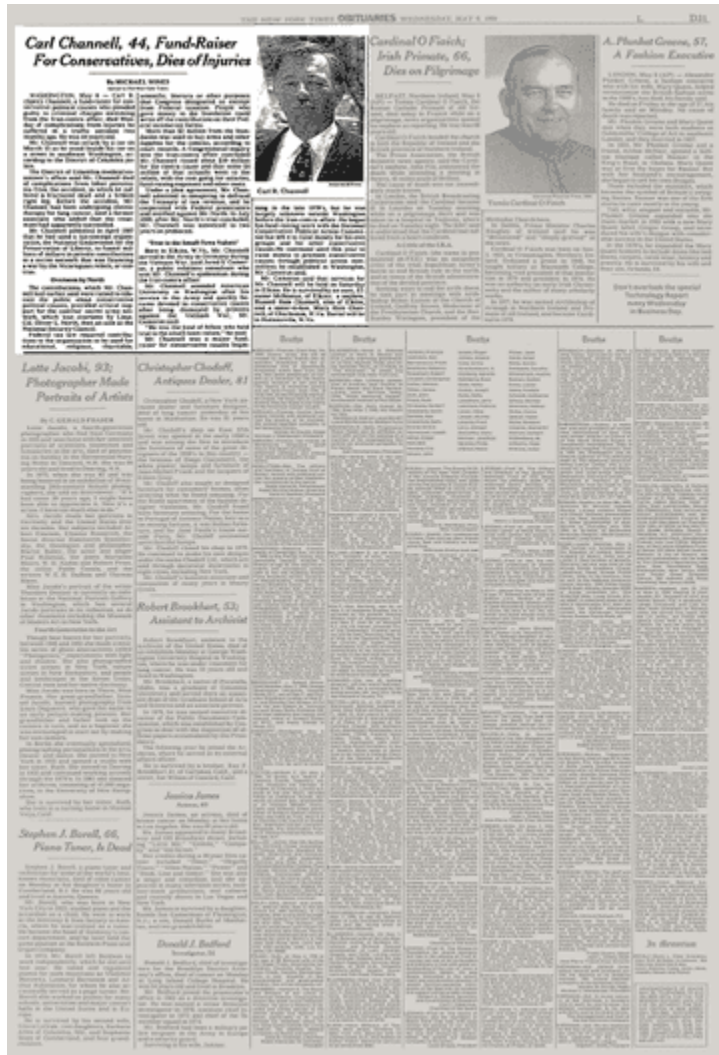
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May 9, 1990, Page 00031Buy Reprints The New York Times Archives

Carl R. (Spitz) Channell, a fund-raiser for conservative political causes who pleaded guilty to criminal charges stemming from the Iran-contra affair, died Monday of complications from injuries he suffered in a traffic accident two months ago. He was 44 years old.

Mr. Channell was struck by a car on March 15 as he stood beside his car on a street in southeast Washington, according to the District of Columbia police.

The District of Columbia medical examiner's office said Mr. Channell died of complications from lobar pneumonia from the accident, in which he suffered a fractured skull and a broken

right leg. Before the accident, Mr. Channell had been undergoing chemotherapy for lung cancer, said a former associate who added that the treatment had apparently succeeded.

Mr. Channell admitted in April 1987 that he had used a tax-exempt organization, the National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty, to funnel millions of dollars in private contributions to a secret network that was financing a war by the Nicaraguan rebels, or contras.

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Overseen by North

The contributions, which Mr. Channell had earlier said were raised to educate the public about conservative political causes, provided critical support for the contras' secret arms network, which was overseen by Lieut. Col. Oliver L. North, then an aide at the National Security Council.

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Federal tax law required contributions to the organization to be used for educational, religious, charitable, scientific, literary or other purposes that Congress designated as exempt from Federal taxation. People who gave money to the foundation could write off the contributions on their Federal income tax forms.

More than \$2 million from the foundation was used to buy arms and other supplies for the contras, according to court records. A Congressional inquiry into the Iran-contra affair concluded Mr. Channell raised about \$10 million for the contra cause and that some \$4 million of that actually went to the rebels, with the rest going for salaries, fund-raising expenses and other costs.

Under a plea agreement, Mr. Channell admitted to conspiring to defraud the Treasury of tax revenue, and he cooperated with Federal prosecutors and testified against Mr. North. In July 1989, after Mr. North's trial concluded, Mr. Channell was sentenced to two years on probation.

'True to the Small-Town Values'

Born in Elkins, W.Va., Mr. Channell served in the Army in Germany during the Vietnam War, said Jared S. Cameron, a public relations consultant who was Mr. Channell's spokesman during the Iran-contra affair.

Mr. Channell attended American University in Washington after his service in the Army and quickly became devoted to conservative causes after being dismayed by protests against the Vietnam War, Mr. Cameron said.

"He was the kind of fellow who held true to the small-town values," he said.

Mr. Channell was a major fund-raiser for conservative causes beginning in the late 1970's, but he was largely unknown outside Washington before the Iran-contra affair. He began his fund-raising work with the National Conservative Political Action Committee but left it to raise money for his own groups and for other conservative causes. He continued until this year to raise money to promote conservative causes through political action committees he established in Washington, Mr. Cameron said.

Mr. Cameron said that services for Mr. Channell will be held on Saturday in Elkins. He is survived by an aunt, Eleanor McManus, of Elkins; a nephew, Russell Hale Channell, also of Elkins, and a sister-in-law, Mary Hale Channell, of Charleston, W.Va. Burial will be in Huttonsville, W.Va.

A version of this obituary appears in print on May 9, 1990, on Page D00031 of the National edition with the headline: Carl Channell, 44, Fund-Raiser For Conservatives, Dies of Injuries. [Order Reprints](#) | [Today's Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)

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