

B-2 C The Evening Bulletin, Thursday, January 18, 1979

Edward Friedman, 73; noted R.I. trial lawyer

FRIEDMAN
EDWARD

MIAMI, Fla. — Edward I. Friedman, 73, a prominent Rhode Island attorney whose life of public service and successful law practice was marred by income tax evasion charges in the early 1970s, died yesterday at Mount Sinai Hospital in Miami, Fla., after a long bout with cancer and other illnesses.

Mr. Friedman, of 75 Oaklawn Ave., Cranston, was the husband of Nettie (Kessler) Friedman.

He was a highly successful trial lawyer who won hundreds of thousands of dollars in settlements over the years for the clients he represented in negligence and other lawsuits.

Mr. Friedman's name repeatedly made the newspapers during the past four decades, most often as a result of his courtroom successes and failures, and because of his continued concern with the Rhode Island's Workmen's Compensation law.

He was legal advisor to the state Department of Labor from 1940 to 1942 and chief of the state Division of Workmen's Compensation from 1940 to 1953. In 1953 he resigned his post, he said, to make more money as an attorney in private practice, and because he wanted to speak out more strongly on Workmen's Compensation issues.

Mr. Friedman repeatedly called for compromise during the 1950s between labor interests who wanted more liberal Workmen's Compensation benefits and business interests which wanted to limit what the law covered in order to reduce the cost, a battle which continues to this day.

As a trial attorney, the case from which Mr. Friedman received the most publicity was tried in 1971. He represented the family of Eduardo Tirella, 42, an interior decorator and movie set designer who was killed on Oct. 7, 1966 by a car driven by Newport tobacco heiress Doris Duke. The family entered a \$1,250,000 negligence suit against Miss Duke, and the jury awarded \$75,000.

In 1970 Mr. Friedman found himself the defendant rather than the counsel in a court action. The Internal Revenue Service charged him with willfully evading payment of \$36,579 in federal income taxes in 1963 and 1964. In 1974, the charges were dismissed because of Mr. Friedman's bad health, which at that time included a 10-year-old bout with cancer and other ailments.

Born in New York City on March 7,

1905, Mr. Friedman was a son of the late Israel and Gussie (Lottman) Friedman.

He was a Cranston resident for more than 30 years, living part-time in Hollywood Fla.

Mr. Friedman was graduated from Brown University in 1926 and from New York University Law School in 1931. He was admitted to the Rhode Island Bar in 1933.

A former member of the Board of Governors of the American Trial Lawyers Association, First Circuit, he had a private law practice in Providence from 1953 until his death.

Mr. Friedman, who was listed in Who's Who in the East, was past president and chairman of the board of the Touro Fraternal Association. He was active nationally in numerous lawyers organizations and at one point was named national chairman of the American Trial Lawyers' Association Workmen's Compensation Division.

Besides his wife, he is survived by a daughter, Helene Genser of Cincinnati, Ohio; a son, Muray A. Friedman of Providence; a brother, Harry Friedman of Pittsburgh, Penn., and three grandchildren.

The funeral will be held tomorrow at 1 p.m. at Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 835 Hope St., Providence. Burial will be in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.