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Tribute Dinner Honoring U.S. District Court Judge Howard G. Munson

Roger J. Miner '56

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Harrison Tweed once said that lawyers are the best people to eat and drink with. With Howard Munson, you should just eat. I know; I spent a week with him in Utica one night. I remember the evening well. There was a nip in the air and he drank it. This is the man who calls New Year's Eve "amateur night." He ordered a drink and the waitress asked him if he wanted water with it. He answered: "I said that I was thirsty, not dirty." Moreover, he has always taken the position that water is not good for a person because fish are known to fornicate in it. Howard always quotes W.C. Fields, who said: "Always carry a bottle of spirits in case of snakebite. Also, always carry a small snake."

He is also fond of quoting W.C. Fields' statement: "A woman drove me to drink and I never stopped to thank her." I shall never forget that evening in Utica. It seems to me that there must be a municipal ordinance in that city requiring one to visit every watering hole before going home at night. Howard deposited me in the motel in the early hours of the morning so that I could be violently ill. He left to return to the rounds he was making.

Seriously, Howard always said that he wanted to make a difference. He has made a difference as a Federal Judge and will continue to make a difference. He is intelligent, dedicated, hardworking and one of the best judges in the entire country. He is one of the most compassionate men I ever have met. I have seen him come off the bench with tears in his eyes after having heard some particularly affecting testimony. Howard believes in justice. He believes in our system. He believes in his fellow man. It was a privilege for me to serve under his leadership in the Northern District. I am very proud to call him "colleague." I am even prouder to call him "friend." Howard, God bless you.

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Judge Munson
Remarks
April 19, 1991

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