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Memorial Ceremony of Hon. Henry F. Werker

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EULOGY -- HON. HENRY F. WERKER

May 18, 1984

The Federal Bench has lost one of its Giants. In his relatively brief term as a Federal Judge, Henry Werker made enormous contributions to federal jurisprudence. His accomplishments have been recognized, not only by the members of the Bar who practiced in his Court, but also by those stern critics who were his colleagues on the federal bench. He was never wrong on the law and just this week the United States Supreme Court refused to disturb one of his decisions that had been affirmed in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.

I shall always carry memories of Henry as a kind and compassionate friend as well as a superb lawyer and judge. When I first aspired to the Federal Bench, he advised and counselled me. When I was sworn in as a United States District Judge, he made the trip from New York City to Albany just to speak at my inauguration. As I encountered problems along the path, he provided me with the benefit of his experience. On a short while ago, in preparing a lecture on the history of my court, I again sought his assistance and Henry, ever the history buff, sent along some documents and references to begin my research. I did not realize how ill he was at the time.

I well remember my first appearance before Judge Werker in this very courtroom. It was shortly after his appointment to the Greene County Bench. My opponent on a motion, who didn't have much of a case, launched a personal attack on me. I was quite

upset by this conduct until Henry said to me: "Don't pay any attention to that stuff." I appeared before Judge Werker many times thereafter and he was just as thoughtful and considerate every time. And he was just as kind and patient with every lawyer and litigant who appeared before him. He was truly a gentleman and a scholar, and he was beloved by all.

The Werker family mourns a husband and father. The legal profession and the judiciary mourn a colleague. The community at large mourns an outstanding citizen who contributed so much to the public good. I mourn a great friend. We who were touched by his special person never will forget him.