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DEDICATION

THE HONORABLE ALFRED P. MURRAH

BY DAVID T. LEWIS*

The death of Judge Alfred Paul Murrah on October 30, 1975, brought to a close a career of extraordinary service and high distinction. For the nearly 40 years that Judge Murrah served on the federal bench, including 35 on this court, he was a dynamic proponent for the improvement of the administration of justice. To the honor and memory of our friend and colleague, this issue of the *Denver Law Journal* is most properly dedicated.

Judge Murrah was born October 27, 1904, in Indian Territory (now the State of Oklahoma) and at an early age resolved to complete a definitive education. This resolve culminated in his graduation, with honors, from the University of Oklahoma School of Law in 1928.

Judge Murrah practiced law in Seminole and later in Oklahoma City. In 1937, he was appointed United States District Judge for the three judicial districts in Oklahoma; at that time he was the youngest United States district judge ever appointed. During Judge Murrah's service as a trial judge, he was recognized for his common sense approach and forthrightness.

In 1940, Judge Murrah was appointed United States Circuit Judge, later to serve as Chief Judge of the Circuit from 1959 to 1970, when he took senior status. The year 1970 also marked a new direction in Judge Murrah's service to the federal judiciary when he became the Director of the Federal Judicial Center, a position he held until 1974. Despite this additional demand on his time and energy, he continued to participate actively in the work of the court.

Judge Murrah had a reputation for accomplishment which he modestly attributed to hard work and once said that he never had time for a hobby or interest outside the law. It is true that Judge Murrah paid no attention to the hours of the day, but his hard work was recognized by all others as accompanied by great ability not only in the law but in leadership directed to his church

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and to numerous charitable institutions. Many times he was honored for these efforts.

Judge Murrah was recognized nationally as a leading figure in the area of judicial administration. In addition to his distinguished service as Director of the Federal Judicial Center, Judge Murrah chaired the Pretrial Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States, the National Council of Crime and Delinquency, the National Committee for Traffic Safety, and the Judicial Panel on Multi-District Litigation. Judge Murrah was also active in many professional organizations including the American Bar Association, serving as chairman of the Judicial Section and of the Advisory Committee on Pretrial Procedure in Criminal Cases.