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## DEDICATION

A. LEON HIGGINBOTHAM, JR.: THE MAN

EDWARD R. BECKER†

I came to know Leon Higginbotham in the fall of 1970 when I joined the federal district court in Philadelphia, on which he then sat. Even though he had been a judge for but six years, his reputation was already very great. What has never ceased to amaze me throughout the twenty-three years that I have known Leon Higginbotham as both colleague and friend is how little he has changed, even as his reputation grew to towering proportions. Simply stated, Leon Higginbotham, the man, is today the same nice guy he has always been—down to earth, warm, sincere, self-deprecating, possessed of a wonderful sense of humor (and a delightful giggle) and, above all, of a marvelous capacity for friendship.

And, oh yes, incredibly hard working. Leon Higginbotham has given that term new meaning. I have never met anyone who worked as prodigiously and effectively at so many things for so many years

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† Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. B.A. 1954, University of Pennsylvania; LL.B. 1957, Yale Law School.

as Leon Higginbotham. His weekend work schedule is legendary. Winging in from a lecture in South Africa or a graduation address in the midwest, he would prepare dozens of difficult cases for argument in sleepless weekend marathons, and yet come in on Monday morning, fresh as a daisy, with a knowledge of the briefs and the record that would knock counsels' socks off. I have encountered lawyers who, a decade later, remembered those searching questions, boomed at them over the half glasses in a voice that would have made Stentor green with envy. Even more memorable is the sheer eloquence of his delivery.

But for all his devotion to the craft of judging, reflected in his superbly crafted opinions—650 of which are published and many of which are landmarks—Leon Higginbotham is, at heart, a teacher. It is well known that he has taught countless students at the University of Pennsylvania and at other institutions. Less well known is how much he has taught a generation of law clerks and interns, many of whom have in turn pursued academic careers. No judge, I might add, has ever had a more devoted cadre of law clerks and interns than Leon Higginbotham. They worked countless weekends, and some stayed on many weeks after their tour of duty was up, because of their reverence for this man.

There is, however, one thing that means more to A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr.<sup>1</sup> than his judging and his teaching: it is his passionate commitment to the goal of equality for all human beings—everywhere on earth. That ideal permeates every facet of his being. Leon Higginbotham, after almost three decades of enormously productive service to the federal judiciary, has surely paid his dues to the republic. No judge was ever more entitled to move on. How fortunate is the nation and the world that this extraordinary human being, freed of the limitations imposed by judicial responsibilities, will now have much more time to pursue the ideal of equality for the benefit of a wider public—all mankind.

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<sup>1</sup> I will let the cat out of the bag—the “A” stands for Aloysius!