ANTHONY B. AKERS, RAN FOR CONGRESS

Former Ambassador to New Zealand Dies at 61

Anthony B. Akers, who was the United States Ambassador to New Zealand from 1961 to 1963 and three times lost battles for a seat in Congress representing the fashionable East Side 17th District in New York, died, apparently of a heart attack, yesterday in Wrightsville Beach, N.C. He was 61 years old and lived in Palm Beach, Fla.

During World War II, Mr. Akers, a lieutenant commander in the Navy, was a motor torpedo boat commander, one of four naval officers who were the heroes of W. L. White's "They Were Expendable."

Mr. Akers ran for Congress in 1954, 1956 and 1958. He was defeated the first two times by Frederic R. Coudert Jr., then by John V. Lindsay.

He very nearly won in 1954, Mr. Coudert beating him by a scant 315 votes.

Tall, affable, baldish with a voice that held a trace of Texas—he was born near San Antonio, the seventh of 13 children, and attended the University of Texas—Mr. Akers was rejected by all three services for being too tall at 6 feet 4 inches.

He finally managed to enlist in the Navy in June 1940, well before this country entered the war.

He took part in the evacuation of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur from Corregidor to Australia and received the Silver Star and two Presidential citations.

Mr. Akers, who earned a degree at the Columbia University Law School, was admitted to practice in New York and the District of Columbia.

He served as Deputy Assistant Secretary and Deputy Under-Secretary of the Air Force from 1951 to 1953, during the Korean War.

In 1955, Gov. W. Averell Harriman appointed him director of the New York City office of the State Department of Commerce, a post he held until 1958.

In 1960, Mr. Akers served as executive chairman of the New York Citizens for Kennedy and Johnson for the Presidency and Vice Presidency, respectively. The following year, President Kennedy named him Ambassador to New Zealand.

In recent years, Mr. Akers had been counsel to the firm of Cabell, Martin, Hammer & Gallo in New York and president of the Landfall Development Company in Wilmington, N.C.

He leaves his wife, the former Jane Pope, and two daughters, Andra Frazier and Ellery Jane Akers.

A memorial service will be conducted Monday at 11 A.M. in St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, Fifth Avenue at 53rd Street.