

**Memorial Resolution****In Honor of****The Honorable Leland Clure Morton****February 20, 1916 - April 11, 1998**

Between these dates a good man and devoted servant of the Constitution of this country lived and died.

Born in Knoxville, he received his early education in the local schools and entered the University of Tennessee at the age of fourteen. He completed his law school studies at the University when he was twenty and had to wait until his twenty-first birthday to receive his law license.

He began the practice of law in Knoxville and in 1941 became a special agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He served in an undercover capacity, attached to the embassies of the United States in several Latin American countries, where he was engaged in counter-espionage work. While on this assignment, he met and married his beloved wife, Marjorie Hernandez Morton.

He returned to the private practice of law in Knoxville in 1946, and was the founder of a prominent law firm. Among the members of the firm was his younger brother George W. Morton, Jr.

In his thirty years at the Bar, Judge Morton engaged in matters related to the practice of corporate and tax law. He was also an active trial lawyer.

As a lawyer, he earned and enjoyed the success that one might expect would come to an able, industrious and forceful advocate, as

well as an astute counselor in the field of banking and commercial law.

On October 14, 1970, he was appointed to the United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee, and later served as Chief Judge from 1977 to 1984, when he took senior status.

Upon his entry on active service on the district bench, he demonstrated his ability and industriousness, developed while at the bar, in the management and disposition of the business of the Court. In doing so, he reflected his adherence to the high standards and values that marked his character. In a word, and his own word, "No one had an edge in the United States District Court."

He decided cases of importance to private litigants, as well as some of the most controversial and significant public issues which have confronted our society. He did so without fear or favor and became a judge in the great tradition by observing the maxim laid down by Judge Learned Hand that a judge "shall abstain from substituting his personal choice."

Judge Morton and his lovely wife, who died February 2, 1993, after a long illness, paid a high price for the fearless and independent decisions he rendered.

Judge Morton was a man of quiet faith and, when troubled, said he would get on the phone to the Man upstairs and seek the guidance that can come only from prayer to our Creator.

Recognized as a man of absolute intellectual integrity, he was a blunt and firm taskmaster. However, he was no more demanding of lawyers who appeared before him than he was of himself.

In paying tribute to him, his brother George said:

He was a man of a lot of intelligence, strength and courage. He never backed down from what he believed in.

Today, we remember a man who discharged his oath of office to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and who fairly and justly applied the law, regardless of the consequences.

Judge Morton's judicial services enriched the professional life of an uncounted number of lawyers and added honor and renown to the federal judiciary and the legal profession.

Resolve that the Nashville Bar Association, by this resolution, honors the memory of Judge Morton and extends its deep felt sympathy to his brother George W. Morton, Jr., and sister Alyse Morton.

Respectfully submitted,

Ward DeWitt, Jr.  
Ward DeWitt, Jr.

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Joseph Martin, Jr.

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