

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION  
JUDGE ROBERT E. TEHAN  
January 7, 1905—November 27, 1975

Last Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1975, Judge Robert E. Tehan died at Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He was 70 years old. These 70 years were crammed full of meaningful, creative activity. Judge Tehan was not a spectator to the evolving history of his time. He was an active participant in producing some of Wisconsin's most significant events.

Judge Tehan graduated from Marquette Law School in 1929. He practiced law during the Depression days and for a while was associated with his long-time friend, James E. McCarty, who is now Senior Bankruptcy Judge in Milwaukee. In 1936, Robert Tehan won election to the Wisconsin Legislature as a Democratic Assemblyman and then served continuously in the Wisconsin Legislature, first as an Assemblyman and then as a State Senator until he was appointed to the Federal Bench in 1949.

Bob Tehan believed deeply in our democratic form of government and perceived that the continued vitality of this system depended upon attracting into partisan politics intelligent, talented and highly ethical individuals. In the mid-40's, the Wisconsin Democratic Party was quite moribund. Wisconsin politics had been dominated by the Progressive Party under Philip and Robert LaFollete and the Republican Party. Bob Tehan took charge of the Democratic Party and worked to reorganize it into a significant force in our State. In 1945, he became the Democratic National Committeeman from Wisconsin and then he set out to recruit fine young people into positions of party leadership. The success of his efforts and their significance for both Wisconsin and the nation can be demonstrated by reviewing a list of some of his recruits, each of whom I believe would acknowledge the positive influence that Judge Tehan had upon his life and his public service career. These include Chief Judge Thomas E. Fairchild of this circuit, District Judge James E. Doyle of the Western District of Wisconsin, Chief Justice Horace Wilke of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, Senator Gaylord Nelson, Congressman Henry Reuss, Congressman Clement Zablocki, and Mayor Henry Maier of Milwaukee.

