

## IN MEMORIAM

It was a perfect San Diego Sunday—clear, crisp, relatively smogless. The tennis was great and even the Chargers almost co-operated by upsetting the Raiders, a thrilling game until that interception.

But Bev and I went through the day with a dull ache, with a sense of loss because Judge Dick Donovan was no longer with us.

I first met Dick and Peg during the 1962 campaign that saw him elected to the State Assembly in the 77th District. It was a simple news interview as part of the coverage I was doing on the election. I liked Dick immediately because of his frank open nature—he didn't try too hard, he was a believable guy who had come up the hard way and made it on his own. A National City Police Officer, Deputy Marshall in Chula Vista, day school, night school, Clerk of the South Bay Municipal Court, the cherished law degree from USD, a private attorney and finally election to the Assembly. Dick Donovan was making it and his future success seemed assured.

But in 1963, at the age of 37, he was slowed when a dilated blood vessel was clipped on top of his brain and he had follow up surgery again in 1966, several months after Governor Pat Brown had appointed Dick, a Republican, to the Municipal Court bench here in San Diego. Outwardly Dick would never show concern over his two surgeries but I know that some self doubt may have been a factor in his untimely death.

Dick Donovan was a man's man; what I admired about him most was his continual growth not only from Police Officer to Judge but in the way he viewed our current social problems as a man and from the bench. With two daughters of his own he had an understanding of today's youth, their pressures and problems that you don't always see in Judges. Presiding Municipal Court Judge Earl Gillam called him a helpful, hardworking Judge who fought for the underdog. Dick would have liked those words. Several years ago when a member of my family had some trouble Dick was ready with a smile at 2 in the morning to sign a court order—he understood.

The last time I talked to Dick was about a month ago. He was a steady KSDO listener and he called to complain about what he considered was a far out George Putnam Commentary. The four of us were going to get together for a Hockey game but we never quite made it. There was nothing to indicate this would happen says Judge Robert Cooney, an old law school friend of Dick Donovan.

And that sums it up. Dick Donovan was the right man at the right time. As a Judge he was knowledgeable, fair and compassionate. The community has lost a courageous, honest force. I have lost one of the rarest of gems—a true friend and Peg, who was always there, in the campaigns, at the hospital, always at his side—Peg and her daughters have lost more than words can measure.

We'll miss you Dick.

FRED LEWIS\*

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\* *Comment San Diego*, KSDO RADIO, Nov. 23, 1971.



THE HON. RICHARD T. DONOVAN

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