

Marin Attorney Gets Judgeship

Gary Thomas, Marin county's 34-year-old assistant district attorney, who was permanently crippled by gunshot wounds in the 1970 Marin Civic Center gunbattle, was named yesterday to the Municipal bench by Governor Ronald Reagan.

Thomas, the first Democrat to receive a Reagan judicial appointment in Marin county, succeeds David Menary Jr., who was elevated to the superior bench last month.

Thomas' appointment fell almost on the second anniversary of the violent escape attempt in which four persons were killed, one of them Superior Court Judge Harold Haley.

Thomas was seized with Judge Haley and three women jurors by three San Quentin inmates and 17-year-old Jonathan Jackson. The five hostages were herded into an awaiting bus and during the ensuing gun battle between the kidnapers and Sheriff's deputies and San Quentin guards, Thomas was shot.

PARALYZED

The bullet that tore away an inch of his spine left him paralyzed from the waist down. Before being shot himself, Thomas grabbed one of the abductor's guns and wounded or killed three of the kidnapers. This was after Judge Haley had been fatally injured.

His action was credited with saving the lives of the three women jurors and for his heroism Thomas was named Marin's "peace officer of the year."

Despite the gravity of his injuries, Thomas effected a remarkable recovery and was back at his desk within five weeks.

Almost immediately after it was learned Thomas would recover, a strong bi-



GARY THOMAS
Municipal bench

partisan drive was launched in Marin county to have Thomas appointed to a then-existing vacancy on the municipal bench. However, at the time Reagan reportedly was "unsure" of the condition of Thomas' health, and appointed Menary instead. The governor said the next appointment would go to Thomas.

WITNESS

Thomas was a principal witness at the San Jose murder - kidnap - conspiracy trial of Angela Davis, charged in connection with the Civic Center shootout. She was acquitted two months ago.

A native of Great Falls, Montana, Thomas received both his bachelor and law degrees at the University of San Francisco, and joined the Marin District Attorney's staff in 1962 as a deputy. He was a senior trial attorney when he was named assistant district attorney in July of 1969.

Thomas expressed gratification at the \$32,273-a-year appointment and said he hopes he can do a "good job." He said he will take office as soon as he winds up his affairs in the District Attorney's office.

Thomas is married to a niece of the late Judge Haley. He and his wife and two young sons live in San Rafael.