Richard G. Reese carried on with his responsibilities with quiet courage to the very end, even planning for the future he knew would not be his. His brave but hopeless resistance to cancer failed on May 12, 1964, when he died in his sleep at St. Mary's Hospital in San Francisco, aged only 61 years.

Dick Reese was then manager of oil exploration for all domestic and foreign operations of Kern County Land Company from its San Francisco headquarters. He had been called to this position in 1959 from his original employment in Calgary.