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Sept 3, 1968

RFK Autopsy Photo Ban Vetoed by Reagan

SACRAMENTO, Sept. 3—Gov. Ronald Reagan said today he has vetoed a bill that would have made it difficult to exploit for commercial and other purposes photographs taken of the body of the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

The measure, co-sponsored by Assembly Speaker Jesse M. Unruh, would have required persons wanting to make use of official autopsy pictures to obtain a court order.

Under present California law copies of such pictures may be obtained by anyone willing to pay the price of reproducing them.

The restriction had been requested by District Attorney

Evelle J. Younger of Los Angeles County who feared there would be a wide demand for Kennedy photos by exploiters and the morbidly curious.

Many of 300 autopsy pictures of the Senator, taken by the Los Angeles County Coroner's office, will be used as evidence in the trial of Sirhan B. Sirhan, who is accused of killing Kennedy.

Reagan said he vetoed the bill because it "is so broadly worded that it would have the unintended effect of impeding the legitimate use of autopsy photographs in medical education and research."

"I have no quarrel with the principal objective," the Governor said.