

'72 Presidential Race Out-Kennedy

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — Sen. Edward Kennedy declared today he definitely would not seek the presidency in 1972.

He said he was inclined not to make the race even before an automobile accident clouded his political career nearly two weeks ago.

"The events of the recent past make definite what already was an inclination of

mine," Kennedy told reporters on his return to Capitol Hill.

In a brief corridor news conference, the first since the accident, Kennedy said he would have no more comment — now or ever — on the tragedy in which a young woman was killed when the car he was driving plunged off a bridge.

"I've tried to the best of

my ability in the reports I made to give the facts of the incident," Kennedy said. "I wouldn't have any further comment."

He was warmly welcomed back to the Senate by Democratic leader Mike Mansfield and given handshakes by Republican whip Hugh Scott and other senators.

Kennedy stood by Mansfield at the usual pre-session

briefing with newsmen and after the Senate convened shortly after 11 a.m., his first words from the floor were:

"Mr. President, I move the journal of the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as read."

Only a half-dozen senators were in the chamber as the session opened. Kennedy, who's the Democratic whip,

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Hearing on Kennedy Case Set

BOSTON — (AP) — A Registry of Motor Vehicles investigation found Sen. Edward M. Kennedy at fault for his driving in the accident that cost the life of a Washington secretary.

Registrar Richard McLaughlin revealed the finding yesterday and said a hearing will be held next Wednesday in Hyannis, at which Kennedy may appear or send counsel if he wishes to contest the finding.

At that hearing, McLaughlin said, a supervisor can find "serious fault," or "no serious fault," but nothing in between.

Kennedy's driver's license automatically was revoked for a year after he pleaded guilty last Friday to leaving the scene of the accident in which May Jo Kopechne, 28, drowned.

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took his seat to the left of Mansfield and thumbed through the Congressional Record. Sens. Herman Talmadge (D-Ga.), and John Stennis (D-Miss.), walked over to shake his hand.

As Kennedy, looking tanned and calm, arrived at the Capitol and walked up the steps leading to the Senate, a reporter asked if he was pleased to be resuming his Senate duties.

He replied, "Fine. Glad to be back at work."

Before returning, he issued a statement saying he had decided not to resign his seat, and in fact plans to seek another term in 1970. If elected, he said, he will serve the full six years of that term.

In the aftermath of contro-

versy surrounding the accident, Kennedy asked the voters of his state to help him make up his mind about his future. The thousands of responses were overwhelmingly "yes."

Kennedy, his driver's license suspended, returned to his home last night as a passenger.

He was driven down from Plainfield, N.J., where he attended funeral services for a close friend.

Muskie's View

Sen. Edmund Muskie of Maine, a potential Democratic presidential candidate for 1972, said in Chicago, "I am delighted that he has decided to stay. I must say I am not surprised and I would expect the people of Massachusetts to re-elect him."



Edward Kennedy returns to Senate for first time since automobile tragedy

—UPI Photo