

# Prosecutor in Inquest

Edmund Dinis

Special to The New York Times

**N**EW BEDFORD, Mass., Aug. 8 — As a political loner who built a career out of playing devil's advocate to local party bosses, Edmund Dinis now finds himself cast in a national role with his requirements—which was granted—for an inquest into the fatal automobile accident involving

**Man** Eaward M. Kennedy on July 18.  
**in the** Mr. Dinis, who is  
**News** District Attorney for southeastern Massachusetts, waited for two weeks before making his move, then applied to the State Superior Court, instead of the district courts, for an inquest. He was rebuked by Chief Justice G. Joseph Tauro of the Superior Court, who pointed out that the law "clearly" showed the jurisdiction to lie in the district courts.

Mr. Dinis suggested that the law was ambiguous. But among the few who are considered close to him, some said that Mr. Dinis (pronounced Din-EESE) was probably expressing his contempt for the district court system.

He once said that the Massachusetts district and probate courts "are among the most corrupt systems in the world, because the judges have such absolute power."

In a brief interview in his law office the other day, he said: "I am controversial, and I have been ever since I entered politics 20 years ago. Sometimes I may have been wrong, but at least I have gone along doing what I thought was right."

## Born in Azores

Edmund Dinis was born Oct. 4, 1924, at St. Michael in the Azores. He has in his office, among scrimshaw and other mementoes of seafaring ancestors, a model of a sailing dory, similar to one used by his grandfather, a whale hunter. Mr. Dinis's father, Jacinto, sat in the Massachusetts House of Representatives more than 20 years ago. The son succeeded to the seat in 1913 after his father's death.

Later that year, Mr. Dinis was denouncing the "boss-minded knaves and culprits" leading the Democratic party, who he said were "star-chamber coat holders."

During 10 years in the legislature, including a period in the Senate, he studied at law nights at Suffolk University.

Mr. Dinis is considered a

handsome man who dresses well and stands erect. He is just under six feet, stockily built. He played football in high school but left before graduation to enter the Army. He served in World War II with Army Intelligence as a French interpreter.

## Got Restaurant at Auction

Along the way since, Mr. Dinis has acquired an insurance agency and a law practice and only within the last year acquired a restaurant in neighboring Fairhaven. He was involved with a number of others in litigation over ownership and loans to the restaurant. He obtained title for \$5,000 at an auction.

In a state where ethnic considerations still run strong, Mr. Dinis as district attorney holds the highest office ever attained in Massachusetts by a Portuguese American. He has always run well among voters of his extraction in southeastern Massachusetts.

But aside from one stretch as a city councilor he has been unsuccessful in tries for Mayor of New Bedford because of greater Irish and Yankee voting strength. And

his tilts with the Democratic power structure have balked him in two attempts to have New Bedford included in the 10th Congressional District. The city remains in the 12th District, which includes Republican Cape Cod and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket.

## Defeated By G.O.P.

The 10th District runs 50 miles northwest from Fall River to suburban Boston. It is represented by Margaret M. Heckler, a Republican, whom Mr. Dinis failed to unseat in a bid in 1968.

For years, Mr. Dinis has battled with The New Bedford Standard Times, a daily newspaper of Republican leanings, which has both scolded and commended him on occasion. He no longer speaks to most of its editors and staff.

The other day, as Mr. Dinis was talking with two acquaintances outside a drugstore, a Standard Times editor said he happened by as the District Attorney was saying: "The doctor is a goddam liar, in fact, almost as big a liar as some newspapermen I know."

At that, the editor quipped: "Or some D. A.'s we all know."

Mr. Dinis turned and said: "But I have to run for reelection; you don't."

THE NEW YORK TIMES, 1



United Press International

PLANNING INQUEST: Edmund Dinis discusses study in drowning of Mary Jo Kopechne