

Judge Bars a Date In Kopechne Inquest Till Autopsy Ruling

By JOHN H. FENTON
Special to The New York Times

EDGARTOWN, Mass., Nov. 6—Judge James A. Boyle of the Dukes County District Court said today that he would not set a date for an inquest in the death of Mary Jo Kopechne until the question of an autopsy was settled in Pennsylvania.

The Massachusetts judge's statement was read by Thomas A. Teller, the clerk of the court, following a two-hour discussion of ground rules with lawyers in the ancient courtroom here on Martha's Vineyard Island.

Miss Kopechne died in a car driven by Senator Edward M. Kennedy on Chappaquiddick Island July 18. The car rolled off a bridge and dropped into a tidal pond.

An inquest was originally scheduled for Sept. 3. It was stayed when lawyers for Senator Kennedy appealed to the State Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts for a change in ground rules set by Judge Boyle.

The high court last Friday granted Senator Kennedy the right to a closed inquest as his lawyers had requested.

Today, 12 lawyers representing Senator Kennedy and others who attended a cookout on Chappaquiddick Island the night of the accident conferred with Judge Boyle. Afterward, they were under orders not to discuss the case.

District Attorney Edmund Dinis of southeastern Massachusetts, who "requested" the inquest under Massachusetts law, also seeks an autopsy.

Since Miss Kopechne's body is buried in Larksville, Pa., Mr. Dinis was compelled to petition the Pennsylvania courts for permission for an autopsy.

Judge Bernard C. Brominski of Luzerne County, Pa., has the petition under advisement. He has promised to give 24 hours' notice before he renders a decision.