

Judgment Reserved

The brief grand jury "investigation" into the death of Mary Jo Kopechne has ended with no indictments and no diminution of the mystery surrounding the plunge from a narrow bridge on Chappaquiddick Island last summer of a car driven by Senator Edward M. Kennedy.

The speed with which the inquiry was concluded and the failure to call any of those most directly involved only adds to dissatisfaction widely felt by the public that there remains a multitude of unanswered questions relating to the episode. "The case is closed," says the Dukes County District Attorney. So it is in a legal sense; but it is not resolved.

The prominence of Senator Kennedy and the great influence of the Kennedy family in Massachusetts politics make it important that the public at least be given access to the facts in the case as they emerged under oath at the official inquest conducted behind closed doors last January. The 775 pages of transcript have been impounded under a ruling of the state's highest court that inquest testimony could never be admitted into criminal proceedings.

With the threat of prosecution removed and other procedural obstacles out of the way, the cause of justice and of equity to Senator Kennedy will be served by release of the full transcript, now planned for next Wednesday. A career of great promise should not be permanently beclouded by doubts the sworn record might help to resolve.