

Tragedy Again



AP Wirephoto

Senator Kennedy and his wife, Joan, as they left Georgetown Hospital after visiting their son

Kennedy's Son Will Lose Leg--Cancer

Washington

Senator Edward M. Kennedy's 12-year-old son, Edward Jr., suffering from bone cancer, will undergo surgery today for amputation of his right leg above the knee, the Senator's office disclosed yesterday.

The latest tragedy to strike the Kennedy family was announced on the eve of the marriage of Kathleen Kennedy, 22, eldest daughter of the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy (Dem-N.Y.) to David Townsend, 25, a Harvard doctoral candidate.

The first wedding among the newest generation of Kennedys will take place as scheduled this morning at Holy Trinity Church in Georgetown.

The younger Kennedy, an athletic-minded seventh grader at St. Albans School for Boys in northwest Washington, was admitted to the hospital November 9 for diagnostic tests after complaining of discomfort in his lower right leg.

GROWTH

He was re-admitted Tuesday when the tests showed "a malignant growth on the lower right leg."

The bone cancer afflicting Edward Jr. is a relatively rare disease and difficult to treat, but is one of the more common types of cancer in boys, the National Cancer Institute said.

Primary cancers of the bone account for only one-half of 1 per cent of all cancers among Americans. But among boys under age 15, they are the fourth most common form after leuke-

mia, brain cancer and cancer of the lymph nodes.

The institute and the American Cancer Society estimate that 2000 new cases of bone cancer will be reported in the U.S. next year, and that 1900 Americans previously diagnosed as having the disease will die.

SURVIVAL

Statistics compiled during the years 1955-64 indicated that the median survival rate for bone cancer patients under age 25 — which accounted for 40 per cent of all such patients — was 1.6 years after the disease was detected. The median rate for all ages was only 1.7 years.

Officials suggested that although there has been marked progress since that period in treating the di-

Back Page Col. 5

SEN. KENNEDY'S SON

From Page 1

sease in young patients, the survival rate is still comparatively low.

The Massachusetts Democrat and his wife, who interrupted a European trip and flew back to Washington last weekend, have been at their son's bedside almost constantly.

The Kennedy's other children are Kara, 13, and Patrick Joseph, 6.

Shortly after the announcement, President Nixon telephoned the boy's hospital room and spoke to him and his father. Drayne said the Senator and his wife, Joan, were "deeply touched by the President's thoughtfulness."

The operation will take place five days before Thanksgiving, which falls this year on the tenth anniversary of the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas.

Senator Robert Kennedy's assassination in Los Angeles in June, 1968, left Edward Kennedy as the lone surviving son of the late Joseph F. Kennedy. The oldest brother, Joseph Jr., was killed in a plane crash in World War II.

Tragedy has stalked Ed-



UPI Telephoto

SEN. KENNEDY WITH HIS SON, EDWARD JR.
A joyous smile in this photo taken in 1972

ward Kennedy as well. He suffered a serious back injury in a private plane crash in 1964 and was re-elected to the Senate that year from his hospital bed.

In 1969, the Senator drove his car off a wooden bridge at Chappaquiddick Island in Massachusetts and a passenger, Mary Jo Kopechne was drowned.

Among the Kennedy children, the President's third child, Patrick, died shortly after birth. Robert's eldest son, Joseph Kennedy III, was fined \$100 on a negligent driving charge last August after a vehicle he was driving overturned, at Nantucket, Mass., seriously injuring a girl passenger.

In World War II, Kathleen Kennedy, who had been serving since 1943 as an American Red Cross worker in London, married Captain William John Robert Cavendish of the Coldstream Guards. Cavendish was killed on infantry patrol four months later.

In May 1948, Kathleen was flying to meet her father in Cannes when she was killed when her chartered plane crashed into a peak bordering the Rhone Valley.

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