

## Koepchne Parents Supporting Kennedy

SWIFTWATER, Pa., May 8 (AP)—The parents of Mary Jo Koepchne, the young woman who drowned when Sen. Edward M. Kennedy's car went off a bridge in 1969, said today they will support Kennedy if he runs for President.

"I'm for him and I would vote for him," said Gwen Koepchne, 56. "He stands for what I think is right. He's a lot better than what we've got now."

"We like the senator just as we liked his brothers, Robert and the President," said Mrs. Koepchne.

Mary Jo Koepchne, 28, was a guest at a party on Chappa-

quiddick Island, Martha's Vineyard, Mass., on July 18, 1969. After the party, Kennedy and Miss Koepchne were driving in his car when it went off a small wooden bridge. Kennedy escaped, and said he tried futilely to save her.

Both Mrs. Koepchne and her husband, Joseph, 61, said they thought Kennedy's political strength lies in the appeal of the Massachusetts Democrat to youth.

"We think the youth of America will follow the senator, and that's what's important today—to have the backing of youth," they said.