

RULING AWAITED IN KENNEDY CASE

Prosecutor Expects Word
Today on Inquest Plea

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NEW BEDFORD, Mass., Aug.

5—District Attorney Edmund Dinis awaited today a reply from Judge James A. Boyle concerning his request for an inquest in the death of a Washington secretary who drowned July 18 in an automobile driven by Senator Edward M. Kennedy.

Neither Mr. Dinis nor Judge Boyle, the presiding judge of the Edgartown District Court, would discuss details of the request, which was made in writing over the weekend. The answer was believed to be in the mail. The District Attorney said that he expected to receive word tomorrow.

In the meantime, Mr. Dinis continued to explore legal steps necessary for an autopsy on the secretary, Mary Jo Kopechne, 28 years old, who formerly worked for the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York.

A verdict of accidental death by drowning was made by Dr. Donald R. Mills, assistant medical examiner for Dukes County, after Miss Kopechne's body had been taken from Mr. Kennedy's car.

The car went off a narrow bridge on Chappaquiddick Island and sank in a salt water pond. The island is near Edgartown, which is on Martha's Vineyard.

Judge Boyle imposed a sus-

pending sentence of two months in jail on Mr. Kennedy after the Senator pleaded guilty on July 25 to leaving the scene of an accident.

Meanwhile, in Boston, the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles postponed until all court action is completed a hearing to determine whether Mr. Kennedy's driving license will be revoked.

The license was suspended for a year following the accident.

At Wilkes-Barre, Pa., District Attorney Blythe Evans Jr. notified Mr. Dinis that a court order issued by "the court of appropriate jurisdiction" in Massachusetts would be necessary to begin the legal steps for the exhumation of Miss Kopechne's body.

The secretary, who was one of six girls at a cookout of Kennedy associates on Chappaquiddick on July 18, is buried near Plymouth, Pa. Under Massachusetts law, a District Attorney may order an exhumation in this Commonwealth.

Most legal sources in Massachusetts are convinced that the law on inquests clearly gives a District Attorney the power to "require" an inquest if he wishes to establish the legal, as distinct from the medical, cause of death.

An autopsy would establish the medical cause. Mr. Dinis has indicated he wants both an inquest and an autopsy.

Kennedy Cancels Trip

WASHINGTON, Aug. 5 (Reuters)—Senator Kennedy has canceled plans to visit Europe this month in the event he has to appear at an inquest into the death of Miss Kopechne, his office said today. The Senator had planned to address a World Assembly of Youth Conference in Liege, Belgium about Aug. 18.