

Mary Jo's Mother Wants to Hear Ted

BERKELEY HEIGHTS (N.J.)—(UPI)—The mother of Mary Jo Kopechne, the girl killed in an auto accident involving Sen. Edward Kennedy, said yesterday she wants Kennedy to testify at an inquest into her daughter's death.

Mrs. Joseph Kopechne said her primary question was why Kennedy's attorney, Paul Markham, and his cousin, Joseph Gargan, also a lawyer, had not sought help for Mary Jo as soon as the Senator told them of the accident.

"They weren't in shock," she said. "And they are supposed to be bright men. It is this question that plagues me

every day, and I strongly approve of an inquest."

She added there was no doubt in her mind that there never was any romantic relationship between Kennedy and her daughter.

"Mary Jo simply didn't know Sen. Kennedy that well."

At the same time, Mrs. Kopechne reiterated her opposition to an autopsy on the body of her daughter, who was killed July 18 on Chappaquiddick Island off Martha's Vineyard, Mass., and is buried at Larksville, Pa.

She also added a new note of mystery to the highly pub-

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licized case by saying that Massachusetts officials had told her before Mary Jo was buried that they had already performed an autopsy but later said they did not.

Has Many Questions

They are now attempting to have the body exhumed and the autopsy performed in opposition to the wishes of Mrs. Kopechne and her husband.

In a telephone interview, the distraught mother said she still had many questions concerning the circumstances that led to her daughter's death and the circumstances afterwards.

"I am banking on an inquest to clear the questions I have about Mary Jo's death," she said.

She said if other witnesses at the inquest Sept. 3 in Edgartown, Mass., do not answer her questions sufficiently, then "I certainly would" want Kennedy to testify.

District Attorney Edmund S. Dinis of the Southern District of Massachusetts has said he has no intention of asking Kennedy to testify.

Likely to Testify

Both she and her husband plan to fly to Wilkes Barre, Pa., Aug. 25 and are likely to testify at a hearing on a request by Dinis to have the autopsy performed.

Mrs. Kopechne said she was "extremely confused" by the autopsy question.

"I had assumed an autopsy had been done before my

daughter was buried," she said. "I don't know that much about the law, but in such cases as my daughter's death, I had assumed autopsies always were performed."

"Now is much too late."

Asked About Autopsy

She said that before Mary Jo was buried, she and her husband placed a call to Dinis' office and asked whether an autopsy would be made.

"We were told that one had been done," Mrs. Kopechne said.

Mrs. Kopechne also revealed she received a letter from Rose Kennedy, the Senator's mother.

"It was beautiful. It sounds as if she wrote it straight from her heart. I read it, then put it aside. I will reread it when my mind clears."

"I can't quote from it by heart and there is no reason to," she said.

"Just say it was beautiful."

Chappaquiddick—A Morbid Touch

EDGARTOWN (Mass.) — (UPI) — Curiosity-seeking tourists are adding some morbid touches to the confusion surrounding the fatal automobile accident involving Sen. Edward Kennedy.

The most recent example of the powerful attraction held by the accident site on Chappaquiddick Island was a gruesome carving in the plank wood bridge from

which Kennedy's car plunged.

In letters nine inches high, the name "Ted" is carved near the center of the 10-foot wide bridge and below it, linked with a plus sign, is the name, "Mary," in six-inch high letters.

Mary Jo Kopechne, 28, of Washington, was killed in the July 18 accident.

A six-inch high caplog

which serves as the bridge's only railing has been splintered by curiosity seekers as though a beaver had gnawed through the beam.

During the weekend, one 9 year old girl held up a piece of the bridge which she had torn off and said, "Wait till I show this to my class back home." Home is in Minnesota.

A taxi driver told of a man

who arrived on Martha's Vineyard on his way to Chappaquiddick. He hired the cab at a cost of \$55.

When he arrived, he scooped up a handful of sand from the dirt road which leads to the bridge and then filled a small bottle with water from the tidal pond whose strong currents swirl around the bridge. With his possessions in hand, he left.