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# Kennedy Hits

## Nixon-AMA

### 'Marriage'

SFChronicle  
Washington

Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Dem-Mass.) accused President Nixon and the American Medical Association yesterday of forming "a marriage of convenience" opposed to meaningful reform of the nation's health care system.

Kennedy said the AMA "has a virtual stranglehold on the health programs of the present administration" and added:

"Indeed it is not too much to say that the AMA and administration are one and the same, Tweedledum and Tweedledee."

Opening a hearing before a Senate subcommittee, Kennedy cited as examples of what he called an unhealthy AMA-administration alliance:

- President Nixon's and the AMA's opposition to Dr. John Knowles as assistant secretary of health in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in 1969.

- The appointment of two AMA-suggested candidates, Dr. Merlin Du Val for the HEW job and Dr. Richard Wilbur as assistant secretary of health in the Pentagon.

- Mr. Nixon's appearance at the AMA convention in Atlantic City last month.

- The AMA's support of Mr. Nixon's health care plan, one which Kennedy says "will provide no hope of meeting the nation's health needs but guarantees the continued enrichment of health insurers."

Kennedy has proposed a health care plan which would be almost completely administered by the federal government. Mr. Nixon wants existing private health insurance companies like Blue Cross to continue.

Kennedy said the AMA has opposed every health reform enacted over the last half century.

"Always, the AMA approach has been the same — reports and recommendations are welcome, so long as nothing is done to implement them, so long as they do not alter the status quo," he said.

AMA headquarters in Chicago issued a brief statement by Dr. Wesley Hall, AMA president, who said: "As Senator Kennedy himself said on another occasion, 'We can recognize political oratory when we hear it.' We believe that the American people can, too."

Associated Press