

Kennedy to support McGovern if necessary in California

WASHINGTON — Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., after first refusing to endorse Sen. George McGovern for the Democratic presidential nomination, has now agreed to throw his support to McGovern if the crucial California primary appears close.

Earlier Kennedy turned down a personal appeal from McGovern for an endorsement. "You've already got my whole family," begged off Kennedy, who has tried to make it a rule to keep out of other people's primaries.

But later, Kennedy indicated through intermediaries that he would help McGovern in California if his support would be decisive. The Massachusetts senator has a strong following among California's blacks and chicanos, who lean toward Hubert Humphrey but could be influenced by Kennedy.

No matter the margin

Both McGovern and Humphrey consider it essential to carry California, whose huge bloc of delegates will go to the winner no matter how small his victory margin may be.

This has pitted the two contenders in a high-noon showdown. The drama is heightened by the fact that they are close personal friends and former next-door neighbors. When McGovern was sick, Humphrey brought him hot soup.

For the sake not only of their friendship but the prospects of defeating President Nixon in November, McGovern and Humphrey have agreed not to cut up one another in the California primary. They have also established an informal liaison to stop their political disciples from engaging in smear politics.

Already McGovern has stopped the circulation of campaign pictures showing Humphrey warmly greeting Georgia's former racist governor, Lester Maddox. McGovern also wouldn't let his campaigners refer to the

Vietnam War as "the Johnson-Humphrey War." Humphrey, for his part, has stopped the distribution of material purporting to show that McGovern is anti-Israel.

But as high noon approaches on June 6, there may be a temptation in the rival camps to throw a final punch.

DEFENDING PEKING

In an unusually conciliatory move toward Peking, the White House is vigorously

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mobilizing the administration to fight what it calls "arrant nonsense" about Red China's role in world dope trafficking.

The White House gesture toward Mao Tse-tung comes even as President Nixon is wooing Mao's arch rival in the Communist world, Soviet party head Leonid Brezhnev.

A White House memo contains evidence that Richard Nixon, once the implacable foe of Communist China, is now defending China. The memo was circulated quietly to the Departments of State, Defense, Treasury and the U. S. Information Agency.

The memo urges them to fight "propaganda" against Red China. Included with the memo is a two-page briefing paper prepared by the federal intelligence agencies on Red China and opium.

"The attached report . . . answers in detail allegations that the PRC (Communist China) is flooding the Western world with illicit opium," declares the memo from White House drug information director Richard Harkness, formerly an NBC newscaster.

"It is earnestly suggested that this factual report be used as a bible for all of us in replying to and countering any propaganda to the contrary. We must cut down this kind of arrant nonsense."