WASHINGTON PANORAMA

Wallace Doesn't Know About 1972

Waits Record
Made by Nixon

By EDGAR A. POE
(The Times-Picayune Washington Correspondent)

WASHINGTON—Will George C. Wallace make another bid for the presidency of the United States in 1972? The question is frequently asked in speculation here in the nation’s capital, where politics is a way of life.

The answer is: The former governor of Alabama himself does not know whether he will or will not run. Talking privately in Washington recently to friends, he was quoted as saying that a lot depends on the Nixon administration.

And Wallace, who rolled up nearly 10,000,000 votes in 1968, assertedly is hopeful that President Nixon and his administration will succeed in bringing "law and order" to city streets, and give greater recognition to local and state governments in trying to solve some of their many problems.

Wishes Him Well

The former governor was quoted by friends here as expressing hope that Nixon and his administration will have a good tenure in office, and that the chief executive should have the support of all the people to try to bring an honorable Vietnam peace, and to solve other critical problems the President inherited.

Wallace came to Washington with his assistant, Bill Jones, of Montgomery, Ala., to make an off-the-record address at an elaborate social function. It was at this event, the annual spring dinner of the Gridiron Club, that he met and chatted briefly with Nixon, Vice President Agnew, Chief Justice Earl Warren, associate members of the supreme court, nearly all cabinet officers, former Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, and numerous others.

The southerner, who served as a flight sergeant in the air corps in World War II, and was decorated for outstanding combat service in the Pacific, also chatted with Col. Frank Borman and Lt. Co. William A. Anders, the moon-circling astronauts.

Perhaps one of the most cordial greetings which Wallace received in Washington at the "White-Tie" Dinner came from Mayor of the District of Columbia, Walter Washington. Mayor Washington walked over to the former governor from the "Heart of Dixie" state and extended him a welcome to the Nation’s Capital. Wallace appeared grateful for the greeting, it was reported.

Visits Humphrey

Wallace perhaps had his longest pre-dinner chat with Humphrey, it was reported later. "They both seemed to enjoy their visit with one another," said one dinner guest.

One of the first VIP's whom Wallace met was Justice Byron White, of the supreme court, who years ago was an all-American football player at Colorado, and later a great professional player for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

He was known in those days as Whizzer White. Wallace too was a football player. Although he weighed only 98 pounds he was quarterback of his high school football team at Choctaw, Ala.

Before the 1968 presidential election Wallace maintained that someone from Alabama and the south would make just as good a president as someone from another part of the country. "And a darn sight better than some we have had."

But whether or not he will make another bid to try and be the first Alabamian to be elected president he just does not know at this time.

Meantime, he will keep friends and supporters advised of his hopes and ambitions through a newsletter, which he plans to issue periodically.