Udall, Others Taking Wallace

Seriously in Democratic Race

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After a long period of treating George C. Wallace with kid gloves and minimizing his potential as a 1976 presidential candidate, a growing realization that he must be taken seriously is stirring liberal Democrats to challenge him head-on.

This concern about the Alabama governor, and how to deal with him, has become the dominant element in the early maneuverings for the 1976 Democratic presidential nomination, as reflected in conversations with the candidates and their political strategists.

Most are planning a tougher anti-Wallace approach not only out of concern that he can be a serious contender for the nomination. They are aware that the candidate who can establish himself as the one to stop Wallace may well coalesce the party's left around his own candidacy.

The principal convert to take-on-Wallace strategy is Rep. Morris K. Udall of Arizona, who, while saying he will not run on a Democratic ticket with Wallace, has until now been careful not to offend the considerable Wallace constituency of middle-income voters. Udall would like to gain.

Udall's caution on this and other matters of prime concern to Democratic liberals has caused a number of them to reserve judgment on his candidacy. His plan to challenge Wallace more directly now obviously is designed in part at least to boost his appeal to these doubters.

Udall's anti-Wallace strategy is to focus on the governor's record in Alabama and, while accepting his word that his health is no barrier to his candidacy, to call upon him to prove it by extensive personal in primary states. Wallace's strategists, taking into account his dependence on a wheelchair after loss of use of his legs in the May, 1972, shooting, are planning a limited personal campaign for him next year, and heavy use of live and taped television talks.

While other candidates are talking about cutting back on use of television in the first national campaign to be conducted under the federal law limiting spending, the Wallace organization is tapping a tested and proven direct-mail list of 600,000 contributors to underwrite an expanded media effort.

Wallace's lead in the money sweepstakes has persuaded Udall to tack an "Urgent P.S." on his first major mailing to 87,000 potential donors. It reports Wallace's success with small contributors under the new law-providing matching federal subsidies, and warns that "this new system will not really function as intended unless thousands of citizens like yourself give equal support to progressive candidates for President."

Also prodding Udall to speak out against Wallace is the "fact that other important Democrats are urging people to run as favorite sons in their states to deny Wallace delegates."

Sens. John Glenn of Ohio, Thomas P. Eagleton of Missouri and Adlai E. Stevenson III of Illinois and Govs. Patrick J. Lucey of Wisconsin and Milton J. Shapp of Pennsylvania are all under some pressure to consider this option.

In all these states, there is increasing worry that Wallace, running first in a multicandidate field, could skim off a controlling share of the delegates with a plurality vote, perhaps as low as 25 per cent in a large enough field. And because proportional representation applies under 1976 Democratic delegate-selection rules, regular Democrats also worry about Wallace picking off a considerable number of delegates even if he doesn't run first in their state primaries or conventions.

Glenn and the others appear reluctant so far to risk their political reputations in a stop-Wallace effort that would seem to offer them little. But the chance that some of the favorite sons might derail Wallace and become a hero in the party is an added inducement for...
the declared candidates to take on the Alabamian.

Three other liberal Democrats who have declared, former Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia and Terry Sanford of North Carolina and former Sen. Fred R. Harris of Oklahoma, already have indicated their intention to make Wallace a prime issue and to challenge him, especially in Southern primaries. Ironically, these three plus Udall are heading for a test of strength in the first 1976 primary, in New Hampshire. Wallace as of now intends to back it.

Coscupiously staying out of the anti-Wallace competition are the other two declared Democratic candidates, Sens. Henry M. Jackson of Washington and Lloyd M. Bentsen of Texas. They are not vying for the liberal wing of the party but instead are seeking to occupy and broaden the center ground. They above the others hope to pick up Wallace voters if he halts, and, accordingly, neither has indicated he will join in the new anti-Wallace emphasis.

Seven and a half months before the start of the presidential election year, the Jackson strategy for the rest of 1975 is to begin Wallace's own—to line up the money the candidate will need, a $10 million ceiling under the new law, to survive to the July, 1976, convention.

According to Robert Keefe, Jackson's campaign manager, the goal is to have in hand or to be able to identify by July 1 the sources of the $10 million, plus another $2 million permitted for fund-raising alone. Two means are being used—a direct-mail effort costing about $1.3 million, and a series of fund-raising dinners at which Jackson speaks. The largest of these so far was held at the Washington Hilton last week, with 1,499 persons paying $125 apiece, or a gross of $186,250.

More typical are the smaller dinners in which 8 to 12 "co-hosts" give $1,000 apiece and then invite 100 to 150 of their friends at $250 apiece. This approach has made it easy for Jackson to meet the requirements of the new law for matching federal money—50 cents in each of 20 states, in contributions of no more than $250. (By law, an individual may donate a maximum of $1,000 to any candidate in each primary, runoff or general election.)

The Jackson camp is also going after prominent fund-raisers of the past. Now working for Jackson are Harrison (Sonny) Doole of Philadelphia and Walter Shortenstein of San Francisco, two principal money-raisers for Hubert H. Humphrey in 1968 and 1972, and Arnold Picker of New York and Sumner Redstone of Boston, two Muskie money men in 1972.

Jackson already has qualified in the necessary 20 states to receive federal matching money and altogether has about $1.7 million in his campaign treasury.

Jackson is continuing to use the Senate as his main forum, going out on weekends or overnight within air commuting distance of Washington. His schedule is arranged so that he meets prospective Jackson campaign workers on the same trips, as part of an effort to organize at the congressional district and county levels.

But Keefe says the emphasis is on a lean staff that will not use up money needed next year, and a low-key approach, in deference to politician who were pushed hard for early endorsements by Sen. Edmund S. Muskie in 1972, were stuck with a loser, and are gun-shy. "Now," Keefe said, "we're playing Billy Killer—and grinding it out on the ground." "Also with an eye to the failed Muskie Campaign, which ran out of money after early primary failures, the Jackson campaign wants to be able to budget for the full primary period before it starts. "Then we can assure local politicians that our money won't dry up," Keefe said. Michael Casey, Jackson's chief scheduler, who held the same job for Muskie in 1972, calls this caution by local Democratic leaders "the Muskie syndrome." Sometimes they mention the Muskie experience directly, Casey said, "but even if they don't, you know what they mean."

For all that some political veterans suggest the Jackson campaign essentially is on the same track that ended disastrously for Muskie—the wooing of established political leaders. But Keefe says the grassroots organization behind that courtship will come as primary time gets closer.

Udall, by contrast to Jack-
Udall aide, said "Our strength is clearly organization. You can't organize around money. Money comes around organization." To build the organization, Gehy said, the campaign is spending about $25,000 a month.

The prime focus for early Udall organization in New Hampshire and Wisconsin. Udall has a former New Hampshire Democratic chairman, David La Roche, as his top man in that state, and a group of Democratic members of Congress spearheading his effort in Wisconsin.

Gabusi said the objective is for Udall to beat the other three liberals—Sanford, Harris and Carter—in New Hampshire and then be "the moderate-left candidate in Wisconsin. Against Jackson and Wallace." And the candidate's brother and campaign manager, former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, said, "If Mo does well in New Hampshire, he can go into Wisconsin and say to the defeated liberal candidates, 'Let's get together and give Wallace a resounding defeat.'"

Bentsen's pre-1976 objective lies somewhere between Jackson's focus on fund-raising and Udall's on organization. As of this month, Bentsen campaign had $310,000 on hand, about a third of it raised outside Texas. The direct-mail effort is just getting started, and meanwhile the candidate is traveling widely—in 36 states so far—to combat his first handicap, low voter recognition.

Ben Palumbo, Bentsen's campaign manager, acknowledged that organizationally his campaign "is in a holding pattern," awaiting the firming up of primary dates and delegate-selection procedures in the various states. But Palumbo said Bentsen realizes he must do reasonably well in the northern industrial states if he is to be taken seriously.

Carter and Harris, two others with low voter recognition, also are traveling a great deal, setting up nucleus organizations in key primary states. Carter's headquarters in Atlanta says he has $250,000 on hand. Harris, still operating out of the basement of his home in McLean with a full-time staff of 12, has just begun to hold fund-raising dinners designed to help him qualify for federal money. His campaign manager, James Hightower, said Harris has raised $25,000, most by direct mail, and has spent it.

Sanford has enlisted former Democratic National Chairman Jean Westwood as his chief organizer and is expected to formally announce his candidacy by the end of June. A small office has been opened for him here run by former Democratic Gov. Philip H. Hoff of Vermont, but there is little Sanford money yet.

Two other Democrats are considered good bets to enter the campaign in another month or so: Sen. Birch Bayh of Indiana and state Sen. Julian Bond of Georgia. Bayh has been taking soundings of longtime supporters and an aide said, "In my judgment he's closer to being a candidate than he was three months ago." Bond has been targeting black congressional districts for a selective effort. He has reported he has raised nearly $10,000 and needs twice that amount to get a direct-mail effort started.

One other Democrat being mentioned prominently, Sen. Frank Church of Idaho, has ruled he will defer any active exploration of candidacy until after the Senate select committee investigating the CIA that he is chairing completes its hearings, probably in late September or early October. A small amount of money raised earlier this year has been sent back to the donors, according to his Senate office.

Finally, Sargent Shriver, the 1972 Democratic vice presidential nominee, says he has been approached by prominent Democrats to run and is considering the idea but has no timetable for a decision. He says he is not persuaded that he must act soon or fall hopelessly behind in fund-raising. A candidate with the right message could cope with all the mechanics, he says.

Shriver says his brother-in-law, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), could have the nomination but he believes Kennedy means it when he says he does not intend to run. And Shriver acknowledges that his own candidacy unavoidably will be labeled by many a stalking horse for Kennedy. "If I got nominated and elected I'd still be called a stalking horse," he says with amusement. "They'd say I was preparing the way for Teddy in 1980."

The fluid situation in the party's left wing was the subject Saturday of a meeting of Sen. George McGovern (D-S.D.), the 1972 nominee, and a group of his former campaign aides. They concluded that McGovern and the liberal cause were best served by McGovern continuing his posture as a non-candidate, at least for the time being.

Most of the group, according to participants, argued that somebody among the declared or soon-to-declare liberal candidates might yet be able to coalesce liberal support, and that McGovern, before considering a candidacy himself, should wait until fall at least to see whether this happens. The considered opinion was that he could still raise the money needed to run through an aggressive direct-mail campaign, seeded by contributions by about 250 previous McGovern backers who each would give the $1,000 limit.

For all the activities of the declared Democratic candidates, speculation remains strong within the party that somehow, despite his repeated statements of noncandidacy, Kennedy will emerge as the 1976 nominee. But the announced candidates all say they are taking him at his word, and proceeding on the basis that, one of those actively contesting for delegates will be the national convention's choice.