

Michigan vote for Wallace today may soar to 50 pct.

By Rob Warden
Staff Writer

WARREN, Mich. — Ted Wicker shook his head in dismay and said, "God, I hope the poor man don't die. If he does, this is a rotten country."

But even if George C. Wallace were to die before Wicker goes to the polls Tuesday, he'd still vote for the Alabama governor.

"And my vote would count," he declared. "As a protest."

Wicker, 54, a brewery worker, apparently typifies thousands of blue-and white-collar voters in this heavily industrialized northern suburb of Detroit.

Early estimates of the vote total in Michigan bore out predictions that 1.2 million of the state's 4 million eligible voters would cast ballots. Wallace was the odds-on favorite even before the attempt on his life.

DETROIT SUBURBS generally have been worked up over the busing issue as a result of a plan proposed to integrate their schools with Detroit's by busing.

And Wallace is the one man in this country they believe absolutely would see to it that not one of their children ever is forced to ride a school bus.

So personal is their bond with Wallace that invariably they refer to him as George, while the other candidates are McGovern, Humphrey or Nixon.

And their anticipated heavy turnout in Michigan's presidential preference primary is expected to propel George to his first primary victory in a Northern state Tuesday.

BEFORE Wallace was wounded Monday in Laurel, Md., political observers here expected that he might get as much as 45 per cent of the vote. But some observers now feel that a sympathy vote could lift Wallace's total to perhaps 50 per cent of the expected 1.2 million turnout.

The rest would be split between Sen. George McGovern of South Dakota and Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, with small percentages of the vote going to Rep. Shirley Chisholm of New York.

DETROIT police were ordered to give "special attention" to the Detroit headquarters of primary candidates after the local McGovern headquarters received a telephoned threat minutes after Wallace was shot.

Under a new state primary law, being used for the first time Tuesday, candidates are supposed to get a slice of national convention delegates based on the proportion of the statewide vote they receive.

That is, 50 per cent of the vote would give Wallace 50 per cent of the state's delegates to the Democratic National Convention in Miami Beach.

PERHAPS Jack Halloran, a World War II veteran who works for one of the many suppliers of Detroit car makers, best summed up the sentiment in Warren:

"I loved President Roosevelt, and I cried when he died. I cried when President Kennedy died and I cried when I heard about George."

"I'm going to vote for him

because of busing," said Bob Bednarz, 22, who will be voting for the first time Tuesday.

"But I'll probably vote for President Nixon in November unless Ted Kennedy is nominated. I'm very partial to the Kennedy family."

KATHY LINDSAY, 24, a nurse at South Macomb (County) Hospital in Warren, told of a protest march that blocked traffic two weeks ago and made her late to work.

"I was going up Twelve Mile Road and there must have been a thousand people there," she said. "I was mad because I was going to be late and get docked."

"Then I pulled in this station and asked, 'What is this?' It's against busing. I thought that's good. I'd get docked but that was good."

Police crews were ordered to check all the headquarters and investigate any threats.