

Wallace Re-Election Seen After

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MONTGOMERY, Ala.—After a decade as the symbol of segregationist politics, Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace is attempting to convince voters he really is not a racist.

In the last eight months Wallace has crowned a black beauty queen at the University of Tuscaloosa, attended a black mayors' conference, and said in predominantly black Tuskegee last weekend that he wants to be governor "of all the people."

For Wallace, who is seeking an unprecedented third term as governor, such campaign tactics reflect a drastic change of politics.

It was 11 years ago, in his first inaugural speech, that Wallace laid the cornerstone of white backlash politics when he promised



GOV. GEORGE C. WALLACE
... changes tactics

"segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." He followed that promise by attempting personally to block blacks from en-

rolling in the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa—the same campus where he crowned a black homecoming queen last fall.

It was just four years ago that Wallace narrowly defeated Albert P. Brewer by claiming that the vote for Brewer would be a vote for blacks to control Alabama for the next 50 years.

Whatever the true status of Wallace's current socio-political philosophy, he isn't expected to have any difficulty winning re-election when voters cast ballots in Tuesday's Democratic primary.

Wallace's direct appeal for the black vote this year is viewed as an effort to improve his national image and is based on his apparent belief that he has a chance to be on the Democratic Party's national ticket in 1976.

Wallace, 54, paralyzed in both legs from an assassination attempt near a Laurel, Md., shopping center during the 1972 presidential campaign, also has stated openly that he might try again for the Democratic nomination in 1976. In the past, he has attempted to hide his national political aspirations during gubernatorial races.

Campaigning in a wheelchair, he has told crowds across Alabama that he will run for President again "if I believe it's in the best interest of the people no matter what the critics say."

Wallace is opposed in the Democratic primary by four candidates. The most vocal has been State Sen. Eugene McLain of Huntsville, an attorney and real estate developer, who has charged that

Campaign to Improve Image

Wallace is only a "part-time governor" who spends most of his time worrying about running for President while his state administration has become "the most corrupt in the history of the state."

Also in the race is former two-term governor James E. "Big Jim" Folsom of Cullman, who is making his seventh race for governor. Folsom is the uncle of Wallace's wife, Cornelia. Others running are Ralph Price of Louisville and Thomas W. Robinson of Grove Hill.

Wallace has answered McLain's charges of being a part-time governor by saying that a governor should be involved in national affairs and "not just kiss beauty queens and cut ribbons."

McLain is considered Wallace's chief opponent for the black vote.

While Wallace will win some black votes this year, possibly more than he has before, McLain received the endorsement of the Alabama Democratic Conference, the black caucus of the state Democratic Party. The ADC influences an estimated 75 per cent of the state's 300,000 registered black voters.

Wallace has the support of the predominantly black Alabama unit of the Southern Democratic Conference, the Ozark Voters League, a largely black southeast Alabama group, and Tuskegee's black Mayor Johnny Ford, who said he believes Wallace has demonstrated a willingness to "help all people."

Joe Reed, chairman of the Alabama Democratic Conference, said Ford's endorsement of Wallace is "an insult to

blacks, particularly the blacks of Tuskegee."

"There are a few black elected officials who are pretending to get the black vote for Wallace," Reed said. "If they think they can, they are just whistling Dixie."

Wallace conceivably could lose some white votes because of his effort to attract the black vote.

Because of the belief that Wallace may move to the national ticket in two years, or at the very least gain an appointment to a national post if the Democrats win the presidency, the race for Alabama's lieutenant governor this year has become a race almost as important as that for governor.

Lt. Gov. Jere Beasley is seeking re-election against four opponents. The main

ones are State Sen. Richard Dominick of Birmingham, who has fought for 12 years for reform of the legislature, and Charles Woods, a millionaire.

All three are running on the issue that whoever is elected Tuesday will be the next governor.

If Wallace wins Tuesday, he will face Republican Elvin McCrary of Anniston in the November general election. McCrary is a former state senator who has no opposition in Tuesday's primary.

Wallace was first elected Alabama governor in 1962. His first wife, the late Lurleen Wallace, was elected in 1966, and Wallace won his second term in 1970.

This is the first year an Alabama governor could succeed himself in office.