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After Wallace

Nixon Will Have To Try Harder

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GEORGE WALLACE'S re-emergence as a third-party presidential contender in 1972 will force President Nixon to concentrate more heavily on winning industrial States in the North and Midwest to offset the expected loss of some Southern States to Wallace. This does not mean, however, that the President will abandon the so-called Southern strategy in the process. For the fact of the matter is that the Southern strategy was never intended to apply only to the South.

It was always aimed as well at millions of voters in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Missouri, California and other States, whose political sentiments are akin to those of many white southerners.

The "Southern strategy" is designed to appeal to millions of middle-class Americans who fear street crime, loathe violent dissent, hate outlandish dress and public obscenity and are appalled by desecration of the American Flag.

IT IS MEANT to be the magnet for people who fear Communism, resent "socialism," favor low taxes, take pride in the Armed Forces and space exploration, dread the drug menace and still attend church on Sundays.

It opens its doors to those who go bowling, who look forward to TV and a six-pack on Saturday nights, take part in veterans' functions and welcome Vice President Agnew's slaps at the eastern press and television commentators.

All these people together are the heart of the Nixon constituency. And while Wallace's victory in the Alabama gubernatorial primary raises problems for the President, the "Southern strategy" would have endured whether Wallace had won or lost, because the "Southern strategy" is really the Nixon way.



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MR. NIXON IS in very bad shape with the Negro vote, which is important in the industrial States. Still he carried States like Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio and Wisconsin in 1968 with scant Negro support, and he is not giving up yet on doing somewhat better with black voters in 1972.

The President's own recent pledge of financial help for desegregating school districts was well received in some black circles, and there is no doubt that, however haltingly, he will in the next couple of years try to do more to win some black support. And at Republican national headquarters, at least, it is expected that the considerable number of Negroes Mr. Nixon has appointed to middle-level jobs will put their shoulder to the wheel.

The President's political strategists maintain that Wallace, whose Alabama campaigning stamped him as more of an extremist than ever, is over the hill as a national candidate. They believe he is now reduced to the role of a strictly regional figure, who would be lucky to capture the five States he won in 1968.

Even if he carried only four of these States in 1972 (the Republicans are confident of Georgia now), he might still throw the election into the House of Representatives in a very close race between the Republican and Democratic nominees.

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