

McKeithen Seeks Demo No. 2 Spot

New Orleans

Governor John J. McKeithen is gambling on back-handed help from George C. Wallace to help him land the Democratic vice presidential nomination.

Although the Louisiana governor insists publicly that he's not seeking the vice presidential nomination, he is known to be waging an active behind-the-scenes campaign to persuade Democratic leaders that he's the only man who can partially offset the big vote Wallace is expected to get in Dixie.

Authoritative sources report that Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, the frontrunner for the Democratic presidential nomination, recently told McKeithen that he was among those Humphrey is considering for the No. 2 spot.

CONTACT

These same sources disclose that McKeithen has been in constant touch with the Humphrey camp since President Johnson's announcement that he would not run again.

The McKeithen vice presidential aspirations are an open secret in Louisiana. When Humphrey came to the state six weeks ago, he fielded a newsman's question about the governor's vice presidential chances in this way:

"John McKeithen is a great man and he's my friend. He can beat almost anybody."

ELECTION

McKeithen was elected to his first term four years ago after charging that his runoff opponent was the Negro bloc vote candidate.

After voters approved a constitutional amendment to let Louisiana governors serve two consecutive terms,

In

Wash.

Cook, a registered among the in the num. and undutrial year which en of 1967, the Co partment reporte day.

The number of su the county totaled up more than 77,000 year earlier, the depa said.

Associated P

McKeithen won against last December — overwhelmingly beating a segregationist.

The governor has managed to snuff out most of the racial fires in Louisiana and has the image of a moderate. McKeithen, however, constantly stresses the need for "law and order" — the same theme which Wallace, the third party presidential aspirant, is preaching.

CONNALLY

Sources close to the Governor indicate he's vigorously trying to persuade Humphrey and national leaders of the party that he can outdo Wallace on the "law and order" issue and help keep at least part of the South in the Democratic field.

It was also learned that McKeithen considers Texas Governor John Connally his strongest rival for vice president. McKeithen's strategy, sources declare, is to convince Democratic leaders that Connally has two drawbacks:

- In some parts of the country, the Texas governor is too closely identified with President Johnson and a Humphrey - Connally ticket would look too much like it was hand-picked by the President.

- Connally is considered too conservative to appeal to Negro and liberal voters.

Associated Press