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Wallace Fails to Get Audience With Pope During Visit to Rome

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ROME, Oct. 17—Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama was in Rome today, sightseeing and meeting with Italian and American Government officials, but he did not succeed in obtaining an audience with Pope Poul VI.

Mr. Wallace, who is confined to a wheel chair after having been paralyzed from the waist down when he was shot while campaigning in Maryland in 1972, is in the Italian capital for two days as part of a European tour that is generally thought to be aimed at improving his image before he attempts to run as a candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination next year.

The Governor's failure to meet the Pontiff was considered unusual by sources close to Vatican affairs.

Mr. Wallace, in a news conference today, said Vatican officials told him that Pope Paul was limiting his special audiences to heads of state and government because of a heavy schedule during the present holy year.

The Governor, whose visit was described by United States Embassy spokesmen as "strictly private," did have talks with President Giovanni Leone of Italy and with John A. Volpe, the United States Ambassador, and called on Premier Aldo Moro. Mr. Wallace is expected to leave Sunday for Bonn.