

Wallace Is In the Race

Montgomery

Governor George C. Wallace, pledging to take back the Democratic party from "the ultra liberal, exotic left-wing few," yesterday became the tenth declared candidate for the 1976 Democratic presidential nomination.

Identifying the nation's chief domestic issue as "the survival and salvation of the middle class," Wallace called on "average Americans" to join him in "a political revolution in the ballot box, in the primaries in 1976."

Discarding a long text, Wallace spoke extemporaneously before network television cameras in an elaborately staged press conference in a Montgomery motel.

With rising voice, he declared himself to be in "excellent" health. When he said he was "able to campaign actively and I do not care what they (the media) say," his supporters in the hall cheered lustily. But when a reporter asked whether Wallace would

Back Page Col. 5

From Page 1

submit to a medical examination by a special board, many booed.

Wallace did not hear the question, and his wife, Cornelia, sitting at his side, repeated it to him in an audible whisper, adding: "It's an insult to your own physicians."

Wallace thereupon replied to the reporter: "In fact, when you talk about independent doctors it's really an insult to some of the best in the country." Doctors, like newspaper columnists, differ greatly in their findings, Wallace said.

"If all the other candidates want to submit to this board, I'll consider it," he said. "But my health is all right. In fact, people ask me, do I get tired. I'll tell you what I get tired of. I get tired of you asking me about my health."

Wallace was driven in a limousine to the hall and the car entered through a doorway about 50 feet from where he spoke. He was then taken in his wheelchair to the podium, where he sat throughout the press conference. He has been confined largely to the chair since the shooting attempt on his life in May, 1972, left him paralyzed from the waist down.

The three-time Alabama governor said he was in the race "for the purpose of winning the nomination and winning the presidency." He brushed aside questions of a third party candidacy if he fails to be the Democratic nominee. Third party speculation, he said, was "mostly talk."

Wallace also said "I just don't think that I would" accept the vice presidential nomination. As one who has led the movement of the middle class, which he claims is about to take over the Democratic party, Wallace said, "I ought to have the first seat."

The governor said he would bypass the 1976 presidential primary in New Hampshire on February 24, because other candidates have gotten a head start there and "I just feel like you have nothing to gain and everything to lose." But he said there is "a good chance" he will enter the Massachusetts primary a week later, though he said it is a state "propagandized by the media" against his prospects.

This will be the fourth presidential campaign for the 56-year-old Wallace. In three earlier runs, in 1964 and 1972 as a Democrat, and in 1968 as a third-party candidate, he ran as a hard-line, law-and-order man, espousing "freedom of choice" on matters of racial integration.

Washington Post