Wallace claims to be presidential material

by Mike Feinsilber United Press International

WASHINGTON-Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama Tuesday dismissed the suggestion of a fellow governor that he was too crippled to seek the presidency in 1976 and could no longer count on southern

"As long as we have this iniquitous income tax that's ground the middle class out of existence, I'm going to be alive and well and involved," Wallace told reporters clustered around him at the Mid-Winter National Governors Conference.

Wallace was wheeled into the Mayflower Hotel in late afternoon to be met with the news that Mississippi Gov. William Waller told a press conference that he felt Wallace was not a viable potential candidate because of his disability. Waller also suggested Wallace could no longer count on the South's loyalty.

Wallace said he was so viable in 1972 that he outpolled every other Democrat in the primaries.

Wallace was a contender for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1964, 1968 and 1972 until he was shot and paralyzed during the Maryland primary

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Party wished I'd go away to Afghanistan or something," Wallace told reporters.

"I want them to know the people represented are going to be very much

Wallace said he would announce whether he was running in the "summertime, falltime,

"My general health is good," he said, "I am-

paralyzed and cannot walk." He said Waller's comment "doesn't upset me. It's only natural for people to speculate when someone's in a wheelchair . . . "

Consumers flay power pricing; utilities seek faster cost passing

by Eliot Brenner United Press International

RALEIGH—Consumers flayed the fuel adjustment clause while the president of Duke Power asked for quicker pass through to consumers of higher fuel costs Tuesday in the first public airing of an omnibus utilities clause.

commission bill. In testimony before the Senate Utilities Commission, a parade of seven consumer spokesmen defended the bill backed by Lt. Gov. James B. Hunt, and while disagreeing on some of the fine points, they urged abolition of the automatic fuel adjustment

show Ford's strength on the issue increasing

Treasury Secretary William E. Simon told

the breakfast meeting congressional

suggestions that an oil allocation-quota

system be substituted for higher tariffs

would cost Americans 400,000 jobs. He said

an allocation system would mean 150,000

service stations would have a very difficult

three-step, \$3 a barrel oil tariff boost is but

an interim measure to cut dependence on

Nessen said Ford and his aides stressed the

The most outspoken of the consumers, Marion Lennon of Bladen County, complained of utility advertising and management and said, "We do not object to paying what is a fair rate...but we do object to poor business practices and poor planning."

"It is a question of whether to heat or to eat" for many persons, she said.

State AFL-CIO President Wilbur Hobby, who backed the bill in its entirety, said, "I believe that the power companies are, in some cases, attempting to intimidate and overwhelm consumer groups..." and regulatory officials "by making things as complex and unintelligble as possible."

Tom Morgan, a consumer spokesman from Asheboro, suggested commission terms be reduced to six years rather than eight and that a seven-member commission contains experts such as an electrical engineer and a cost accountant.

Duke President Carl Horn Jr., the only utility spokesman to appear before the panel, urged retention of the fuel clause and said Duke objected to a provision in the bill that would expand the time it takes utilities to collect the higer costs of fuel from 60 to 90

Horn denied reports power firms in other hearings had threatened power blackouts because of changes in the fuel clause, saying power firms weren't deliberately cutting plant construction. "Wall Street will make this decision for us," he said.

He said the commission staff should be expanded but said he did not agree a ninemember commission would speed the rate hearing process.

Other provisions of the legislation. sponsored by committee chairman Sen. Wesley Webster, D-Rockingham, include expansion of the commission to nine members allowed to sit in panels of three. repeal of the future test period of utilities by law are now allowed to use for data in rate cases, and repeal of the automatic fuel clause with a provision that utility firms apply for each fuel rate adjustment.

Ford musters tariff support

veto the bill; and he wants Republicans to but Nessen said recent White House surveys

in Congress.

time surviving.

foreign energy.

by Richard H. Growald United Press International

WASHINGTON-President Ford. apparently convinced Congress will reject his increased tariff on foreign oil, worked Tuesday to muster enough Republican support to make the hike effective through a presidential veto.

The White House said Ford outlined this scenario to GOP congressional leaders at

He expects Congress to pass a bill "I know the hierarchy of the Democratic negating his oil import tariff; he intends to

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Presidential Press Secretary Ron Nessen told reporters Ford also expressed to 26 GOP senators and representatives his impatience with lawmakers wasting time and his willingness to compromise to get his economic and energy programs passed.

back him to the hilt so Congress sustains that

"What we need to do is to sustain the veto, then let Congress get to work on an energy program and we might be ready to make accomodations to detail," Nessen said Ford told the lawmakers.

The Democratic controlled Congress is expected Wednesday to postpone Ford's ordered \$3 a barrel hike in oil import tariffs.

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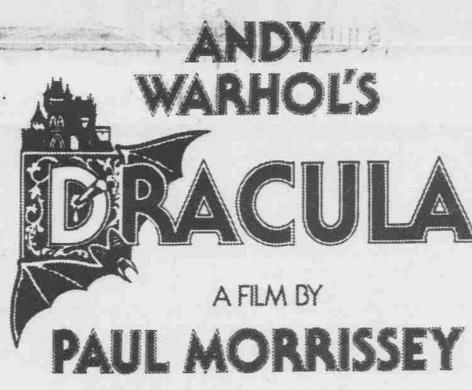
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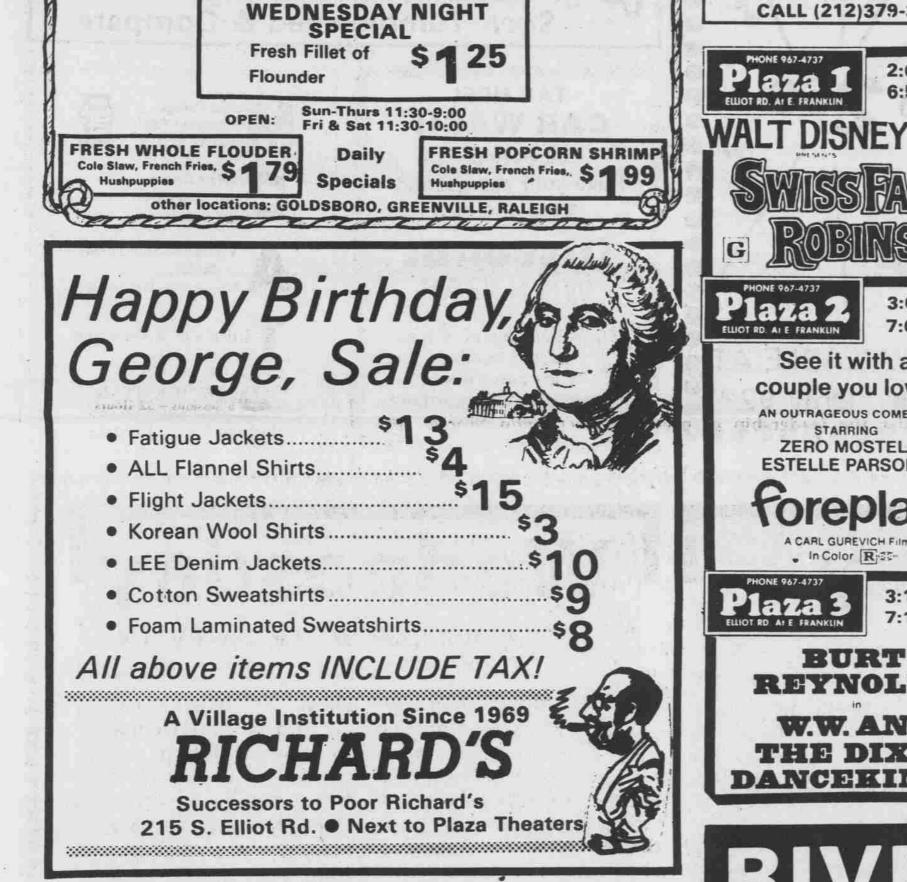
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