Rep. Chisholm Pays Visit To Wallace in Md. Hospital

By Richard M. Cohen
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Rep. Shirley A. Chisholm yesterday visited her political opposite, George C. Wallace, in his Silver Spring hospital room and reported the Alabama governor looked weak and “very pale.”

Rep. Chisholm would not divulge the subject of her 20-minute conversation with the wounded Wallace but vehemently denied reports that she later said that Wallace might be an acceptable choice as the party's vice presidential nominee.

Instead, the black congresswoman and Democratic presidential candidate said she thought that if Wallace moderated his views of busing, he might be acceptable to Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey for the second spot on the ticket. As for herself, the congresswoman insisted, Wallace was not an acceptable candidate.

However, the Associated Press quoted Mrs. Chisholm as saying she could not “work with Gov. Wallace because of his stand on education but if the governor moderated his stand he might be acceptable” as the party vice presidential nominee.

When read this account of her statement, she exploded with a “Jesus Christ!” and pointed out that she considered Wallace a “firm states rights” while she credited “federal intervention” with the civil rights advances of the 1950s and 1960s.

Meanwhile in Miami, Wallace's campaign manager, Charles Snyder, told reporters that Wallace would be coming to the convention.

"I don't see any way of keeping him away from the convention," Snyder said. "He's going all the way to the convention.

"If there is any way at all," Snyder said, "we expect him to take his turn at the podium at the convention."

Snyder said he expects Wallace to be moved from Holy Cross Hospital within the next week to 10 days and transferred to a Birmingham, Ala., hospital where a second operation will be performed for the removal of a bullet lodged in his spinal canal. Snyder said it was "highly likely" that Wallace will undergo the operation before going to the Miami Beach convention.

However, earlier this week, the governor's wife, Cornelia, told a press conference in Houston that Wallace may remain in the Washington area for the second operation.

Wallace remains paralyzed from the waist down from wounds suffered May 15 when he was shot while campaigning in Laurel. Since then he has been plagued by a stomach infection near one of the bullet wounds and has lost about 20 pounds.

Rep. Chisholm said that Wallace looked "very pale. You can tell he's weak. You can tell he's gone through an ordeal."

She said she visited Wallace because she wanted to, adding that she never lets philosophies or ideas "get in my way" in these matters. At the hospital and elsewhere, Mrs. Chisholm had indicated a respect she feels that they are both mavericks in the Democratic Party.

"We both in our own way fight for what we believe," she said.