American Party

American Party delegates say Wallace speaks for Bay Staters

By Martin F. Nolan
Globe Staff

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Bay State delegates tothe American Party Convention here insisted that they "represent the voice of the people of Massachusetts" as much as do the delegates to the Republican or Democratic conventions.

Moreover, they claimed that their first choice for President, Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace, "clearly speaks for the average man in Massachusetts, much more than either major party's candidate."

The Bay State delegation was the major holdout for a draft-Wallace drive here as the convention chose lameduck California Rep. John G. Schmitz as its presidential candidate.

The party ended its convention yesterday after nominating Tom Anderson, a Tennessee weekly newspaper editor and self-styled "crusader for freedom," as its vice presidential candidate.

That gave it two members of the John Birch Society as the top of the ticket it hopes to get on the ballot in 40 or more states.

In spite of an emotional long-distance telephone call from his hospital bed in Alabama urging delegates not to draft him, Wallace received eight votes on the first ballot late Friday night. Seven of the votes came from Massachusetts.

The 12-member Bay State delegation, equally divided between former Republicans and former Democrats, contained two union members, two people under 21, and two housewives.

In income, geography and occupation the pro-Wallace group contrasts with the mostly suburban-liberal Democratic delegates for Sen. George McGovern last month and with the Myopia Hunt Club cast of delegates rooting for President Nixon later this month at the Republican Convention at Miami Beach.

The chairman of the state delegation here, James J. Twohig of South Boston, says that his group plans to sue the state to get Schmitz's name on the ballot in Massachusetts.

When the July 11 deadline passed for gathering the necessary 56,000 signatures, the American party had mustered only 16,000 certified signatures.

"We hope to prove to the Supreme Judicial Court that a substantial number of citizens have indicated their desire to have a third party on the ballot" Twohig said. "We intend to argue that the current statute favors only the Republican and Democratic parties and is oppressive and therefore unconstitutional, both with reference to the state and Federal constitutions."

Twohig, a former state representative from South Boston who served on Beacon Hill from 1947 to 1950, was also a former assistant attorney general under Elliot L. Richardson, now Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare and one of the leaders of the Bay State Republican delegation in Miami this month.

Other members of the American Party delegation here are:

Vice-Chairman Alan MacNeil of Newtonville; his wife, Carol, also a delegate; Parker Weaver of Burlington, an optometrist and publisher of the Middlesex Trumpet; and his wife, Beverly; Gary Benoit of East Hampton, 19, a student at Lowell Technological Institute; Michael McDonald, 28, of East Boston, a salesman; John Adams of Worcester, a telephone company worker; Ed Kantorski of Concord, a distributor of electronics small parts.

Also included are:

Grant Wells of Springfield, 20, a factory worker; Letty Angelone of Newton, an office manager for a men's clothing store; and John E. Hanson of Newton, a compositor at The Boston Globe.

Hanson, 42, said that he joined the American Party "after my sister's kid was picked up for breaking and entering. I had another nephew who was also involved in marijuana and I could see that the drug culture can have its effect. I like Wallace's delivery and I knew that he was against the drug culture.

"As an individual there's not much you can do about it, but together with others you might be able to change the trend of things. You know it doesn't affect you, unless it happens to you. My home in Newton Center has been burglarized twice and my car has been stolen."

Hanson, a member of the International Typographical Union, local 13, is a graduate of Newton Technical High and a veteran of the US Army.

His fellow Newton resident, MacNeil, is also a member of a labor union, the United Carpenters and Joiners of America, Local 275.

"We have to get this busing stopped of course and get some control over our school systems" says MacNeil, father of two girls ages 7 and 9.

The 34-year-old carpenter ran for mayor of Newton last year and finished last, but "we tried to educate the people as to what the American party was all about. I wish Wallace had been able to run in Massachusetts this year. I'd bet he'd do very, very well."

MacNeil is a member of the American Party's executive board.

Michael MacDonald joined the American Party in 1969, having been disappointed with the Republican Party.

"I got involved and interested in politics when I graduated from Brighton High in 1962. That was when Kennedy was very big, as you know. But I did not like the direction the country was going in then and I supported Goldwater, but then Wallace became my candidate.

"I can see now that Nixon and McGovern both want control over the lives of simple Americans. They want more taxes and a one-world government and all the trouble that brings."

"A third party idea is here to stay," said McDonald. "Look at the 9th Congressional District. There's an independent candidate there (Boston City Councilman John J. Moakley). He's not our type of independent, to be sure, but more and more you're seeing third choices available and this is what we need."

"Both major parties have failed us," said Twohig, chairman of the American Party delegation. "I think that the average man in the street in Massachusetts really went for Wallace and would have have gone for him this year. McGovern represents revolution and full change in our customs, ideas and mode of living. Nixon too would represent the end of liberty in America because he stands for pretty much the same things as McGovern, although he expresses them differently. Nixon is one of the cleverest politicians."

Twohig said that "Schmitz is obviously not as strong a candidate as Wallace; but he deserves the right to be on the ballot."