CARL P. LEUBSDORF
7202 CONNECTICUT AVENUE
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20015

Nov. 15, 1972

Mr. Richard J. Johnson
2402 Willow Road
Rolling Meadows, Ill.

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Here, as promised, are copies of the two stories I wrote after interviewing you, the first while you were traveling with Sen. McGovern, the second right before the election.

Your judgments seem to be uite close to those rendered by the country last Tuesday, and your prediction was right on the mark.

Please let me know if I can do anything further for you. I've enjoyed talking with you.

All best wishes.

Sincerelyy

Carl P. Leubsdorf
AP Political Writer

This 'Middle American' Is 'Typical'—And Undecided

By CARL P. LEUBSDORF

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — A 43-year-old Chicago area credit manager, picked as a typical "middle American" for a study of voting behavior, says he still doesn't know how he will vote after a rare, inside view of Sen. George McGovern's presidential campaign.

"To be frank," Richard J. Johnson said in an interview, "I'm still undecided at this point whether he'll get my vote in November." But he said his view of McGovern has gone up from a week of close watching.

Johnson was picked by the Public Broadcasting Corp.'s National Public Affairs Center for Televison (PACT) for a year-long study. He was first interviewed in January, when he described himself as a Democrat who might vote in November for President Nixon.

"I feel that he's done a commendable job," Johnson said at the time. But he added that if Sen. Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts won the Democratic nomination, he'd certainly vote for him.

Married and the father of four, Johnson lives in Rolling Meadows, Ill., drives 21 miles each day to his job with National Steel Service Center Inc. in Evanston and is concerned that his income of about $15,000, including his wife's part-time job, won't be enough to pay for his children's college education.

Last week, he arrived in Los Angeles to see the McGovern campaign first hand. Since Wednesday, he has seen the senator campaign there, in San Diego, in Dallas and Houston, Tex.; in Peoria and Rockford, Ill.; in Superior, Wis.; and in Des Moines, Iowa.

"It's been strenuous," Johnson conceded. "I'm tired at night, and I'm ready for the old sack, but what an experience."

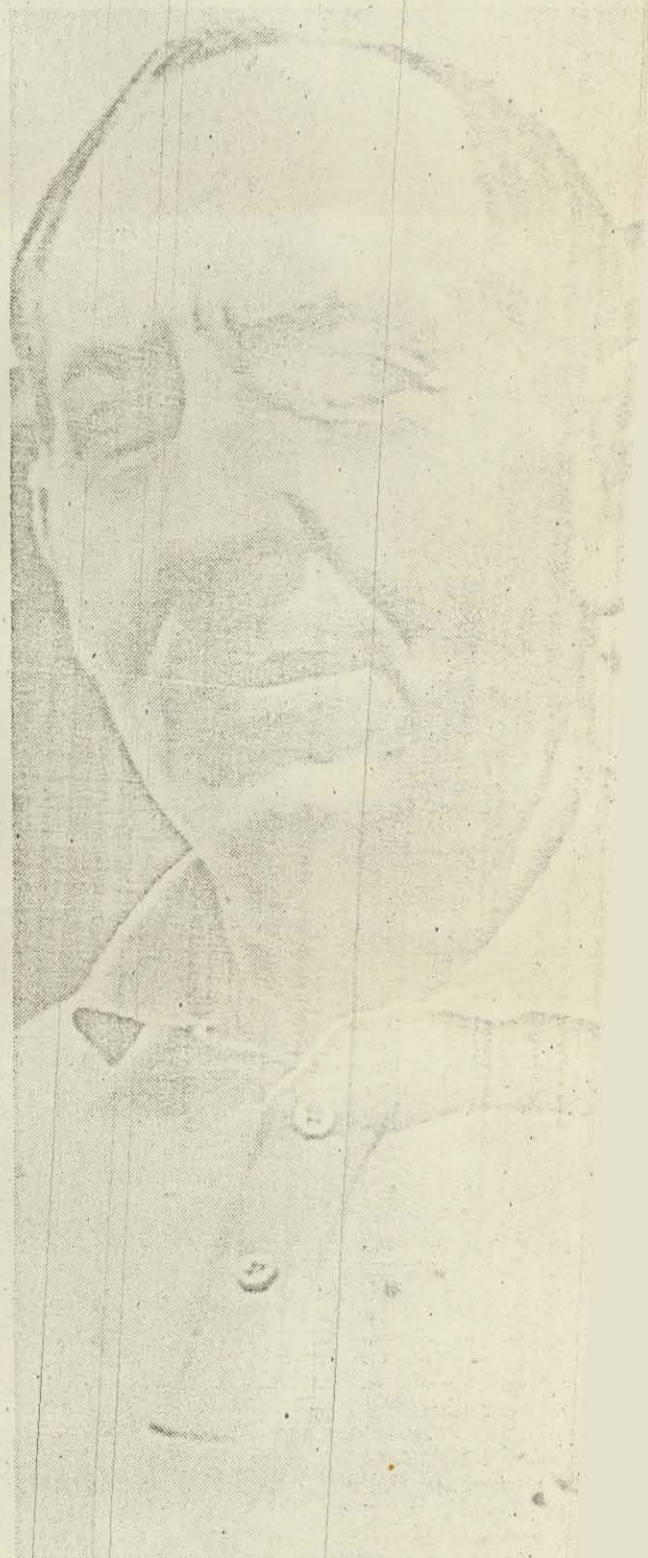
As for McGovern, Johnson said his first conclusion was that "the candidate has to be an extraordinary human being to endure the rigors of this." He likes a lot of what McGovern has said, finds him "a very congenial, honest and religious man" but still has doubts.

"I would like to see him a little more dynamic in his speeches, in his presentations," Johnson said. He feels Nixon has those qualities, plus the experience of four years in office and adds that "in the last year, there has been improvement in this country economy-wise."

Another thing that bothers Johnson about McGovern is a feeling "there is a lot of indecision here." He is upset at McGovern's decision to drop Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton as his running mate after disclosure of the Missouri senator's medical history, saying he "definitely" should have been retained.

He has no opinion on Sargent Shriver, who replaced Eagleton an dsays he is uninfluenced by the fact he is Kennedy's brother-in-law. He thinks Vice President Spiro T. Agnew "has done a good job."

On Sept. 20 public broadcasting stations will carry a followup program to the earlier show, this one on Johnson's week with McGovern campaign.



Richard Johnson, McGovern-Watc

MUNITY NEWS

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will repose in the Rivers Funeral Chapel until noon, Wednesday.

Surviving the deceased are her husband, Shirod Robbins; three daughters, Mrs. Minnie M. Gatlin of Eltoro, Calif., Mrs. Anna Carter of New Bern and Miss Sandra A. Robbins of the home; four sons, Shirod Robbins, Jr. of New Bern, Linwood Robbins of Freeport, Ronald Robbins of the home and Charles N. Robbins of Fayetteville; one brother, Sylvester Delamar of James City and several grandchildren, one great-grandchild and several nieces and nephews.

Miss Brenda K. Boyd of Corona, N. Y., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Riley Boyd of Pollocksville, graduated on October 25 from the Career Academy of New York City with honors. Her grade average was 96.

Business Mirror

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—The value of these coins is

Middle American Undecided On His 'Voting Choice'

By CARL P. LEUBSDORF
AP Politial Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — For months, Richard J. Johnson, a lifetime Democrat who was the subject of a study into the voting habits of a typical "middle American," had said he was leaning this year to Republican Richard Nixon.

Now, just a day before the election, he says he has moved into the undecided camp. The reason: the Nixon administration's pre-election bid for peace in Vietnam.

"I really don't know how I'm going to vote," Johnson said in a television interview. "I'll make that decision in the voting booth at about 7:30 a.m. Tuesday morning."

Johnson, a $15,000-a-year credit manager with a subsidiary of the National Steel Corp. who lives in Rolling Meadow, Ill., was chosen last January by the National Public Affairs Center for Television (NPACT) for the study. In September, he spent four days with Sen. George McGovern's campaign.

Until the Nixon administration disclosed its Vietnam peace drive 10 days ago, Johnson said, "I was going to vote for President Nixon." Then, he began to lean toward McGovern, feeling that "if it could have been done now, it could have been done two years ago."

"As of right now, I really don't know what to tell you," he added.

Johnson, who has four children and whose wife works parttime, said, "I think there are lots of people like me. There are more people than a lot of people realize who are really undecided . . . It's an election of two people that people aren't too interested about and they have to vote for on."

He said he thinks that, in that case, many might end up voting for the party they had supported in the past. In his case, he said, "If (Sen. Edward M.) Kennedy was running, I'd vote for him."

Though undecided on his own vote, Johnson isn't undecided on the outcome. Asked if he thinks McGovern might win despite deficits in the polls, he replied "my very best opinion is that he doesn't have a chance" unless there are even more undecided voters than anyone imagins.

But he said that won't affect his vote and that "I am going to decide on which is best for my own interests."

HOUSE BLAZE

The Craven County Fire Commission reports that 10 men with two trucks from the Cove City Fire Department responded to a house fire at the residence of Hubert Bryant Sunday in the Winter Green section of Cove City. Damage was reported to be minor. Loss was set at $50, according to Fire Commission officials.

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