

# Campaign's a Joy to G.O.P. Editor

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 17—The Republicans are businesslike, the Democrats are glum, and the voters are largely apathetic. But one man, perhaps one of the few, is actually having fun this election season: He is John D. Lofton Jr., the editor of a rambunctiously partisan Republican publication, a sort-of-weekly newsletter entitled Monday.

Most of its estimated total of 150,000 readers are \$25-contributing Republicans, but Monday's mailing list includes Democrats, a good many of whom will admit to a grudging admiration for what is, in essence, a house organ.

Even those who consider its slashing, sometimes tasteless audacity, less gutsy than gutter tactics, are likely to skim it before filing it in the wastebasket. There is something riveting, they concede, in what they see as Monday's calculated outrageousness—as, in last week's issue, a cover drawing of Senator McGovern with his hands raised in surrender, labeled: "Advance copy of McGovern plan to end the war in Vietnam."

## Twice-a-Month Weekly

That is fairly typical of Monday's campaign approach, which is to say out loud and bluntly what is being murmured more discreetly in other quarters of the party. And Mr. Lofton, a stocky man with a waning-moon face and heavy horn-rims, seems to delight in being the 31-year-old enfant terrible of the party.

"Monday is me," he said recently.

Monday is also a weekly that, for the duration of the campaign, is coming out only the middle two weeks of the month—replaced by the thicker, four-color First Monday one week and by the thinner Letter from Monday on the last Monday.

Monday's transformation from an earnest, less-than-lively weekly began when Mr. Lofton took over about two years ago, but it has flourished in the charged election-year atmosphere.

Its attacks on Democrats were already a feature: Mr.

Lofton is very proud of having written about Senator Edwin S. Muskie's volatility back in early 1971. But until the campaign began to move, Monday was often sticky with laudatory exposition of the Nixon Administration's doings.

Mr. Lofton, who says that he does not know how much it costs to publish Monday, puts it out from a tiny office in the Republican National Committee headquarters on Capitol Hill.

The walls of his minimum-security cubicle are a collage of Lofton fun-and-games, including a bumper sticker that asks "Will Muskie Pique Too Soon?" for which Mr. Lofton is delighted to claim credit.

Most of the jokes are on the Democrats, but there are a few touches that indicate that he can laugh at his own party, such as a cartoon of former Attorney General John N. Mitchell smoking marijuana.

Mr. Lofton came to Washington from the editorship of a small Vermont paper owned by William Loeb, the publisher of the right-wing Manchester, (N.H.) Union Leader. It was outside The Union Leader that Senator Muskie held the news conference early this year that seemed to some a confirmation of the implied negative answer to a 1971 headline in Monday: "Is Muskie cool enough to be President?"

## Most Articles Reprinted

Every issue of Monday starts with a straight rouse-the-troops piece. Excerpts from speeches by the President of Administration and campaign officials are generally included. And there is often a praiseful report of some Administration program or another.

The basis for Monday, Mr. Lofton says, is research. He himself reads, he says, 10 or 12 papers a day; the committee's research division chips about 115 papers a day, and these are fed into its efficient data retrieval system.

The clip-and-file system makes it possible for Mr. Lofton to put out Monday almost by himself, since the bulk of its material has appeared elsewhere—from letters-to-the-editors columns to news articles and syndicated columns—and is reprinted

with meticulous editing of the source.

Mr. Lofton, whose conversational tone is appropriately mocking, of himself as well as others, admits to being "jugular" in his thrust but "pretty cold-blooded—I know what I'm doing." At times his weaponry becomes clumsy; satire becomes sniggering.

In Monday cartoons, for instance, the North Vietnamese are always portrayed as buck-toothed, slant-eyed little men out of the yellow peril area. The Democratic party is the "Democrat party" and Mrs. Jean Westwood is referred to as "Democrat National Committee chairthing."

This last, he concedes, was perhaps "a little meat ax-ish."

In appearance, Monday resembles a thin newsmagazine. It is printed on glossy paper, its covers are in two colors and it averages eight pages. First Monday usually 14 pages thick, uses four-color covers and picture spreads, and Letter From Monday uses a newsletter format on dull cream paper.

Mr. Lofton is proud of Monday's accuracy and of having made it an attention-getting publication. "I like letting air out of shirts," he says, "and I just happen to be letting air out of Democrats' shirts."

He concedes that he would not be as skillful at deflating Republicans—let alone have as much fun. "Probably not," he said, "because my heart wouldn't be in it."

One of Mr. Lofton's tangential amusements is collecting predictions about the outcome of the 1972 race, which he is thinking of releasing en masse after Nov. 7. One that he might include appeared in print Aug. 23, 1971, under the headline, "Curtains for George," and said in part: "As for McGovern [John V. Lindsay's Presidential maneuvers have torpedoed his candidacy.] Overnight he has become the superfluous candidate. With Lindsay on the playing field, it is not likely McGovern can go his scheduled three innings without being shelled, or relieved and sent to the showers."

The source of this Delphic pronouncement? "Monday," and its resident seer, John D. Lofton Jr.