

Ralph Nader - Green

While Ralph Nader is not currently running at the time of this writing, there is an active and vocal draft movement to convince him to run for the Green party in the Presidential election for 2008. The site "drafternader.org" sports a petition signed with over 1000 signatures, so he's worth including "just in case". He's nothing if not full of surprises.

Ralph Nader was born February 27, 1934 in Winsted, Connecticut. Both of his parents were immigrants from Egypt and Lebanon. He graduated from Princeton University in 1955 with a B.A. in government and economics and Harvard Law School in 1958.

He joined the United States Army in 1959, but served less than a year before his discharge. He then began work as a lawyer until 1961, when he became a Professor of History and Government at the University of Hartford until 1964. He then relocated to Washington D.C., and took up a position on the staff of Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan. He also counseled the United States Senate subcommittee on car safety, and was also a faculty member at The American University Washington College of Law. He has continued to practice law throughout his career, but only in between his other accomplishments.

Through the years and throughout his career, Ralph Nader has been an outspoken activist for consumer rights, the environment, and civic government. He has based much of his career on criticizing big corporations, which have largely taken over control of the United States at the detriment of its citizens. He is the founder of many organizations both in the government and in the private sector whose purpose serves to protect private citizens from the greed and misanthropy of large corporations, including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Public Citizen, and several public interest research groups. He has also founded a huge number of non-profit activist and watchdog groups.

He has run for President four times, in 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004. He has never held a public office. However, he has created several regulatory government agencies, most particularly the EPA and OSHA. Virtually every industry from airlines to fast food has changed its practices or added safety features as a result of his work.

Not surprisingly, he has had clashes, run-ins, and struggles with multinational corporations who wanted to silence him. The most famous of these incidents happened after he published his study of car safety, which he gave General Motors failing marks for. General Motors, Inc., responded by numerous tactics to

discredit him, spy on him, and even "hiring prostitutes to trap him in compromising situations". These activities were later the subject of a lawsuit by Nader against General Motors, which he won and received a public apology and a six-figure cash settlement.

Ralph Nader has so far authored, co-authored, or edited 31 books on the topics of consumer safety, consumer rights, and how society is abused by corporate interests. His published bibliography includes a list which would fill this article, but some of his more famous and signatory books are "Unsafe at Any Speed", "Corporate Power in America", "Who's Poisoning America", "No Contest: Corporate Lawyers and the Perversion of Justice in America", and "Why Women Pay More". He has also appeared in several documentaries, and is fluent in English, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, and Portuguese.

The current effort to draft Ralph Nader is an expression of his huge fan following. At times, his previous nominations have been what are called "protest candidacies". So far, the closest thing he has made to accepting the nomination is that he has stated that he might run if Hillary Rodham Clinton receives the Democratic nomination. Since Clinton is indeed the front-runner in the Democratic race, that seems like a very good possibility.

Surprisingly enough, Ralph Nader has shown many signs that he might make a good President, despite not having held public office. He has continuously acted in the best conscience and public interest, he has set up and run many organizations, has gotten things done to improve the quality of life in America well beyond the capacity of many Governors and Congressmen, and has vast knowledge in many subjects which would qualify him to handle almost any problem that came up.

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