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From CIA Agent To "Consumer Champion"

Ralph Nader, Unsafe Under Any Cover



by Lydia Dittler

If there is one thing that's consistent about Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign, it is his dedication to the ideals of Ralph Nader. It goes further than Carter's enthusiastic use of Nader's populist rhetoric of "smallness" and "corporate crime" and the appearance of the "consumer champion" at strategy sessions and softball games in Plains this summer. Carter has pledged his campaign to the Naderite goal of a zero-growth, corporatist society, a program for holocaust whose model is the hellhole "Brazilian miracle" of forced labor and genocidal austerity.

And it is typical of the methods of the Rockefeller-led faction of Wall Street financiers that stands behind these men and this program that Nader, the independent champion of the public interest, started his career by helping to bring the Brazilian model into being during an early 1960s stint as a street-level CIA agent, before his classification was upped to that of media-superstar consumerist bringing Brazil to the U.S.

Nader's Program: "A Lot of Little Things"

Thus it is not really surprising that Nader, through his Health Research Group operation, is inviting Brazilian-scale disease epidemics by actively opposing the Ford Administration's swine flu vaccine program. A spokesman for the HRG branded the program "wasteful," and added that if a repeat of the killer epidemic of 1918 should occur, it would "serve people right."

After all, genocide is just the honest term for the anti-technology, anti-progress "consumerism" that Nader has been peddling since as early as 1956-57, when as editor of the Harvard Law School *Record* he wrote that modern medicine doesn't know anything the American Indians didn't. (The date is the same as that of John D. Rockefeller III's first zero-growth tract.)

"What made us happy in the 1800s?" Nader asks. "A lot of little things. House calls made by physicians. Small pharmacies just down the street. Self-entertainment...." Windmills, consumer cooperatives, decentralization like in China — but with no communism. Nader's hideously atavistic program is geared to appeal to feelings of impotence and paranoia — paranoia about big business, big unions, science, industrial development, etc.

The real goal of "Naderism" from the beginning has been the transformation of the U.S. into a 1984 world — top-down control over a "rationalized" economy in the hands of the Rockefeller family's invisible government, replacement of elected legislators and civil servants by "public interest" lawyers and judges, and silencing of all political opposition by a permanent scandal apparatus of PIRGs, CARGs, and an army of "whistle blowers."

This goal is made perfectly explicit in one of Nader's most sweeping operations, CARG — the Corporate Accountability Research Group. In the name of making the corporate structure accountable to the "public interest," Nader and Mark Green, one of Nader's closest associates, have been lobbying since the early 1970s for the federal chartering of corporations. Their allies in this effort include the Institute for Policy Studies and former OSS agent Arthur Goldberg's Center for Law and Social Policy. Nader and Green are direct about the reason for replacing state with federal incorporation: it will put all corporations under tight federal surveillance. Together with beefed up regulatory agencies and anti-trust laws (likewise two battle cries of the Carter campaign) federal chartering is intended to be a bludgeon to be used against any independent capitalist opposition and consolidate Rockefeller control. Similar "reforms" in corporate law paved the way for the establishment of the German and Italian fascist states.

CARG's commitment to fascist reorganization is made clear in its one instance of support for "free enterprise." Nader and Green, who otherwise want to put everything under government regulation, are committed to the deregulation of trucking, rail, and other transport, radio, television, and some other industries — a policy which primarily means sure bankruptcy for the smaller capitalists operating in those areas.

Nader's first go at corporate reorganization was the Project on Corporate Responsibility, better known as Campaign GM. Campaign GM was actually launched by two other Ivy League lawyers, who were inspired and later aided by Nader. (Nader's goal is to produce a nation of Naders, he says.) A small group of stockholders representing itself as "the public" demanded the reform of GM, the largest corporation in the U.S., along corporatist lines: the election of three new directors to represent the "public interest" (Campaign GM proposed Rene Dubos, the infamous Rockefeller University zero-growther as one of its candidates), the creation of a labor-management-citizen board to review the corporation's policies, etc. Campaign GM's recommendations were defeated in the proxy fight that ensued — even though those champions of "the public interest," the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations, voted their blocks of votes for the reforms and against management. But the reforms were never really intended as anything more than the cover for the management shakeup which followed, and resulted in, for example, the introduction of brainwashing sessions for workers and corporate executives alike, and other such innovations as the creation of GMAD (General Motors Assembly Division),

where assembly-line workers were isolated from the rest of the workforce and subjected to literally killing speedup.

To run a fascist economy, you need a fascist bureaucracy. In 1967 the first group of "Nader's Raiders" produced a several-hundred-page, fact-filled report, based on extensive interviews and snooping around, which charged the Federal Trade Commission with collaborating with the corporate structure to defraud the public. In particular, the report charged FTC chairman Paul Rand Dixon with political cronyism and prejudice against employing young Ivy League lawyers (!) and led to Dixon's replacement by future HEW hatchetman Casper ("Cap the Knife") Weinberger and an influx of Eastern Establishment anti-trust lawyers. One of the goals of the FTC "reform" was to restore the agency to its original purpose of anti-trust enforcement. Nader and his Raiders proceeded to profile every other significant government agency with the same intent.

Nader's 1984

In 1969 James Ridgeway, editor of the "left" fascist rag *Hard Times*, wrote bluntly that his old associate Ralph Nader was really "working towards a new definition of a governmental system, in which lawyers are a commanding elite" — a Kafkaesque "post-industrial" world where lawyers have replaced elected lawmakers.

Nader has endeavored to turn the whole population into "eyes and ears." Starting in 1970 he promoted the creation of Public Interest Research Groups — with the suggestive acronym PIRGs — on campuses and in local communities around the U.S. and in Japan. The aim was to create a terror apparatus of Naders in every community. The PIRGs, directed by a small nucleus of "public interest" lawyers and other "professionals," have used overpricing, industrial pollution, and other issues to push local enterprises into bankruptcy.

Nader has by no means restricted himself to the corporate sector. His most significant operation against labor was his campaign to "clean up" the United Mineworkers Union. In 1969 Nader personally groomed "Jock" Yablonski, a then unknown union radical, to run against incumbent Tony Boyle for union president on a hoked-up "anti-corruption" platform. The murder of Yablonski, his wife, and daughter gave Nader and his partner in crime Joseph Rauh the leverage to pull off a takeover of the union and the installation of their new patsy, Arnold Miller, as president. The outcome of Nader's efforts speaks for itself: once one of the country's most militant unions, the Mineworkers now had a leadership favorable to Project Independence coal gassification boondoggles, the loss of seniority, a proliferation of pot-smoking countergangs, brainwashing sessions for West Virginia miners overseen by Jay Rockefeller, where the miners are taught to focus on specious health and safety issues, etc.

Less well known is Nader's Project Congress, initiated in 1971. Project Congress is usually described as a flop — the whole operation was slowed down because of an open rebellion by Nader's staff whose idealism still didn't give them the physical strength to withstand the miserable slave-labor conditions which Nader imposed on them, and the widespread criticism of the final report for its sloppiness and gross inaccuracies. However, Project Congress was the basis for the operations later run against Representatives Wilbur Mills, Wayne Hayes, and other congressmen who represented potential obstacles to the Fabian reorganization of Congress. Nader prepared the way for a multitude of Elizabeth Rays.

Save Energy — Cut Your Own Throat

The other prong of Naderism has been the fostering of the ideology of zero growth in the population at large. In the 1960s, with the dollar-based international monetary system visibly

cracking and real economic growth stalled, the Rockefeller family and its allies needed to put their zero-growth policies over on the whole population in order to preserve their bankrupt financial empire. This is where Ralph Nader came in. Nader, the son of Lebanese immigrants — a father who left the "tyranny" of a factory job for the "independence" of a wretched bakery-diner-health food store in a small Connecticut town, and an omnipresent, smothering mother — was perfectly psychologically suited to lead a movement based on zero-growth "consumerism."

As everyone will recall, the springboard for the consumerist movement was auto safety. In 1964 Nader published *Unsafe At Any Speed*, which shifted the blame for auto deaths from the driver to the "machine." (One of the elements of the Nader myth is the bizarre boast that he has never owned any kind of machine.) Granted, General Motors and the other auto manufacturers were producing unsafe cars; similarly, there was a necessary germ of truth to all the consumerist campaigns Nader was to launch subsequently against the reckless use of X-rays, the unwholesomeness of products like hot dogs and Coke, deceit in advertising, and so on. But Nader's job was not to turn the population against such abuses per se, but against technology and progress and all that that implies — including the productive working class. The real significance of the specific consumer campaigns was the proto-fascist organizing process unleashed around them.

Taking off from auto safety, Nader endeavored to spread his own psychotic involvement with zero growth to the whole American population. He deliberately appealed to people as childlike consumers, divorced from any identity or potential identity as **productive** members of society, to tap the paranoid terror of big and powerful corporations, government, and unions particularly in petit-bourgeois layers.

This is why the actual effects of the consumerist campaigns have usually been the opposite of their stated intentions. Take the auto safety campaign, the original Nader crusade. Nader actually played a key role in impeding the development of safer auto transportation. Since the advent of Naderism, auto engineering has degenerated from some approximation of basic research to the idiocy of devising one gimmick after another — airbags, rubber bumpers, etc. — to conform to the latest safety and pollution requirements. As a result of all the gimmickry, autos are harder to repair, burn more gasoline than ever before, and are generally less efficient. By the same token, Nader is responsible for the disappearance of any semblance of serious research on overall auto design, traffic flows, and other elements of real auto safety.

Nader's campaign against the railroads is a case study in obfuscation.

Perhaps the most telling — and most obvious — proof of the utter phoniness of Nader's auto safety campaign is the fact that Nader has **never** called for the expansion of mass transit. In 1969 he denounced the railroads for their "repulsive corporate practice" of dumping "200 million pounds of excrement" on the tracks every year — of all things to focus the public's attention on, in the face of an entirely obsolete, bankrupt railway system! Nader's railroad campaign did its part to impede the development of modern mass transportation in the U.S.

Where the possibility of developing modernized jet passenger service existed — in the government's program to develop the Supersonic Transport System — Nader did his utmost to sabotage it. He played a pivotal role in organizing the hysterical movement to ban the building of the SST and the landing of the Concorde in the U.S., thereby protecting the huge debts of the bankrupt U.S. airline companies to the New York banks.

Characteristically, on the energy question Nader has led the public to believe that there are only two alternatives: nuclear

fission on the one hand and a return to the good old days — barbarism — on the other. Says Nader, "If people knew what the facts were and if they had to choose between nuclear power and candles, they would choose candles."

The ultimate goal of the consumerist movement is, simply, to get people to voluntarily cut their consumption. Nader, who says he is a great believer in the power of the consumer to "beat the profit system" through consumer boycotts, was the guiding light of the hysterical housewives who fought high meat prices in the spring of 1973 — by depriving their families of meat! The high prices were not, of course, the fault of the "greedy" farmers and meat industry targeted by the boycotters, but the wild commodity speculation which had pushed up the price of feed grains to historic highs — squeezing farmers, meat companies, and consumers alike.

"Jesus Christ, He's CIA!"

Nader's program on its own is more than enough to identify him as a fascist and leading agent of the Rockefeller-led monetarists. The financing of his campaign by such important "philanthropic" foundations as the Carnegie Foundation, the Stern Family Foundation (chief funders of the Institute for Policy Studies), the Field Foundation, and the Warburg family's New York Foundation merely confirms Nader's credentials. The Rockefeller and Ford Foundations may have discreetly refrained from putting their money directly behind Nader's operations, but their record of direct collaboration with him stands. In the late 1960s Ford Foundation president McGeorge Bundy — straight from directing the murderous Operation Phoenix in Vietnam — asked Nader to brief his staff on how the Foundation could use its money to finance public interest groups such as Nader's! The Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Foundation were the only two institutional shareholders to vote against the General Motors management and with Nader's Campaign GM in the 1970 proxy fight.

Prior to the launching of his "public interest" career in the mid-1960s, Nader's history has all the identification marks of high-level agency. Nader was groomed at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, a notorious breeding ground for agents, where he conveniently majored in Far Eastern politics and languages — Russian and Chinese. He then went on to Harvard Law. One of Nader's classmates from Harvard commented wryly, "There seemed to be other items on the agenda than being a lawyer" for Nader during his stint at Harvard.

For one thing, Nader was reportedly "obsessed with Latin America" during his law school days. Then, soon after Nader had set up a law practice in Hartford, Connecticut in 1959, he suddenly turned to a career of "freelance journalism," traveling to Europe, the Soviet Union, Africa, and Latin America between 1961 and 1964. After a trip to Scandinavia in the summer of 1961, Nader drafted the first ombudsman bill in the U.S., which was introduced in the Connecticut legislature, and wrote a hundred-page paper on the ombudsman system for the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, California, an agent operation run by World Federalist head Robert Hutchinson, a Rockefeller flunkie who had formerly headed up the John D. Rockefeller-founded University of Chicago. The ombudsman report was the prototype for the future mammoth "fact-filled" reports Nader, the former fanatical baseball card collector, was to churn out.

In the summer of 1963 Nader was deployed into Latin America with Harvard Law classmate Joseph Page — who later collaborated with Nader on a project on occupational health and safety — supposedly on assignment for the Atlantic Monthly and the Christian Science Monitor.

The most important stop on Nader's tour was the Northeast of Brazil, at that time this area was the center of peasant ferment

whose revolutionary potential — occurring in the wake of the Cuban Revolution, had the CIA et al. terrified. Nader had planned to spend only a couple of days in Recife, wrote Page in *The Revolution That Never Was*, "but he became fascinated with the ferment and remained for more than a month." Nader was part of a much broader deployment — others in town during this period were: Peace Corps Director Sargent Shriver, Food for Peace head George McGovern, Massachusetts' Assistant D.A. Edward Kennedy, and Henry Kissinger.

These deployments helped ensure that the peasant upsurge was crushed, and set up the conditions for the coming to power of the Brazilian dictatorship in 1964. Nader contributed the service of "Naderizing" the bungling U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) mission in Recife, paving the way for a change to personnel who were better trained in the art of counterinsurgency.

When Nader returned from one of his journalistic jaunts, his old prep school friend David Halberstam exclaimed, "Jesus Christ, he's a CIA man!" Halberstam, the Pulitzer prize-winning journalist who traveled to Saigon to report on the Vietnam war, should know.

The New Assignment

Nader's "public service" career began shortly thereafter in Washington in 1964, when he got a job as a consultant on auto safety with "food control" and terrorism hack Daniel P. Moynihan, then an assistant secretary of labor under Arthur Goldberg, the labor counterinsurgency expert. The story goes that in 1959 Moynihan, at that time an aide to New York's Governor Averell Harriman, Rockefeller's controller of the Democratic Party, had spotted an article the 24-year-old Nader had written for *The Nation* and was impressed — Moynihan being an auto safety advocate himself. (Averell Harriman heaped great praise on the "young man ... with high ideals" in his book, *America and Russia in a Changing World*.) But Nader's former acquaintances, remembering his exclusive fascination with Latin America, were shocked at the unexpected change in Nader's interests.

While working for Moynihan Nader wrote his *Unsafe At Any Speed*, which was to make auto safety the no. 1 public interest issue in the U.S. He soon became a "secret" advisor to Fabian Senator Abraham Ribicoff's Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization, which was looking into the federal role in auto safety. Following the publication of *Unsafe*, General Motors reportedly put a former FBI agent, Vincent Gillen, on Nader's trail to find out who the nuisance was. Two *New Republic* writers, associates of Nader, broke the Gillen story in March 1966 and touched off Nader's rise to celebrity; they were Institute for Policy Studies fellow James Ridgeway, who had put Nader in touch with Dick Grossman, publisher of *Unsafe* and all his future muckraking reports, and David Sanford, now a "critic" of Nader. Ribicoff promptly called hearings of his subcommittee to hear the testimony of James Roche, president of GM, and Gillen. Thanks to *New Republic*, the media, and Ribicoff (who later distinguished himself as an agent at the 1968 Democratic Party convention by supporting the Weathermen and other crazies from the convention floor), Nader — glorified as the private citizen who came smack up against the largest corporation in the U.S. — became a celebrity overnight and his book a best seller.

From that point on Nader began building up his own machine, spawning the dozens of "public interest" offshoots which were held together by an umbrella organization, the Center for the Study of Responsive Law. The Center was headed up by Ted Jacobs, a former Princeton and Harvard Law classmate of Nader's until his recent departure to work with Bella Abzug's

civil rights subcommittee. Through such "defections" the close interconnections between Nader's machine and allied Institute for Policy Studies networks and Fabian Democratic Party circles have been built and strengthened.

CARG, headed up by Mark Green, illustrates the interface between Nader's operations and other agent circles. Green, for example, participated in a 1973 Institute for Policy Studies seminar on "The State and the Corporate Economy" held to indoctrinate Congressmen and their staffers on "post-industrial economy." Other participants were leading IPSers Marcus Raskin, Richard Barnet, and Ralph Stavins, and "economist" for the Institute's Cambridge branch Gar Alperowitz. CARG also closely collaborates with the Center for the Study of Law and Social Policy, headed up by Arthur Goldberg and the home of anti-trust specialists from the Washington law firm of Arnold and Porter, one of Wall Street's key Fabian operations in the capital.

Thurmond Arnold, the deceased founding partner of Arnold

and Porter and the chief of the Anti-Trust Division of the Justice Department during the Depression years of 1938 to 1943, was, in fact, one of the original corporate watergaters. As head of the Temporary National Economic Commission (TNEC), Arnold opened war on "monopoly" in the U.S. — he strove (unsuccessfully) to break the hold of the Morgan family over U.S. Steel for the Rockefellers. TNEC's proposals included Federal incorporation of business, stiff criminal penalties for the violation of anti-trust laws, and authorization of the FTC to forbid corporate mergers unless they were in the "public interest." Nader's proposals for corporate "reform" are far from original.

Now Nader has thrown in his political lot with fellow media creation Jimmy Carter, helping pull together a gamut of counterinsurgent machines and networks into what Wall Street had first hoped would be a victorious fighting force for fascism. The accelerating "negative growth" of Carter's campaign, however, promises to serve the public interest by putting Nader and Naderism on blocks for good.

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