

## Ralph Nader and Nader's Raiders Strike Again

The republican party got an early Easter Basket Sunday, 24 February, 2008 when Ralph Nader announced on NBC's Meet the Press with Tim Russert (the same forum where he announced his 2004 presidential run) that he was tossing his hat into the ring for the Office of The President of The United States of America. In 1992 a third-party candidate, H. Ross Perot, claimed a large share of the American vote, nearly Twenty (20) percent, playing a role the Republican base will never forget. The day following Nader's announcement, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who is apparently contemplating his own independent presidential bid, defended Ralph Nader's right to seek the Nation's Highest Office. So while Nader may be the nemeses of the democratic party, it may be that the republicans have a spoiler of their own on their hands. If so, like H. Ross Perot, he has enough money of his own to make the country take him seriously - at least for a time. Nader is a member of the Green Party. He came to prominence in the 1960s as a consumer advocate. His most significant program to the mind of a car lover, like the Tennessee Mountain Man, was spearheading the demise of what he dubbed the coffin on wheels - the Chevy Corvair. Computer Man saw one of Nader's rolling coffins in mint condition traveling on Rossville Blouvard in Chattanooga, Tennessee just a week or so preceding Nader's announcement, and wondered if "the spoiler" would show again. Given Nader's ego and his apparent thirst for power, he could have done no less. Having run unsuccessfully in 2000 and 2004, the 2008 bid will be Nader's third run for the office. Will the third time be the charm Surely not. Although Nader attracted just 2.7 percent of the vote nationwide, the democrats have not forgotten, nor forgiven, Ralph Nader for what they believe cost Al Gore the 2000 election. In 2004 he garnered only 0.3 percent of the vote, and yet he once again finds himself vilified in the Blogosphere as being in bed with The Grand Old Party. Obama, who briefly organized with a Nader influenced group as a young man, taking the high road, said, "Ralph Nader deserves enormous credit for the work he did as a consumer advocate, but his function as a perennial candidate is not putting food on the table of workers." Obama did opine, that Ralph Nader in recent years tended to assume that candidates are fatally flawed if they fail to recognize the wisdom of his views. Hillary, talking with reporters on board her campaign plane said of Nader's run "Obviously it's not helpful to whomever our Democratic nominee is, but it's a free country". In reference to the AL Gore - George Bush race of 2000, she suggested that Ralph Nader's Green Party candidacy cost the nation the "greenest president" it could have had. She believes Nader's new candidacy for the White House, at best, poses an unwelcome distraction. Nader has run as both a Green Party candidate and an independent in past elections. He has not yet declared how he will run in the upcoming general election. Whatever his decision, he will be a power with which the Democratic Party Nominee will have to contend. Not surprisingly, the Republicans were not so dismissive. On the other hand, Ward Harkavy, in the Village Voice Blog, dubbed Nader, "America's Suicide Bomber" while The Age saw him as the "Democrats bogeyman", and The Nation Blog apparently believes America still needs Ralph Nader to be Public Citizen Number One pursuing matters as a consumer advocate and not a presidential candidate. Republican presidential candidate and former Arkansas governor, Mike Huckabee couldn't resist a little fun at Nader's expense and joked on CNN that Republicans would welcome Nader's entry into the race and hope that maybe a few more will join in. Huckabee said in a television interview that a Ralph Nader candidacy was a suicide mission and would more likely pull votes away from Democrats than Republicans, and he welcomed the longtime consumer advocate into the fray. Ron Paul's camp believes there is unhappiness among the electorate, and that he (Paul) best captures that anger, and that Ralph Nader is not the proper vehicle for the expression of America's year of discontent. Nader, they feel, was a spoiler in 2000 and will long be remembered as being responsible for the election of George W. Bush, and that just as when he ran again in 2004 there will be few who care in the final analysis. John McCain being the odds on favorite to benefit the most from the Nader candidacy has appropriately remained mum on the subject.

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