

The Nader Factor

So Ralph Nader is running for president again, and there is no truth to the rumor that the nominating convention will be held in his garage. Too spacious.

With a few exceptions, the left-wing press was openly hostile to Nader's announcement this week, taking it very personally:

"[Nader] remains as obstinate, prickly, and egotistical as ever," said the *New Jersey Star-Ledger*.

"Nader: Unsafe at Any Age," headlined the *Louisville Courier-Journal*.

And the *Boston Globe*, while saying Nader has a "right" to run, wrote, "Nader has come to believe in his own indispensability."

The left-leaning media is mad because they believe Nader cost Al Gore the election in 2000 by siphoning votes away from him in Florida. You may remember that old Ralph received 97,499 votes in the Sunshine State and that President Bush defeated Vice President Gore by less than one thousand ballots. Doing the math makes many liberals cry.

So Ralphie boy, as Ed Norton might put it, is not in real solid with the Democratic establishment these days.

Not that he cares. I've known Nader for decades and he is a hard-core socialist, a man who fervently believes the government must control evil corporations, regulate wages, and even set prices for what consumers buy. Nader has far more in common with Raul Castro than Howard Dean. He thinks the Dems are almost as bad as the Republicans, as far as exploiting the folks are concerned.

That's why Nader's presidential announcement was a one-day story. No *New York Times* profile for him, not this year. No

NBC News feature story. Ralph Nader is going to be mighty lonely on the campaign trail because the far-left has abandoned him.

Feeling sorry for the guy, I called him a few days ago to appear on my syndicated radio program, heard on more than 400 stations. At first, Nader's "person" was excited. Free media! But a short time later, she told us that Ralph was "unavailable." Perhaps a conference call with Raul?

The reason, I believe, that Nader passed on the Radio Factor was that he knew I would poke a bit of fun at him. Let's face it, Jane Fonda has a better chance of winning the presidency than Ralph. But unlike the lefty media, I have no problem with Nader running. He entertains me. I never know what he's going to say or who he's going to hammer. Give him points for that.

Next November, Ralph Nader will get less than one percent of the vote, and won't even appear on most state ballots. Sadly for him, the Ralphster will not be a factor this time around. His time has passed, and his socialistic struggle is completely irrelevant.

But I still like Ralph Nader. Even if he is unavailable.