

Here is what the press has said about the work of Ralph Nader and his associates:

“Individual initiative is a vital force in our society. There is something pretty good about our system when you get a young man like Ralph Nader—a man who has the courage, the knowledge, the facts, to defy one of the largest corporations in our country and force changes in design. That’s a rather extraordinary achievement, although it’s certainly not his only nor his most important one. He has aroused our country to think quite differently about a great many subjects. He has had enormous influence. . . it is an extraordinary thing that a young man of that type with high ideals can have the influence he has, and it gives me great heart that the individual still counts the most in our country. No matter how big our institutions become, we are as strong as our individuals are, not as strong as the state is.”

—W. Averell Harriman

“Ralph Nader is inflexible in his aims and relentless in his determination. He is determined to change America, and his work is his life. . . His facts are accurate. His revelations drawn from the Government’s own documents or from respectable scientists are convincing. He is relevant, he is responsible, and he is usually right. . . That is why he has brought about a revolution in the safety engineering of automobiles, why he was able to defeat the meat lobby and achieve a drastic upgrading of meat inspection standards, and why he is likely to make the “consumer revolution” an institutional force rather than just a hobby-horse for faddists.”

—William V. Shannon
New York Times

“Ralph Nader has shown that in an increasingly computerized, complex and impersonal society, one persistent man can actually do something about the forces that often seem to badger him—that he can indeed even shake and change big business, big labor and even bigger government.”

“If there is a man in Washington who provokes pure awe and respect here and beyond the Potomac, it is Ralph Nader, the curious champion of the consumer. He lives his religion, devoid of greed, filled with candor, beyond influence. He has a mission. He has done it himself.”

—Time Magazine

“Nader has become, in four years, a national institution. He has brought about a near-revolution in U.S. law schools, and his influence is still sky-rocketing. New public interest groups are sprouting like daisies across the country—a few of them loosely connected with Nader, some of them inspired by him, and others copies.”

—Los Angeles Times

“The term ‘household word’ is not one to be used with abandon. It is safe to say, however, that Ralph Nader has become a household word. He is better known than many United States Senators, and is unquestionably the most prominent of all Washington lobbyists or lawyers. What is more, he is generating new household words and terms that are serving to further awareness of his unique mission and talents. Life magazine, among others, now uses the word Naderism without enclosing it in quotation marks. In the four years since Nader first came into national prominence with his hard-hitting criticism of automobile safety, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, he has discovered and effectively played the role of the outspoken advocate of consumerism in the nation. To the dismay of old-line lobbyists, Nader has beaten them at their own game, but he has chosen the public interest rather than the special interest in his advocacy. Nader has carved out a niche for himself in Washington while possessing none of the usual prerequisites. He is not salaried, appointed, elected, or employed by any client or organization. He is bound to no predetermined issues, as demonstrated by the evergrowing assortment of topics in which he has involved himself since he began with the issue of automobile safety. Pollution, pipeline safety, radiation, the American Indian, industrial safety, law schools and law firms, food, medicine, regulatory agencies, secrecy in government, and the effects of noise—these are just some of the issues now associated with him.”

—Paul Dickson
The Progressive

“Nader and his Raiders get things done. Last year they were moving forces in pushing a tough air-pollution bill through Congress; in getting workmen’s safety legislation approved by Congress; in persuading the Senate to turn a mushy consumer bill into a meaningful Consumer Protection Agency; in winning a court case that forced the Administration to review all the remaining uses of the herbicide 2,4,5-T, and in convincing the National Highway Safety Bureau that 200,000 G.M. trucks had potentially dangerous wheels. And that’s not all Nader’s Raiders accomplished last year. Reacting to their first assault on a Government agency, the Federal Trade Commission continued to implement suggestions made by some of the early Raiders back in 1969. The Interstate Commerce Commission and the Food and Drug Administration instituted some long-overdue reforms pinpointed by Raider reports on those two agencies. Two Raiders dispatched to West Virginia mounted an assault on Union Carbide’s pollution smokestacks and low tax bill in the state. Partly as a result of the Raiders’ activities, the company agreed to clean up its polluting plants and pay higher taxes. . . Although Nader is usually tagged simply as a ‘consumer advocate’ by the newspapers, he is much more than that. He is an ombudsman; a symbol to all the little people of the world; a one-man court of last resort that receives an average of 1,500 letters a week from the helpless; an inspiration to college students; the man who turned the phrase ‘public-interest law’ into a whole new concept of the legal profession.”

–Julius Duscha
New York Times

“The debt of the consumer movement to Mr. Nader is incalculable. He showed the more fainthearted what is possible and proved to the consumer that he can fight back against the computerized illogic of the business world.”

–Ian McDonald
London Times

“Nader uses the law as it ought to be used—to demonstrate the glaring disproportion of legal responsibility between private and corporate activities. He exposes the indifference and incompetence of public institutions which have been established to enforce this minimal corporate legal responsibility. . . More than any other lawyer, Nader has forced law students to consider the legal profession in terms of the interests it serves.”

–Harvard Law School Bulletin

“He is chiefly responsible for the passage of at least six major laws, imposing new federal safety standards on automobiles, meat and poultry products, gas pipelines, coal mining, and radiation emissions from electronic devices. His investigations have led to a strenuous renovation at both the Federal Trade Commission and the Food and Drug Administration. . . Nader can point to at least one quite tangible result. Last year, for the first time in nine years, traffic fatalities in the U.S. declined, to 55,300 from 56,400 in 1969. Unless the decline was a fluke (and officials at the Highway Traffic Safety Administration do not think it was), then for those 1,100 living Americans, whoever they may be, Nader can be said to have performed the ultimate public service.”

–Fortune Magazine

“He demonstrates for reformers everywhere the power of a passionately convinced intelligence. He has won victories for safer mines and factories. He has broadened the impact of his consumer class action movement, inducing government agencies like the Food and Drug Administration to improve their work. Because of his charges of social irresponsibility, the first Black has been elected to General Motors Board.”

–Henry Brandon
London Times

“Mr. Nader is a remarkable man who, in the last six years, has done more as a private citizen for our country and its people than most public officials do in a lifetime.”

–Bess Myerson
New York City Commissioner of Consumer Affairs

“The manpower—and womanpower—so far consists of some 30 low-paid professionals, most of them lawyers, working in several Washington-based groups. . . Together, they form the nucleus of the new field of public interest law now burgeoning in Washington. Sometimes described as ‘representatives of the unrepresented’, public interest lawyers act as advocates in behalf of minority groups, consumers, environmentalists, and many other citizens with a gripe against the system.”

–Business Week