

cc: S. Trahern

March 20, 1992

C-SPAN
400 No. Capitol St. #650
Washington, D. C. 20001

Gentlemen:

We want to thank you for the excellent services of televising all the important news and events as they happen. We appreciate your call-in programs which gives an opportunity for the public to express their opinions and feelings.

Our special thanks to Mr. Brian Lamb for his interview this week of Mr. Ross Perot ("An American Profile"). We always watch Mr. Perot's TV appearances and listen to his speeches. The latest one at the National Press Club on C-SPAN, March 18, confirmed what we had heard before about his running for president as an independent. We are enclosing a copy of an article published in the U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, about Mr. Perot.

We feel he is fully qualified for that position and we think he may be the man this nation needs to clean up the economical, political and moral mess our government is in now. He is not involved in dirty politics and is not committed to PAC's special interests groups. Today during your call-in program we heard very favorable responses.

KEEP UP YOUR GOOD WORK.

Very truly yours,

Mr. & Mrs. [REDACTED]

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Ross Perot's time to saddle on up

Americans have long fantasized that a knight on a white charger might one day sweep into Washington to topple all the knaves and rogues dragging down the country. It's a fairy tale that has never come true, and probably never will, but dreams are kindling again out in the nation's heartland.

The man who is stirring imaginations is an American original—a buccaneer who built a hugely successful high-tech company with the talents of Vietnam veterans, a self-made billionaire who pours his energies and money in helping children from broken homes and soldiers with broken bones, a folk hero who sent a commando squad to rescue two employees taken hostage in Iran while his government failed on a similar mission. Now, at 61, alarmed about his country, H. Ross Perot is seriously thinking about running as an independent candidate for president. On its face, of course, the idea seems wildly improbable. But if Perot follows through, he *could* turn the race upside down—and maybe America, too.

"Gonna do it." Three weeks ago, Perot appeared on "Larry King Live!" and said he might run if voters around the country petitioned to put him on the ballot in all 50 states and if they promised to remain active in politics after the election. "In a time of economic peril, he is viewed as almost a messiah," says King. CNN President Tom Johnson adds that "the response was one of the heaviest and most positive we've ever had." Last week, a Nashville-based organization called "Grassroots-Perot" filed to place his name on the ballot in Tennessee. People in 45 other states have said they are organizing similar drives. John Jay Hooker, former publisher of the *Nashville Banner* and a moving force behind the effort, proclaims, "I think he's going to do it."

Over a long dinner last week near his home in Dallas, Perot offered all the appropriate disclaimers. But the issue clearly has his full attention. He has already had a lawyer examine filing deadlines (he could wait until after the party conventions this summer) and has studied potential outcomes should a three-man race end without a winner and be forced into the House of Representatives. While a Democratic majority would prefer a man of their own party, reasons Hooker, they would feel compelled to support the candidate with the biggest popular vote.

His fortune ranked 21st in the nation by *Forbes*, Perot would finance his own campaign; he asks only that supporters send him \$5 "so they have skin in the game." He does

not intend to attack others personally, though he has deep, bitter grievances with George Bush. He never talks in terms of six-point plans to solve problems. His would be the most unconventional of campaigns—but that's his very point.

Like a growing number of Americans, Perot is disgusted with politics as usual, with politicians acting like emperors and buying votes with federal funds. It is time, he says, for citizens to wake up and say, "We're the owners of this country. . . . The guys in Washington work for us."

If Perot were in charge, he would set up an electronic town hall and go on the air to explain the difficult challenges facing the country. With interactive communication from the grass roots, he thinks, a president would have enough power to push reforms through Congress and forge a more intelligent, supportive relationship between government and business. Deficits, skyrocketing health costs, social decay—all would be addressed in a crash program. With economic growth, the country could afford to pay for the things it needs, starting with greater support for children and families. The family, he argues, is key because it is "the most efficient unit of government the world will ever know."

But why should Americans expect Perot to be any more successful in overhauling Washington than in overhauling General Motors? A good question, he says. His effort to transform GM several years ago, when he was a major partner, failed because of resistance from the Detroit boardroom. But armed with power from the people, maybe things could be different this time. And with GM now losing tons of money and laying off employees, Perot also has a

strong case that he was right all along and that the country is where the auto giant was in the mid-1980s: still able to save itself, but heading for serious trouble.

In some quarters, Perot is considered too headstrong, a practitioner from the school of "ready, fire, aim." But his kind of leadership has a powerful appeal, for reasons that have less to do with H. Ross Perot than with the sorry state of American politics. Once again, a growing number of voters are disenchanted with the choices they are likely to face in November. Polls show that more than half of Democrats, and rising, would like someone else in the current race. A third of Republicans are voting against George Bush, whether Pat Buchanan visits or not. Eight years ago, even four years ago, a Ross Perot candidacy would have seemed outlandish. Not so in today's troubled America. ■



CHARLIE ARCHAMBAULT—USNEWS

'Politicians are buying votes with our children's money.'



Mr. & Mrs. [REDACTED]

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