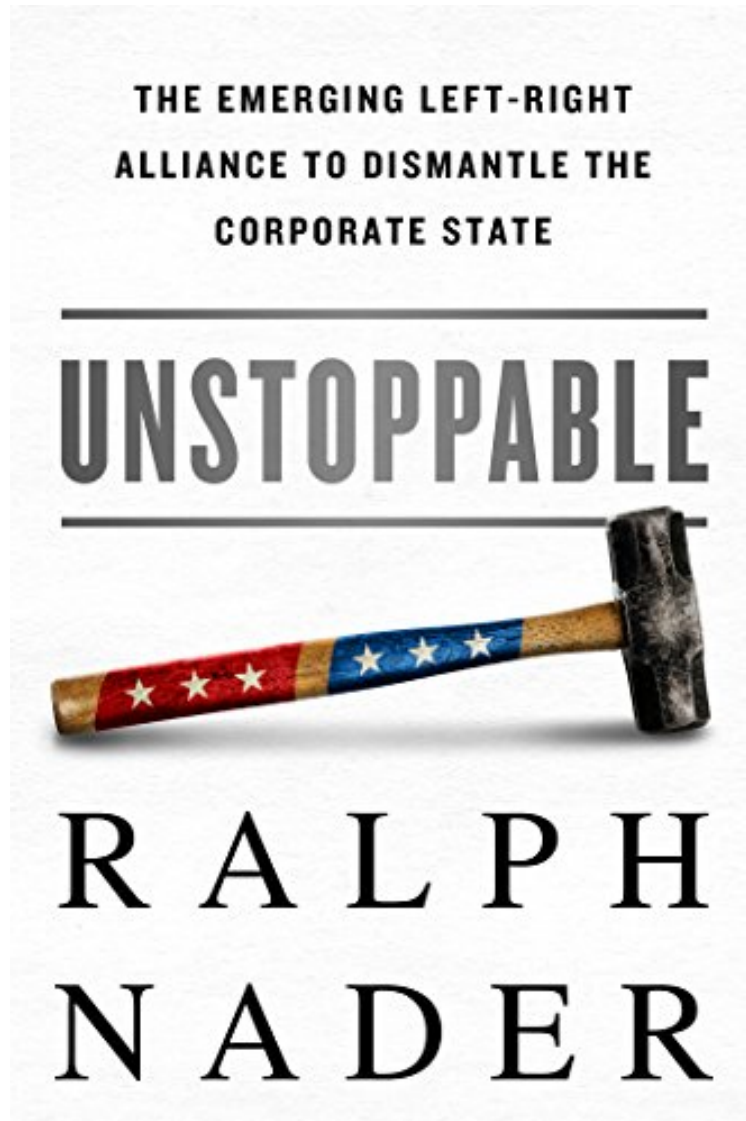


# Unstoppable: The Emerging Left-Right Alliance to Dismantle the Corporate State

*Ralph Nader*

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**Ralph Nader : Unstoppable: The Emerging Left-Right Alliance to Dismantle the Corporate State** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unstoppable: The Emerging Left-Right Alliance to Dismantle the Corporate State:

33 of 35 people found the following review helpful. A Way Out!By Robert KrebsbachA short way into this book, it became clear: Corporatism is the enemy that lovers of democracy, freedom, and justice must unite against. The right/left, conservative/liberal labels are petty distractions that keep us from uniting to stop corporate tyranny. I

thought I was progressive until reading this book, but I resonated so completely with the thoughts of the Greats of conservatism that Nader quotes, that I could just as easily regard myself as conservative. That's how little it matters in the face of corporate economic globalization.<sup>3</sup> of 3 people found the following review helpful. Bringing Libertarians and Progressives together to end "Corporate Statism"; By Alan F. Sewell

Mr. Nader has written this book to convince Libertarian Conservatives and Liberal Progressives that the time has come for them to unite in a party dedicated to replacing the two major parties that he believes have been suborned by corporations to act exclusively in their interests. Being conservative, I've always thought of Mr. Nader as being "over the top"; in portraying the malignancy of America's big business corporations. However, he's always seemed personable on TV appearances, so I believe that his yearning for reform is based on a sincere desire for social justice and not on the negative trait of hating business people merely because they accumulate wealth. It also can't be denied that things have changed in a big way since the economic crash of 2008. It now looks like Mr. Nader was not so much a fanatic as a man ahead of his time. We've learned that excessive tax cuts on high income earners may destabilize the economy by fueling unsustainable budget deficits in the public sector and by encouraging the wealthy to pour money into reckless speculations that undermine the private sector. We've learned that depressing the wages of the working middle class by excessive job elimination via globalization and corporate cost-cutting mania do not prosper the country. In times like these, desperate people start thinking about founding new political parties that will return the government to the business of representing the interests of the people. We've had Populist movements in the past, and their result has been to push both major parties back towards the interests of the people. To build a new party requires bringing together unlikely coalitions --- Libertarian Conservatives and Progressive Liberals; young people and the elderly; urban minorities and white suburbanites and country people. That is what Ralph Nader is proposing to do now: to build a new party that pulls together the coalitions of people who have not benefited by the corporate agendas of removing the maximum number of Americans from employment opportunities, thus concentrating the wealth of the nation in the small number of people who own, invest, or manage businesses. Mr. Nader explains his points in a well-reasoned way. He tells his life story of growing up around a family-owned business, so it is clear that he respects the hard work and risk taking of small business owners who are more likely than not to be Conservatives. He then makes the case that when corporations become excessively powerful, they become detrimental to the people's interests: ===== Corporatism or "corporate statism," as Grover Norquist calls it, is first and foremost a doctrine of corporate supremacy. Large corporations usually push, with whatever political, technological, economic, marketing, and cultural tools are required, the frontiers of domination in all directions. However you might describe them, it is hard to deny that their DNA commands them to control, undermine, or eliminate any force, tradition, or institution that impedes their expansion of sales, profits, and executive compensation. That is what is meant by corporate statism. And as it gets stronger, it delivers a weaker economy for a majority of Americans, a weaker democratic society, and record riches for the few. Key to understanding corporate behavior is the recognition that, while its propagandists trumpet the irreconcilable differences between Right and Left, corporations are remarkably flexible in relation to these divisions. What is behind this plasticity is a laser-like focus on expansion, profits, and bonuses. ===== This is not really anything new. American Progressives and Libertarians have been saying the same thing ever since Thomas Jefferson resisted Alexander Hamilton's design to turn the USA into a corporate-dominated state back in the 1790s. A century later, in 1892, President Grover Cleveland stated the danger as he saw it in his day: ===== The fortunes realized by our manufacturers are no longer solely the reward of sturdy industry and enlightened foresight, but they result from the discriminating favor of the Government and are largely built upon undue exactions from the masses of our people. The gulf between employers and the employed is constantly widening, and classes are rapidly forming, one comprising the very rich and powerful, while in another are found the toiling poor; the citizen is struggling far in the rear or is trampled to death beneath an iron heel. Corporations, which should be carefully restrained creatures of the law and the servants of the people, are fast becoming the people's masters. The existing situation stifles all patriotic love of country, and substitutes in its place selfish greed and grasping avarice. Government, instead of being the embodiment of equality, is but an instrumentality through which especial and individual advantages are to be gained. ===== Nader makes these points throughout the book, beginning with a historical analysis of anti-corporatism that goes back to Conservative icons Adam Smith, Ludwig von Mises, Edward Burke, and Frederick Hayek. Nader manages to refute what he thinks are some common delusions among today's Conservatives without being mean-spirited or condescending. So this is NOT a Conservative-bashing book, but rather one that seeks to show Conservatives where they have common cause with Liberals. He is fair in excoriating the hypocrisies of those old-line Liberal Progressives who used to condemn fascists while making excuses for genocidal Communist dictators. He says Liberal Progressives are also lazy in administering their vast budgets for social welfare programs effectively. So, there is a component of intellectual honesty here. He praises the "minimum income" plan of none other than Richard Nixon, which, if passed, would have replaced the welfare state BUREAUCRACY, an idea that Conservative Republicans and Liberal Democrats should have endorsed, if they could have looked past their partisan rancor. Most books of this type are strong in pointing out the symptoms of wealth inequality, but are weak in providing specific remedies to restore a fair balance between 1% and

the 99%. While this book is not as specific as some might want, Mr. Nader does propose 25 "actions." A lot of them are meaningless platitudes such as "encourage patronage of community businesses." But there are a few somewhat specific things like raising the minimum wage and taxing income from wages, dividends, capital gains, and rents at the same rate. I would have liked for him to have been stronger in advocating the imposition of wage-equalization tariffs when American companies relocated overseas to use peon labor to produce product that is shipped back to the USA. But he does say that we have the right to opt out of our free-trade treaties with six months' notice. Overall, I think this book is very readable by Conservatives, Liberals, and middle-of-the-roaders. It's written in a congenial spirit, and Mr. Nader does dig deep in making most of his points. I agreed with maybe 50% of Mr. Nader's proposals, and I'm pretty far to the right on the political spectrum.=====I originally wrote this review in 2014, but removed it in 2015 because I did not want my review list to become overly politicized. I am putting back up on 12/13/2106 because it is an important link in the evolution of my political thinking. I've voted for all Republican presidential candidates, except in 2012 when I voted for Obama. I voted for Obama because I believed his handling of domestic and foreign affairs justified his re-election. I also did not believe that Mitt Romney, an establishment Republican, understood middle class concerns for all the reasons Mr. Nader mentions in this book. In 2016 I voted for Trump because he convinced me that he is an anti-Establishment politician of the type Mr. Nader recommends. I heard one Bernie Sanders supporter, a Liberal environmental activist, complement Mr. Trump for running on the issues that matter to the distress middle class. So perhaps there really is an alliance between Libertarian Conservatives and Liberal Progressives. on this point. Ultimately, the Democrats decided to go with Ms. Clinton, their Establishment candidate. Trump prevailed over the Republican Establishment in the primaries, then over Ms. Clinton in the general election. I believe Trump prevailed because he demonstrated concern for restoring middle class jobs, as Mr. Nader mentions in this book. I don't believe that any other Republican Establishment candidates shared his concerns, nor was Ms. Clinton a convincing advocate for middle class issues. 12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Wise, maybe a little windy By Philip G Blumel This is a somewhat flawed but fascinating book that I would recommend to activist types. His key thesis is correct. If activists are tied to Team Red or Team Blue they will find themselves played like a fiddle by their own party's corporate special interests. Activists who are committed to ideas, left or right, have great opportunities to work with their erstwhile enemies to achieve real victories on important shared goals (opposition to corporate welfare, enacting Congressional term limits, among others) but if political identification trumps convictions, the power of the corporate/union interests will be too great. Together, activists from left and right can be 'unstoppable' on certain types of issues. Why flawed? It is a bit repetitive and tangential. There is too much detail about specific campaigns he would like to engage in the future. The strength is in making his case and examples of his thesis from the past. In spite of Ralph's honest almost herculean efforts to get into the head of his allies and potential allies on the right, he falls into some of the same traps of thinking he warns against. This highlights how hard it is to form such alliances. But he is right that we should and this book deserves serious consideration in the trenches, right and left.

Ralph Nader has fought for over fifty years on behalf of American citizens against the reckless influence of corporations and their government patrons on our society. Now he ramps up the fight and makes a persuasive case that Americans are not powerless. In *Unstoppable*, he explores the emerging political alignment of the Left and the Right against converging corporate-government tyranny. Large segments from the progressive, conservative, and libertarian political camps find themselves aligned in opposition to the destruction of civil liberties, the economically draining corporate welfare state, the relentless perpetuation of America's wars, sovereignty-shredding trade agreements, and the unpunished crimes of Wall Street against Main Street. Nader shows how Left-Right coalitions can prevail over the corporate state and crony capitalism. He draws on his extensive experience working with grassroots organizations in Washington and reveals the many surprising victories by united progressive and conservative forces. As a participator in, and keen observer of, these budding alliances, he breaks new ground in showing how such coalitions can overcome specific obstacles that divide them, and how they can expand their power on Capitol Hill, in the courts, and in the decisive arena of public opinion. Americans can reclaim their right to consume safe foods and drugs, live in healthy environments, receive fair rewards for their work, resist empire, regain control of taxpayer assets, strengthen investor rights, and make bureaucrats more efficient and accountable. Nader argues it is in the interest of citizens of different political labels to join in the struggle against the corporate state that will, if left unchecked, ruin the Republic, override our constitution, and shred the basic rights of the American people.

"In *Unstoppable*, Ralph Nader argues that there are in fact surprising areas of convergence between the left and the right... These are profound observations... Mr. Nader rails so effectively." —David Asman, *Wall Street Journal* "Activist Nader sketches out places of 'convergence' where liberals and conservatives can start working together for the public good... [he] lists reforms with which many lawmakers would agree, including breaking up too-big-to-fail banks, protecting children from commercialism and ending corporate personhood." —Kirkus