

Dear Michael,

During the closing stretch to national presidential election in November 2016, I reached out to you to apprise you about my concern of liberal Democrats siding with Hillary in order to beat Trump. My good friend, and a notable liberal progressive, Steve Brown, also followed your ideal. He argues in retrospect that a Hillary victory would not have led to appointment of hundreds of deranged federal judges, have overturned many critical environmental protections and OSHA regulations, normalize racism and violence, nor given \$1 trillion to the top 1%.

However on foreign policy, a Clinton White House would likely be a very different matter and even further polarize the major global powers, notably Russia and China. It is not unrealistic to suggest that Syria today would have joined the world's basket cases with Libya following Obama-Clinton's regime change under utterly false premises. Venezuela may have now joined the club of failed states created by the US. We would still be stockpiling new nuclear weapons, and international relationships with Russia would be far more strained and tense. In fact, the military industrial complex would have remained where it is today.

I can appreciate that your efforts are now clearly focused on exposing the dangers of Donald Trump and your belief that America would have been far better served with either Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders in the White House. Your commitment to challenging Republican injustice and hypocrisies motivated you to pull back many of our federal and societal ills in your films, notably Sicko, Capitalism: A Love Story, Bowling for Columbine and Fahrenheit 9/11. And certainly this is the case of your recent film on Trump. However, there was also a time when you believed Al Gore, and subsequently John Kerry, would have been better than Ralph Nader.

I remember when you once supported Ralph Nader and the progressive principles he dedicated his life to. You even gave a rousing speech in Madison Square Garden in support of Nader. Of course, Nader has been responsible for the passage of more legislation beneficial to American consumers than any other non-elected legislator in American history. Nevertheless for many years Democrats and Republicans alike have made efforts and often succeeded in repealing, diluting and/or replacing Nader's courageous accomplishments. I am certain you would agree on the important role Nader has played in representing the public's needs in the face of private corporate interests and the government's alliance with the capitalist elite.

Upon examining Nader's positions on a large variety of domestic and foreign issues, it is clear he is diametrically opposed to Obama-Clinton. The latter have summarily maintained and preserved the neoliberal oligarchic mandate. If Nader had been elected president, or even Jill Stein or Rocky Anderson who also supported progressive principles, there would be no need for you to have directed Sicko. We would have had Medicare for all. Nor would Capitalism: A Love Story have been necessary because the increasing rise in income, racial and social inequalities

would have been addressed at a national level. We would likely not have invaded Afghanistan, and clearly would have stayed out of Iraq. Nor would there have been US led regime changes in Libya, Honduras and Ukraine nor the current attempts to topple the leaders of Venezuela and Syria. For certain, Eisenhower's warnings would have been acknowledged and the military-industrial complex would not be controlling our foreign policy. There would no longer be a war between a failing public school system and exaggerated promises of educational privatization and charter schools. And we would not have civil asset forfeiture and the return of debtors' prisons.

Is it not time for the corporate "liberal" democrats to understand why we need to move beyond the division of power between two ruling parties dueling in the theatrical spectacle of a corporatized duopoly? We need more parties and a myopic focus upon Trump is ignoring the critical progressive issues now in dire need of attention. The consequence is that nothing urgent and positive is being pursued.

Michael, I realize your documentaries, books and public appearances are intended to inform, educate as well as entertain the public in your own inimitable manner. It is critical that people, irrespective of party allegiance, gain exposure to the truth about those who abuse power. In and of itself, this is a noble pursuit and I have always considered you a loyal liberal. However, now we must also face other realities, not simply the reality of the Trump dystopia as heinous as it is.

I believe it is important for you to clearly state publicly the actual policies and social platforms you stand for aside from any ambiguous sloganeering and/or over-reliance upon euphemisms. We have taken Nader's record and his past stated agendas and compared them with the positions of Obama/Clinton and Bernie Sanders on both domestic and foreign issues. The message is clear. Nader, Stein and other independents represent authentic fundamental change. It is the deep structure of the system that is cancerous, and to continue promoting the agenda of the corporate liberal Democrat is simply decorations on the surface that will have no essential positive impact upon anyone's life aside from the multinational elite.

For those of us who voted for Nader and Stein, we knew we were voting for the future. They had no chance of winning at that time. But we had to start somewhere. If you had supported Nader vocally then, you might have helped boost a third party into the playing field so that we wouldn't still be peering into this bleak landscape of the lesser of two evils. The time has come – in fact, it is long overdue – to commence in earnest building a viable, dynamic and progressive movement. At this time, we must look towards the future. We believe it's time for the nation's 104 million independents to begin uniting around these progressive themes and to walk away from the corporate Democratic and Republican parties. These are people conscious of their moral backbone whose conscience will no longer permit them to compromise their principles to sustain the status quo. These are the people who want a candidate to vote for, not someone to

vote a against. The attached chart identifies the true progressive from the corporate wonk. Who defends the people and who defends the oligarchy?

Even though Nader has not run for office since 2004, younger idealistic progressiveness can still look up to Nader as a model. Nader was instrumental in passing an impressive amount of legislation including the Clean Air and Clean Water acts, Whistleblower Protection Act, Mine Health and Safety Act, Consumer Product Safety Act, Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act, Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, Freedom of Information Act, Co-Op Bank Bill, National Automobile and Highway Traffic Safety Act, Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act, Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), Safe Water Drinking Act and the Wholesome Meat Act. He was also largely responsible for establishing the Environmental Protection Agency and sponsoring bills that have protected public lands and the environment that is so necessary with climate change as our number one national security threat. He also wrote laws concerning pension protection, funeral home cost disclosure, consumer credit disclosure, medical devices safety, mobile home safety, and nuclear power safety.

Nader also founded and helped start dozens of citizen activist groups, including the Public Citizen, American Antitrust Institute, Citizen Advocacy Center, National Insurance Consumer Organization, Freedom of Information Clearinghouse, Equal Justice Foundation, Disability Rights Center, Center for Justice and Democracy, Global Trade Watch, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Center for Study of Responsive Law, Center for Women Policy Studies, Health Research Group, Clean Water Action Project, Congress Watch, Tax Reform Research Group, Corporate Accountability Research Group, and dozens of others.

Any aspiring activist would find Nader's accomplishments inspiring, as well as his ability to hold fast to his values and high ethical standards throughout almost six decades. Never one to settle for compromising on behalf of a lesser of two evils, he has remained a reliably progressive figure even as his peers have forsaken their ideals in their pursuit of political expediency. Such strength of character is rare and must be applauded. Instead, corporate democrats shamed voters who selected Nader instead of the two neoliberal candidates. Similarly they shamed those who voted for Jill Stein in 2016. There is no excuse for participating in this public shaming. Our "democracy" will remain a race to the bottom unless well-known liberals like yourself lend their support to third-party candidates that are actually in line with progressive liberal ideals. Many of those voting today have never cast a ballot for a candidate who wasn't a "lesser of two evils." This sad fact, more than anything else, represents a fatal flaw of our system.

Therefore Michael, my question to you is: which is more important to you – criticizing Trump, or working constructively beyond the oligarchic duopoly to establish a government that Americans can be proud of?

Michael, one last thought. It is my belief that had you used your respected celebrity, and supported Nader and his progressive platform, which would have been the basis for future

progressive candidates to have built upon. It is very conceivable that today we would have a viable third party beholden to citizens rather than an elite class. Rather, you along with Bill Maher shamed Nader by getting on your knees to beg him to withdraw his candidacy. It made for good theater but closed doors for progressives to enter. Imagine our nation and world today if Nader had continued to be a respected voice for government sanity and truly democratic reform to this day. Instead he has been shunned and dismissed as an old archaic relic who assisted the Republican victory over the Democrats -- and even then, this has been shown to be grossly inaccurate.

<b>Progressive issue</b>	<b>Sanders</b>	<b>Obama/Clinton</b>	<b>Nader</b>
Repeal the worst labor law taft-hartley which intrudes on free speech	Yes	No	Yes
Halt nuclear energy	Yes	No	Yes
Reduce hydrofracking	Yes	No	Yes
Continue Fossil fuel subsidies	No	Yes	No
Clean Coal	No	Yes	No
Offshore drilling	No	No	No
Federal Protection of Public lands	Yes	Minimal	Yes
Carbon tax	Yes	No	Yes
Overhaul the EPA	Moderate	Moderate	Yes
Tax on speculative trading	Yes	Unlikely	Yes
Label GMO's & Repeal DARK Act	Yes	No	Yes
Repeal the dark act and mandate gmo labeling	Yes	No	Yes
National minimum wage of \$15/- or higher immediately	Yes	Incremental	Yes
Reinstate Glass Steagle Act	Yes	No	Yes
Repeal Citizen's United	Yes	Yes	Yes
Repeal or reform Patriot Act	Moderate	No	Yes
No TTP and TTIP	Yes	No	Yes
Reform or repeal NAFTA and CAFTA	Yes	No	Perhaps
Forgive Student loan debt	Yes	Less so	Yes
Repeal National Defense Authorization Act	No	No	Yes
Lessen Whistleblower policies	Yes	No	Yes
Legalize marijuana	Yes	No	Yes
Universal Health care	Yes	Incremental	Yes
Breakup the big banks	Yes	Unlikely	Yes
Repeal the Patriot Act	Yes	No	Yes
Sever support to Saudi Arabia	No	No	Yes
Dramatic reduction of the defense budget	No	No	Yes
Abolish unconstitutional Acts of War	Yes	No	Yes

Reduction of overseas military bases	No	No	Yes
Normalize relations with Russia	Possibly	No	Yes
Oppose Israeli Apartheid of Palestine	Minimal	No	Yes
Decrease arsenal of nuclear weapons	Possibly	No	Yes
Cease aggressive threats against China	Uncertain	No	Yes
Stop NATO containment of Russia	No	No	Yes
Reduction of prisons and inmates	Yes	Yes	Yes
Free public university education	Yes	Incremental	Yes
Campaign finance reform	Yes	Unlikely	Yes
Overhaul pharmaceutical pricing	Yes	Uncertain	Yes
Mandate vaccines	Unlikely	Yes	No
Reduce militarization of law enforcement	Moderately	No	Yes
Expand social security	Yes	No	Yes
Overhaul NSA surveillance	Yes	No	Yes
Reform of public airwaves	Yes	No	Yes
Free public college education	Yes	Unlikely	Yes
Reduce support for Charter schools	Probably	No	Yes
Reform of the judicial system	Moderately	No	Yes
Increase federal funds for public housing	Yes	Possibly	Yes
LGBT rights	Yes	Not nationally	Yes
Strengthen hate crime laws	Yes	Yes	Yes
Progressive immigration reform	Yes	Yes	Yes
Internet neutrality	Yes	Unlikely	Yes



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