

NEWS RELEASE

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Nader Applauds First Lady's Suggestion That Parents Consider Boycotting Sponsors of Violent, Crass TV

Ralph Nader called on parents to "use your power as consumers to protect your children" from violent or crass television shows by "trying to avoid" purchasing products made by corporations that sponsor such TV shows, following First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton's statement yesterday that parents should "Let people know you're not going to buy products that support shows and things you don't believe in."

Nader encouraged political, community and religious leaders to ask others to listen to the First Lady's advice. "This is a good idea to help rebuild a civil society, and to help make America safer for childhood. It might reduce the sewerage that the TV corporations unleash upon our nation."

In a letter on June 22 to Robert Pitofsky, Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Nader and Gary Ruskin, Director of Commercial Alert, encouraged the FTC to tally televised acts of violence by show and sponsor, to assist parents in making choices about whether to buy from companies that support unwholesome entertainment.

"The free market is based upon the principle of choice. Buyers are supposed to be able to make informed choices about which companies and products they want to support. The market doesn't work today in regards to the marketing of violence to children because parents don't have the information they need," the letter said.

"We urge the FTC to fill this gap so that the market can work. The FTC could tally the average number of televised violent acts by show and by sponsor, and publish statistics regarding which shows are the most violent, and which companies sponsor the most violent TV shows. This would help parents express their informed preferences in the marketplace in regards to the networks and sponsors for their violent programming. Parents could learn of the most violence-associated brands of peanut butter, soap, toothpaste, hamburgers, soda, chewing gum, etc., and could make their purchasing decisions accordingly," the letter said.

Nader also encouraged parents not to buy violent video games, as did Ms. Clinton. He called such games "the product of corporate predators." Ms. Clinton said yesterday: "Don't buy those video games, no matter how much your child begs," according to *Associated Press*.

Commercial Alert was founded last year to oppose the excesses of commercialism, advertising and marketing. More information on how corporations harm children is available from Commercial Alert's website at <http://www.essential.org/alert/>, and in the book Children First: A Parent's Guide to Corporate Predators. To obtain a copy, call (202) 387-8030.