

slaves, doing the bidding of Harvard economists.

Is Mr. Gorbachev really offering us the right to disarm the Soviets?

skill as an illusionist, it will be a difficult call. But it's a good guess that Mr. Gorbachev will not come away empty-handed.

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L. Ron Nader

Doctors who treat people suffering from depression have learned something recently about the associations that the Ralph Nader combine is willing to accept in pursuit of its notions of the "public interest."

For some time now, Eli Lilly & Co. has been embroiled in a tedious battle with the Scientology cult and the usual coven of plaintiffs' lawyers over its anti-depression drug Prozac. The Scientologists—founded by the late science-fiction writer, L. Ron Hubbard—and the lawyers have been galloping around the country shouting that Prozac can make depression patients suicidal and even homicidal. They have expressed this view in such well-known venues of pharmacological discussion as the Phil Donahue show.

This assault has indeed caused problems for physicians treating depression. The National Mental Health Association says that in the aftermath of Prozac stories on TV, patients have called their offices distraught, sometimes to say they are taking themselves off the medication without telling their doctors about it. Despite these problems, it is likely that the anti-Prozac campaign would have run down eventually, because the drug has shown itself to be extraordinarily safe in treating a large population of

serious depression patients.

Then Sidney Wolfe of Ralph Nader's Health Research Group jumped in. Writing to FDA Commissioner David Kessler, Dr. Wolfe filed a petition demanding revision of Prozac's label to warn of its "association with intense, violent suicidal preoccupation . . . in a small minority of patients." For our part, we think the public interest would be served if Ralph Nader's and Sidney Wolfe's press releases carried a warning about their own association with intense plaintiffs' contingency-fee lawyers, of the sort now trying to keep anti-Prozac lawsuits afloat.

But of course no such warning will ever be forthcoming from the capital's most famous "public-interest" group, and Dr. Wolfe's petition was, once again, reflexively picked up by the Associated Press and reprinted in papers across the country ("Consumer Group Wants Warning for Drug Prozac"—St. Petersburg Times).

It's a pretty effective PR-system, but doctors and genuine mental-health advocacy groups aren't happy with it. They're worried that the scary scenarios being disseminated by the Scientologists and the Nader-Wolfe group are restigmatizing depression, undoing years of effort to properly characterize it as a treatable illness.

Kennedy's Choice

Backers of educational choice cheered when President Bush included it in his ambitious plan to reshape America's schools. But now that Senator Ted Kennedy has signed on as the main Senate sponsor of President Bush's "America 2000" act,

things may come out of such showcase schools. But they're no substitute for genuine reforms that will help the students who still attend the Old American Schools.

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