

The Nobel Peace Prize

Watch

Lay down your arms
nobelwill.org¹

Dear Editor

News release - October 6, 2015

Next pages: Additional material, background comments from plaintiffs
- in Sweden, Norway, USA - on the initiated lawsuit

**RE: Nobel Foundation - lawsuit against misappropriation of funds –
violating intended antimilitarist purpose of the Nobel peace prize**

The controversy over peace prizes disconnected from the specific peace vision of Alfred Nobel is now coming to a head in a lawsuit initiated by Mairead Maguire, a Nobel laureate; David Swanson, USA; Jan Oberg, Sweden; and the Nobel Peace Prize Watch. None of the members of the Board of the Nobel Foundation had responded when the time limit set in a notice of litigation expired on Tuesday. The plaintiffs have retained attorney Kenneth Lewis, Stockholm, to have the Stockholm City Court declare the prize to the EU an illegal use of the Foundation's funds. In December 2012 the members of the Board of the Nobel Foundation did not heed protests from four Nobel laureates, Mairead Maguire, Perez Esquivel, Desmond Tutu, and the International Peace Bureau, who in a letter had warned that "The 'EU is clearly not 'the champion of peace' that Alfred Nobel had in mind when he wrote his will."

- There can be many views on the EU as a contribution to peace, says one of the plaintiffs, **Mairead Maguire**, of Northern Ireland, but there can be no doubt that the Union has a military approach that is the opposite of the peace ideas Nobel wished to support. Our lawsuit is not against the EU, but for Nobel's wonderful and visionary ideas of world peace and security through global co-operation, building trust, and abolition of armaments. The evidence is clear that Nobel wished to support the ideas of Bertha von Suttner and her political friends. In the same fortnight as Nobel wrote a peace prize into his will he planned to

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buy a liberal newspaper “to end armaments and other relics from the Medieval ages.” There is no room for doubt what his intention actually was, says Maguire.

FURTHER COMMENTS – FROM SWEDEN, NORWAY, USA

- The controversy between the Nobel Foundation and its Norwegian sub-committee is coming to a head this year. The Nobel Foundation has promised to the Swedish authorities not to pay out a prize that does not conform to the testator’s purpose, says **Tomas Magnusson**, Sweden, on behalf of Nobel Peace Prize Watch. All we have demanded from the Foundation is a confirmation that they will respect the rights of the “champions of peace” to whom Nobel designated his prize. The time limit set by attorney Kenneth Lewis in his notice of litigation expired Tuesday with no response and the writ of complaint will now be lodged with the Stockholm City Court.

An investigation of the peace prize in 2012 ended only after the Foundation had promised to exercise superior control over the peace prize, At this point the plaintiffs have seen no sign that the Nobel Foundation has followed the instructions of the Swedish Foundations Authority (Länsstyrelsen i Stockholm) to examine the purpose of the peace prize, give instructions to the Norwegian committee and introduce routines to avoid the embarrassing situation that the Stockholm Board cannot pay out the prize without the members incurring personal liability. Recent leaks by a former Nobel secretary shows that the Foundation has yet to implement the new routines demanded by the authorities in 2012.

- The Norwegian Nobel Committee seems to belong to a different sphere, very unlike the peace arena I am familiar with, says **Fredrik S. Heffermehl**, a Norwegian lawyer who has published books on Nobel’s will and how his peace idea has been transformed over the years. We very much dislike having to retain a lawyer and go to court to get a serious response, but the Nobel institutions behave as if they are above the law and can get away with anything, even disregarding the legal entitlements created by a will. The secrecy around the selections has been misused to conceal the peace ideas and the “champions of peace” that Nobel described in his will. The world has a right to know what it is being deprived of, that is why we published information on all candidates qualified to win for 2015, with the full nomination letters. With 16 prominent co-signers we then demanded a confirmation from the Nobel Foundation that they will keep within the purpose – as

illustrated and exemplified by our list – Link:

<http://www.nobelwill.org/index.html?tab=7#list> . The Committee did not even have a comment to this list of qualified winners.

-- The Nobel Peace Prize Watch is an important initiative in the same direction as our World Beyond War initiative, says **David Swanson**. Nobel gave warm praise to Bertha von Suttner for “Lay Down Your Arms,” her great antiwar novel. Suttner was a skilled organizer who communicated with world leaders, visited the White House, and attracted prominent supporters, including Alfred Nobel and Andrew Carnegie to give substantial financing to people working for peace and disarmament. Swanson, who has studied both the Carnegie Endowment and the Nobel Peace Prize, regrets that both have long ago disconnected from their intended purpose.

-- The law of power must be replaced with the power of the law, that is central to the peace plan of Alfred Nobel’s will, says **Jan Oberg**, of the Transnational Foundation, Sweden. Member nations must adhere to the central idea of the United Nations, that peace can only be secured by peaceful means, not by power and military means. Had it been used as intended by Nobel, the peace prize would become a wonderful tool to create a better world where all its citizens could live in prosperity and security. We all have reason to regret the mismanagement of the Nobel peace prize.

Swanson and Oberg have been nominated for the 2015 peace prize.

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FURTHER COMMENTS FROM THE PLAINTIFFS:

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NOTICE OF LITIGATION SENT BY ATTORNEY KENNETH LEWIS
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NOBEL FOUNDATION BOARD IN 2012:

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- Göran K Hansson, Stockholm
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- Peter Englund, 753 20 Uppsala
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The Nobel Foundation, Stockholm

The Norwegian Nobel Committee/ Nobel Institute, Oslo

The Swedish Foundations Authority, head of division Mikael Wiman

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