



The Nobel Peace Prize: What Nobel Really Wanted

Fredrik S. Heffermehl

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The Nobel Peace Prize is the world's most coveted award, galvanizing the world's attention for 110 years. In recent decades, it has also become the world's most reviled award, as heads of militarized states and out-and-out warmongers and terrorists have been showered with peace prizes. Delving into previously unpublished primary sources, Fredrik Heffermehl reveals the history of the inner workings of the Norwegian Nobel Committee as it has come under increasing political, geopolitical, and commercial pressures to make inappropriate awards.

As a Norwegian lawyer, Heffermehl makes the case that the Norwegian politicians entrusted with the Nobel peace awards have brushed aside the legal requirements in Scandinavian estate law using the prize to promote their own political and personal interests instead of the peace ideas Alfred Nobel had in mind. Evaluating each of the 119 Nobel Peace Prizes awarded between 1901 and 2009, the author tracks the ever-widening divergence of the committee's selections from Nobel's intentions and concludes that all but one of the last ten prizes are illegitimate under the law.

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