

The Latest Nobel Committee “Peace Prize” Award Hypocrisy

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Region: [Europe](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#),
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Nobel Committee members long ago lost credibility. War criminals or other undeserving honorees win peace prizes. Past recipients included a rogue’s gallery of miscreants – Obama, Henry Kissinger and three former Israeli prime ministers most notably, all unindicted war criminals. Maybe Netanyahu is next.

Selection is entirely politicized. Legitimate peace advocates are shunned. Mahatma Gandhi was nominated five times, never awarded the coveted prize.

Deserving candidates like peace champion Kathy Kelly, whistleblowers Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning are consistently ignored. So are Vladimir Putin and Sergey Lavrov’s all-out efforts for peace in Ukraine and Syria – drawing condemnation, not the high praise they deserve.

This year’s most notable nominees included **Angela Merkel, Pope Francis and John Kerry** – two unindicted war criminals and a pontiff representing wealth and power. Don’t let his rhetoric fool you.

Nobel Committee members announced the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet as recipient of this year’s prize “for its decisive contribution to the building of a (nonexistent) pluralistic democracy in Tunisia in the wake of the (so-called) Jasmine Revolution of 2011,” – part of Washington’s orchestrated and manipulated phony Arab Spring, assuring business as usual remained unchallenged, including in Tunisia.

It’s a democracy in name only. President Beji Caid Essebsi is a longtime Tunisian politician, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister for the repressive Bourguiba and Ben Ali regimes respectively.

Now 88 years old, his mandate is business as usual. In May 2015, he met with Obama at the White House, invitations reserved solely for pro-Western officials shunning democracy, notably Middle East ones, mostly governed by ruthless despots, all close US allies.

Essebsi’s runoff December presidential win was hailed as the culmination of Tunisia’s transition to democracy. Not by some observers, accusing him of continuing repressive Ben Ali policies.

His Nidaa Tounes party is infested with Ben Ali cronies. Tunisian engineer Neid Ben Hamza called last December’s electoral result “really disappointing.” Tunisians have “short memories,” he said.

A repressive old guard member now leads the country. Educator Ali Toudi said he “fear(s) for our liberties, especially as the same political party will have such overarching powers.”

“Essebsi talks about counter-terrorism and the prestige of the state. I’m afraid of a return to repressive practices in their name.” Musician Ben Amor said “the fight goes on and we will never give up.”

Last April, Essebsi met with French President Francois Hollande in Paris. Tunisia is a former French colony. He declared “France is our top partner. We are open to every kind of collaboration – economic, political, social and even on security.”

His regime continues repressive old guard policies with a smiling face – supporting wealth and power exclusively at the expense of social justice. Hollande praised his nonexistent “exemplary track record regarding democracy.”

Conditions for ordinary Tunisians are deplorable. Poverty increased 30% since 2011. High unemployment affects youths and women hardest. Workers lucky to have jobs earn poverty or sub-poverty wages.

Tunisia closed its main border crossing with Libya because of violence and instability. It’s the only land escape route for tens of thousands trying to flee – victims of US imperial lawlessness.

Following the 2015 Sousse attacks, killing 38 mostly British tourists, Essebsi promised harsh counterterrorism steps in response. He imposed draconian state of emergency diktats, saying an “exceptional situation required exceptional measures.”

Police state antiterrorism legislation followed, trashing human rights while falsely claiming to respect them. Terrorism now includes damaging property during legitimate protests.

Police can hold suspects up to 15 days, isolated with no legal representation or outside contacts. Capital punishment is an option for disseminating information alleged responsible for loss of life in terrorist attacks.

Essebsi heads a police state. It bears repeating. Nobel Committee members honored the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet “for its decisive contribution to the building of a (nonexistent) pluralistic democracy...”

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

His new book as editor and contributor is titled “Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III.”

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

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About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III." <http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

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