S to the NEWS

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NOBEL PRIZES

A small, select group of persons will have their day in the sun on December 10 when the King of Sweden confers the prestigious Nobel Prizes. Each will receive $162,320 and a glory that many would rank as even more valuable.

Nobel Prizes have been awarded since 1901 from a fortune of $9,000,000 left by the Swedish inventor of dynamite, Alfred Bernhard Nobel. His aim was to reward idealistic efforts to find peace.

Sought-after and admired as are the Nobel Prizes, there are growing criticisms that they are awarded for reasons other than the merit of the winners. An examination of the recipients of the Nobel Peace Prizes, particularly since World War II, reveals more the political bias of the donors than the distinction of the donees.

Secretary of State Cordell Hull won the 1945 Nobel Peace Prize for being the "originator of the idea of the United Nations." The 1947 Peace Prize was divided between the pacifist Quakers of London and Washington.

In 1949 the Peace Prize went to Lord John Boyd-Orr, a British supporter of trade with Red China during the Korean War. General George Marshall got the Prize in 1953 for proposing largescale American foreign aid.

The candidates for the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize formed a motley group: Pandit Nehru, Dag Hammarskjold (of the UN), Lester Pearson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Sanger (of the Association for Planned Parenthood), and Mao Tse-tung. Lester Pearson of Canada won for creating the UN World Police Force.

The 1959 Prize went to Philip Noel Baker, a British Socialist and Quaker pacifist. 'Ihe Peace Prize/winner in 1969 was the International Labor Organization, which now has a hard time keeping peace among its own members.

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The 1962 Nobel Peace Prize, then worth $49,465, went to Linus Pauling for his long campaign against atomic weapons and for a no-inspection nuclear test-ban treaty. The Oslo weekly, Farmand, stated: "There is no denying the fact that awarding the prize to Pauling is the outcome of a purposeful and long-term campaign to make political capital out of the test-ban treaty.[11] The propaganda value of the Nobel Prize was exploited to the fullest when the first announcement of the Pauling prize was made on October 10, the day the Moscow Test Ban Treaty of 1963 went into effect.

The 1973 Nobel Peace Prize was shared jointly by Henry Kissinger and North Vietnam's Le Due Tho. The "peace" they brought to Southeast Asia is the peace of the grave and the peace of the slave. The 1977 Peace Prize is being awarded to Amnesty International.

It isn't only the Peace Prizes, which are frankly political, that cause controversy. The Literature Prize has been widely criticized because of the writers who did NOT receive it, including Tolstoy, Ibsen, Strindberg, Proust, and Mark Twain. Some people allege that the Swedish Nobel committee deliberately chooses relatively obscure authors in order to include countries that have no chance of winning a science prize.

A Communist-Socialist bias is certainly no handicap. Literature prize winners include Bertrand (Rather-Red-than-dead)Russell, Ernest Hemingway (who sided with the Communists during the Spanish Civil War), the Russian Communist Boris Pasternak, and the untalented Italian Communist Salvatore Quasimodo.

Even the science prizes are not immune to criticism. Some critics believe that, since biology and other major areas of science are excluded by the terms of Nobel's will, all science prizes should be abolished. Cited as a prime case of virtue unrewarded is the discovery of the polio vaccine.

Despite the excellent credentials of most Nobel winners, it appears that rich prizes of enormous prestige awarded to controversial celebrities make propaganda for dubious causes.

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