

Nobel Peace prize: scandal, half-truths and hypocrisy

Friday 21 October 2022, by [CZAJKOWSKI Jan](#) (Date first published: 18 October 2022).

A few days ago I wrote about the shameful editorial in the Internationalen newspaper 41/2022 - in which the Socialistisk Politik organisation claims that the Russian nuclear threat makes it necessary to end arms aid to Ukraine. Implicitly this must be done so that Ukraine can be effectively pressured to capitulate to Russia's imperialist wars and annexations.

But it was not only at the high politics level that Ukraine's struggle for freedom was attacked. It seems that no opportunity to criticise Ukraine's government must be missed, in the name of world peace, for readers to understand how worthless Ukraine's cause is. SP board member Peter Widén (PW) writes in the same issue of Internationalen a half-page article on the Nobel Peace Prize, which this year is shared between human rights organisations in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine.

The reason why PW pays so much attention to the Peace Prize is soon made clear. He quotes Zelensky's adviser Myhajlo Podoljak (whom PW consistently refers to as "Podyliak" or "Mr. Podyliak") commenting on the Peace Prize on Twitter:

"The Nobel Committee has an interesting interpretation of the word 'peace,' as representatives of two countries that attacked a third receive the Nobel Prize together. Neither Russian nor Belarusian organizations were able to organize resistance to the war. This year's Nobel Prize is 'amazing'"

Compare this with how Anna-Lena Laurén describes the debate on the Nobel Prize in Dagens Nyheter on 10 October.

"Leading figures in Memorial, on the other hand, have been very clear that Crimea belongs to Ukraine. Yet the Ukrainian public has been outraged that the Ukrainian human rights organisation Center for Civil Liberties was allowed to share the Nobel Peace Prize with Memorial as well as Belarusian human rights activist Ales Bjaljatski. According to Zelensky's advisor Myhajlo Podoljak, neither Belyatski nor Memorial should receive the prize, as they were unable to organise resistance to the war. (...) "It is obvious that Podolyk's reasoning on this point does not hold. But the Ukrainian resistance is really about something else, namely that it does not want to be included in the same cultural and political sphere as Russia and Belarus." - Yet another attempt to force us and them into the same room, BUT WE DON'T WANT TO BE IN THE SAME ROOM," writes Ukrainian journalist Yliana Skibitska on Facebook. "The Ukrainian bitterness is understandable from a human perspective. The country is at war, attacked through no fault of its own. At the same time, it is very difficult to understand who gains anything from boycotting Russians and Belarusians who have sacrificed everything to make their countries more democratic - which would have prevented insane attacks on neighbours.

"Oleksandra Matvichuk, head of the Center for Civil Liberties, has no objection to the prize

being shared, as all three organisations are working towards the same goals.”

Podolak’s statement about the opposition in Russia and Belarus may seem belittling, but if you re-read the quote, it’s not that he’s saying they’re wrong, but that what he’s against is lumping Ukraine in with the other countries.

But PW of course has no understanding of what Laurén writes about, i.e. that people in Ukraine no longer want to be constantly lumped together with Russia in the West. Could it have something to do with the fact that PW actually prefers the war to end with the Ukrainian territories annexed by Russia remaining under Russian control? And that he might be more comfortable with Russia swallowing Ukraine whole?

He writes: “Compare the Ukrainian regime’s disgraceful and contemptuous attitude towards Russian human rights organisations and peace campaigners with how the Vietnamese viewed US peace activists during the Vietnam War”.

But what are the concrete examples of this “scandalous and contemptuous attitude” of the Ukrainian regime?

I recall the protest of Russian TV producer Marina Ovsianikova when she held up a poster on live Russian TV on 14 March to protest against the war on Ukraine. On the same day, President Zelensky made the following statement:

“I am grateful to those Russians who do not stop trying to get the truth out, who fight against misinformation and tell the truth, explain real facts to their friends and relatives. And personally for the girl who walked into the Channel 1 studio with a poster against the war. To those who are not afraid to protest, before your country is completely cut off from the rest of the world and turns into a very big North Korea. You must fight, you should not miss your own chance.”

What in this statement does PW see as outrageous and contemptuous?

Is it not his own attitude towards Ukraine that is contemptuous, when the lives, freedom, culture and homes of the people do not matter to himself as Putin once again rattles off the nuclear threat?

Is it not PW (who 50 years ago supported the Vietnamese fight against imperialism) who is scandalous, when he considers today that Ukraine’s fight against imperialism is not worthy of our support?

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P.S.

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