

Nobel's EU "Champion of Peace" Makes a Mockery of Free Speech

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Only three days after being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its alleged role in promoting peace and reconciliation across the European continent, the European Union made the most undemocratic and non-peaceful decision one might think of by ordering the French-based satellite provider Eutelsat SA to take 19 Iranian TV channels, including the 24-hour English-language Press TV off air, denying millions of viewers across the world the opportunity to benefit from the alternative, critical standpoint of a group of media which had for long endeavored to challenge the Western mainstream media's uncontested influence over the global public opinion.

The disputed move can be seen as the latest effort intended for pressuring and isolating Iran over its political independence and its steadfast resistance against the warmongering and hawkish policies of the West is but a flagrant violation of the principles of free speech. This decision is made while the Europeans and Americans have constantly, since the World War II, been boasting of being the commander-in-chief and foremost pioneers of freedom speech and democracy. Albeit their claims are justifiable in the context that freedom of speech is allowed as long as it is used as a pretext to lambaste and interfere in the internal affairs of unfriendly "others" such as Iran, Cuba, Venezuela and Syria, which these Westerners very much like to capitalize on as the favorite villains to hit and attack.

It's said that this controversial decision is in line with the unilateral sanctions imposed upon Iran by the European Union; however, the question which can be raised is that, can the belligerent states of the EU go as far as banning the television stations of a sovereign country which have been operating in compliance with the technical rules and regulations of the satellite providers? Are the satellite providers legally entitled to investigate the content of the programs of the TV stations which they give coverage to?

Mike Harris, the managing director of the Arizona-based AMT Capital Partners, a private equity investment banking firm believes that it was Israel, the uneasy and perturbed entity in the Middle East, which triggered and encouraged the ban on Iranian TV stations.

"Let's look at who Eutelsat really is.... and let's look at them for a moment because their CEO is a French-Israeli dual national citizen. If you look at the executive committee, they are all French-Israeli dual national citizens," said Harris in an interview with Press TV.

Of course Israel will substantially gain from the removal of Iranian television stations from the Hot Bird frequencies. Press TV, Al-Alam and other Iranian channels on the Eutelsat's blacklist were giving a robust, specialized and regular coverage to the atrocities committed by the United States, UK and their Middle East stooge and client state, Israel, and it was

seemingly going beyond the pale. No other major media outlet in the world, with the influence, dexterity and proficiency of Press TV maintained such an anti-imperialism, anti-Zionism policy, and this could not be tolerated anymore, especially in the wake of the deep socioeconomic crisis and depression which the Western world is experiencing.

“Eutelsat is an intelligence operation as are most communications billing companies, mobile phone providers and the infamous ‘choke points’ that make sure all communication, all progress, all privacy is subject to what is allowed. Most of such ‘chokepoints,’ companies like ‘Google’ for one, are Israeli owned. Call it a coincidence,” wrote Gordon Duff in a recent article.

Since it was launched in July 2007, Press TV was under huge pressure by the Western states, especially the UK government, which finally realized its nightmarish dream of silencing Press TV by taking it off the Sky platform in January 2012 and imposing a fine of 100,000 pounds on the channel for what it called the violation of its broadcasting regulations.

“Ofcom is said to have close ties to Britain’s royal family. And the cables released by the whistleblower website WikiLeaks show that Press TV’s programs on the royal wedding, which many in the country described as extravagant, angered the royal family,” reported Press TV on January 20, 2012.

Now, with the intensification of the EU’s anti-Iranian hostility which has been manifested this time in the punishment and penalization of a TV station whose only sin is being different from the corporate, Zionist-run media in policies and trajectory, it’s being proved more than before that the European Union did not reserve such a high-profile and prestigious award as the Nobel Peace Prize and that the decision made by the Swedish Nobel Committee was absolutely political, aimed at salvaging the crisis-stricken Europe from the socioeconomic predicament it’s drowning into. If the EU has contributed to global peace and fraternity, why can’t it tolerate the free and unrestricted operation of a progressive and independent media outlet?

The EU Commission’s decision in taking Press TV and 18 other Iranian television stations off air is absolutely a violation of the freedom of speech, but let’s be frank: who will hold the culprits in this criminal action responsible? Perhaps none of the European leaders will react to this hostile and unjustifiable decision, because they are the first ones who will cheer and relish at the “imprisonment” of Iranian media which have always been a thorn on their side. It’s time for the international organizations, peace activists, human rights advocates and journalists around the world to voice their protest at this blatant and unashamed assault on free speech and put an end to the unending and inexplicable duplicity and hypocrisy of the West.

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