

“Greenland belongs to us”

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Both the United States President, Donald Trump, and Vice President JD Vance keep repeating that Greenland is very important for the security of the United States and the Arctic region. And Denmark has not done a good job regarding this, according to President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance.

This repetition and choice of words can be seen as bullying behaviour towards Denmark and Greenland, which increases the tension over the Atlantic. Only the President, Vice President, and their advisers know the intention behind this behaviour, and the rest of the world can only guess, but it has and will have consequences for the transatlantic relationship.

President Donald Trump has claimed that you can see both Chinese and Russian ships from the coast of Greenland, which is not correct in the current situation. But at the same time, we cannot dismiss an increasing military interest from Russia in Svalbard, as Elisabeth Braw, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, has written about.

Russia is trying to excuse military presence in Svalbard on the accusation that Norway is involving Svalbard in its military and political planning together with NATO, which of course Norway has denied, and such action would be against the Svalbard Treaty.

With both the United States and Russia showing such strong interest in the Arctic region, it is plausible that the situation could devolve rapidly, and with that in mind, it emphasizes the importance of prioritizing the security of the Arctic region, including Greenland.

Therefore, it is understandable that President Donald Trump has a significant interest in Greenland for security reasons, but at the same time, he does not seem trustworthy when he is claiming something that is not true, and that can be destructive in a cooperation between allies both now and in the future.

After the Cold War, both the United States and Denmark decreased the military presence in Greenland, but after President Donald Trump in his first term showed interest in buying Greenland, Denmark has increased the expenses on the military regarding the security of the Arctic and North Atlantic in the past years, most recently, a defence agreement from 2024 to 2033, and this in cooperation with Greenland.

This shows that both Denmark and Greenland are taking the security situation seriously now, but at the same time they would prefer a cooperation with NATO in this regard and therefore also the United States. And it could be seamless for Denmark and Greenland to collaborate with the United States in this matter because these three countries renewed the Defence agreement from 1951 in 2004, which gives the United States the possibility for an increase in military presence in Greenland.

Despite President Donald Trump's intensified interest in Greenland for security reasons, he has neglected to mention the possibility this Defence agreement gives him when he accuses Denmark of not doing its part, and he is using that as an excuse for why Greenland should belong to the United States instead of being a part of the Danish Realm. This gives a reason to believe that there might be other motives for President Donald Trump to acquire Greenland, and it can complicate the situation in the Transatlantic relationship when not all parties are honest about the situation.

It would be understandable if President Donald Trump expressed an interest in Greenland because of the minerals or the sea route that both will be accessible over time due to the climate change, although not a legitimate reason for the behaviour he is showing towards Greenland and Denmark.

According to Denmark's Prime Minister, Mette Frederiksen, it is the Greenlanders that decide Greenland's future, and Greenland is maintaining that they do not want to be a part of the United States, which the four-party coalition stated very clearly in the coalition agreement where it is stated that "Greenland belongs to us".

This does not mean that Greenland will not participate in the security issues, as the engagement in the matter shows, but it means that Greenland as a country wants to focus on their own identity and culture. This shows the growing national feeling and pride in the Greenlanders, which should be respected by other countries, but it seems not to be the case with President Donald Trump, which is also how politicians from both Greenland and Denmark see it.

A case can be made that this tense situation between the United States, Denmark, and Greenland does not only affect these countries, but it affects the transatlantic relationship, and it can affect above that because a lot of countries are in cooperation with the United States. And when other countries see this behaviour from President Donald Trump, they might feel insecure regarding what else can happen. And one can argue that we are witnessing this in the world situation today.

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