

Colonialism Lives on in the Mind of Donald Trump

The Struggle against Colonialism and Imperialism in Kalaallit Nunaat

By [Kim Petersen](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

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Outside of melting glaciers and global warming discussions, Kalaallit Nunaat does not often find itself in the spotlight, and when it does, it is usually referred to as Greenland. United States president Donald Trump's real-estate aspirations have given Kalaallit Nunaat/Greenland prominence in recent news. It seems Trump is serious about the US purchasing Greenland. Judging by history, if Trump could swing such a purchase, he would certainly garner severe gravitas as a big-time deal-maker. And there is a precedent to such a real estate transaction between the US and Denmark. In 1917, Denmark sold the Danish West Indies to the US for \$25 million. The islands were subsequently renamed the US Virgin Islands.

Said Trump about the proposed acquisition of Kalaallit Nunaat/Greenland:

It's just something we've talked about. Denmark essentially owns it. We're very good allies with Denmark. We've protected Denmark like we protect large portions of the world, so the concept came up. Strategically it's interesting and we'd be interested, but we'll talk to them a little bit. It's not No. 1 on the burner, I can tell you that, Essentially, it's a large real estate deal.

A lot of things can be done. It's hurting Denmark very badly, because they're losing almost \$700 million a year carrying it. So they carry it at a great loss.

Trump, commander-in-chief of the nation responsible for "protect[ing] large portions of the world" was ostensibly unaware that the per capita GDP (2018) in economically "badly" "hurting" Denmark is [\\$62888.7](#) while the US has a per capita GDP (2018) of [\\$54541.7](#). Neither did Trump mention that the [projected US deficit](#) for 2019 is \$896 billion.

Moreover, in conducting such a mega-real estate transaction in the media, Trump does not come across as consummate or skilled in the art of a deal.

Some Kalaallit were not impressed.

"We are not for sale and are not a commodity. If Trump really thinks so, he can only dream of it. And it also finally shows his distorted view of his fellow humans," said Muté B. Egede, a leader of the Inuit Ataqatigiit (Community of the People), a separatist party in Kalaallit Nunaat. [1]

Denmark's prime minister, Mette Frederiksen, was of similar opinion:

Greenland is not for sale. It's an absurd discussion, and Kim Kielsen [Greenland's current prime minister] has of course made it clear that Greenland is not for sale, and that is the end of this discussion ." [2]

Forbes [states](#) the sale of Kalaallit Nunaat is a matter for Denmark to decide.

But as the name *Kalaallit Nunaat* makes clear in translation, the world's largest island is the "Home of the Kalaallit." Denmark is the European home country of the Danes; Kalaallit Nunaat, on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, is the home country of the Kalaallit. Few would dispute this. Consequently, one might wonder what moral or rightful basis would people from one country have to sell the country of another people to a third country?

Tillie Martinussen, Kalaallit Nunaat member of parliament with the Samarbejdspartiet (Cooperation Party) responded:

That's just completely crazy from Donald Trump. I wonder if he doesn't do it to draw attention to the Arctic. He can't be serious. Colonial times are over, and Donald Trump is harming the good relations Greenland and Denmark have to the US by saying something like this.

Martinussen playfully came back with a counter-offer:

We think Donald Trump should drop the plans and start by figuring out how much California, Florida and Alaska cost, as we want to buy them. [1]

Imagine if the deal did go through, Denmark sells Kalaallit Nunaat/Greenland to the US; then, following the sale, the Kalaallit hold a binding plebiscite whereby the result shows people voted overwhelmingly to become independent.

For background on Kalaallit Nunaat/Greenland read [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#).

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Notes

1. Translated from Kassaaluk Kristiansen, "[Partier tager kraftigt afstand fra Trumps ønske](#)," *Sermitsiaq*, 16 August 2019.

2. Translated from Nis Kielgast, "[Mette Frederiksen: Nu stopper snakken om at sælge Grønland](#)," DR, 18 August 2019.

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