

# Is NATO about to collapse?

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The United States is openly threatening to take Greenland, a self-governing territory linked to Denmark and therefore to NATO. That creates a crisis no one planned for. What happens when a NATO member threatens another NATO member?

This video explains why Donald Trump's claim has no legal basis, how extractive fantasies are driving geopolitical aggression, and why Europe now faces a choice between law and force.

If rules only apply when convenient, they do not apply at all.

But this is not about Greenland alone. It is about whether collective security, international law, and European sovereignty still mean anything. In political economy, this is a massive deal affecting all our futures.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqLhst6Uxts?si=dHUqxpFsAG8hKu01>

This is the audio version:

[https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=daq4q-1a10648-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo\\_link=episode\\_page&btn-skin=c73a3a](https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=daq4q-1a10648-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a)

This is the transcript:

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Venezuela has been invaded.

Its President has been seized.

The international legal order is in disarray.

And what is Europe wanting to talk about? Greenland.

Greenland has become the epicentre of European concern over this issue because, well, Venezuela is a long way away, and Trump's threat to Greenland, made repeatedly, now feels very real, and it's an existential threat to NATO and to international law, and that makes it worth talking about.

Let's be clear. Greenland is enormous. It's about a quarter of the size of Europe, but it has a population of just 50,000 or so people, and that combination matters. It has a small population and a huge landmass. It's almost impossible to defend, but it has a strategic location, and that makes it of interest to Trump.

But there is no legal justification for the claim that he's making that the US must take possession of Greenland. It does not threaten US security. There is no conceivable UN mandate for the USA taking over Greenland, and there is, therefore, no lawful basis under international law on which he can claim the right to this territory. But Donald Trump keeps repeating the claim that he wants it, and that alone should alarm us.

The real motive that Trump has is, after all, about extractive fantasy. He wants Greenland because he believes that when the ice melts, which his friends in the petrochemical industry are doing all they can to help, there will be vast mineral wealth beneath the Greenland tundra. It does not matter that there may be no market by the time that the ice cap has melted. He believes there will be value, and that is what this is about. Even though the possibility of realising that value is next to zero, he wants to control it, and Greenland's current status as a self-governing territory of Denmark is, in his opinion, an impediment to that.

He wants to take control, but the fact is that Greenland is functioning very well as it stands.

Full independence would be very difficult for Greenland; let's be honest. There are economies of scale when it comes to states, and they do require shared institutions when they're small, and they do require allies. Denmark may not be the perfect ally for Greenland, but the EU apart, there is definitely no one better, and the United States would be worse.

As a consequence, there is a definite NATO problem here, because the critical point is that Greenland is linked, absolutely, to a NATO member state and under Article 5 of the NATO treaty, an attack on one member state is an attack on all of them, and then every member state is required to come to the defence of the one that is under attack.

But the situation is that no one ever envisaged when NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, was created that the attack would come from another member state, and yet that is what the USA is planning; it is planning to attack a NATO member state.

Within this, there is a profound contradiction. What do we do? Is NATO still functional if one member state is now planning an attack on another member state? Whether that attack be by way of force or simply by way of expropriation, doesn't matter. The point is that NATO is a defence league, and it is meant to be a common defence league, treating all the member states as a unity for these purposes and yet quite clearly, that is no longer the case. The US is threatening a NATO member state.

So does that make the United States a pariah state?

And does collective security now mean anything in this situation?

After all, if rules only apply when they're convenient, they do not apply at all, and that is the implication of Trump's action.

And what does this anyway say about Europe? Could the EU defend Greenland? Would it want to? Would it risk confrontation with the USA? And if it would not, what does European sovereignty actually mean?

This is a test Europe can't avoid because the threat is very obviously real. We are seeing a situation where Europe is going to be challenged. I don't think there's any doubt that Trump is going to pursue this, and so what does Greenland think?

Let's not forget that the 50,000 people there have an opinion and a right to express it. Greenland might be both enormous and tiny and strategically central and politically vulnerable, but its future is not a side issue, most particularly for those 50,000 people. The evidence at the moment is that they will prefer Denmark to the USA, and they might prefer independence to either, but in that case, with some form of protection agreement. Now it is possible that the EU could provide that, but should the USA? And should that be determined by force?

Here is, obviously, the conflict in international relations, and it is being rehearsed in plain sight, and yet, where is our government? Where are the governments of Europe? Some are unambiguous. Denmark is of course taking the lead, and France, Spain and others are telling the US to back off. Even the UK, dithering as it is over Venezuela, is saying that the USA has no right to Greenland, but the point is, will we act?

Will we let power replace law?

Will we allow the power of extractive financial capital to override a duty of care to the people of Greenland?

And will our alliances end up being worth anything?

After all, if the rules of law collapse, only force remains.

So Europe must choose: is it going to choose law over might? Cooperation over coercion? And care over exploitation? Or is it going to allow power to prevail?

The one thing that we do know is that in this situation, silence is not neutrality; it is consent.

So are voices going to be raised? Is noise going to be created? Are we going to shout out for Greenland? It's a question that needs an answer, and as yet we don't know it, but the answer will determine a great deal of our international future for a long time to come.

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## Poll

[poll id="284"]

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## Taking further action

If you want to write a letter to your MP on the issues raised in this blog post, there is a ChatGPT prompt to assist you in doing so, with full instructions, [here](#).

**One word of warning, though: please ensure you have the correct MP. ChatGPT can get it wrong.**

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