

# Denmark-Greenland in the twentieth Century

*Axel Kjær Sørensen*





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Front cover: The South Greenland provincial council in session 1939. Photo Arctic Institute.

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# Preface

What is told on the following pages is a history of the Danish-Greenlandic relationship over one hundred years. It covers the history of Danish Greenland policy, and the history of political and economic development in Greenland. With only a very basic knowledge of Greenlandic I had to base my account on sources written in Danish. This is less of a problem than might be supposed because the language of administration has been Danish, including even the minutes from the local political assemblies. Over the years much Greenlandic writing has also been translated including some novels, and anything written to the authorities in Greenlandic has been translated. Nevertheless, the account is necessarily that of an outsider unable to fully analyse the linguistic expressions of the Greenlanders.

Written in a Danish context it covers Danish Greenland policy and its background in and impact on Greenland society. This Danish perspective is predominant at the beginning, but as the Greenlanders took over more and more of the administration it is almost lacking in the latter part, dealing mostly with developments in Greenland.

Many colleagues are to be thanked for discussions over the years, but in particular publisher Christopher Hurst, London, and my colleague at the University of Gloucestershire John R. Howe who has been indispensable in rooting out the many Danish expressions in the script. Any shortcomings are however mine.



# Greenland before 1900

Greenland is an arctic/sub arctic country with a permanent ice cap covering the whole inland area and in places projecting into the sea. Human habitation is only possible in the coastal area of 350,000 square km. Up till recent times the permanent ice was impassable. All communication had to be by ship along the coast and in the northern part by foot or dog-sledge on the frozen sea and fiords in winter.

The first known settlements in Greenland date from around 2,500 B.C. and were found in the most northerly part called Peary Land. They were established by Eskimo tribes from Arctic America. In the following centuries more came in larger or smaller groups, the latest about 1000 A.D.

Greenland's relationship with Europe started in the Viking Age. In 982 people from Iceland settled in the southern part of Greenland in the Qaqortoq (Julianehaab) and Nuuk (Godthaab) areas, which were not at that time occupied by the Eskimos. The Norse settlements in Greenland as well as in Iceland were free, independent societies for a couple of centuries. However, in 1261 Iceland, mostly inhabited by Norwegian settlers, accepted a subordinate status under the Norwegian crown and the settler community in Greenland did likewise. Bergen in Norway became the link to the two dependencies in the North Atlantic.

In 1380 Denmark and Norway became a double monarchy, soon with Denmark in the leading role. Thus Greenland became a part of the possessions of the Danish crown. However the possession of Greenland added little to the king's power because the Norse population there died out about 1500 following a period of 100 years out of all contact with other parts of the realm. In fact, their extinction was not realised in Denmark till much later. The actual circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the Norse population in Greenland are still an unsolved riddle although there have been many hypotheses. Among the plausible ones is an evident worsening of the climate and assumed competition for means of subsistence with incoming Eskimo settlers.

Although no relationship with Greenland had been maintained for centuries the Danish kings still regarded it as one of their dependencies, but despite several attempts contact was not re-established till 1721. This re-colonization of Greenland was seen at the start as a reopening of contact with an old part of the realm, but it became hardly distinguishable in character from any other colony acquired at that time. A Norwegian priest, Hans Egede, set out to bring the true Lutheran faith to the descendants of the 'Old Norse' who were believed to be still living in the darkness of Catholicism. He found none, but kept looking.

However, he did find a 'wild' population, which he began to Christianise. As the years passed and knowledge of the Greenland territory grew, the hope of finding Norse descendants vanished, and the contact made in 1884 with the Eskimo tribe at Ammassalik on the east coast extinguished the last hope. No more unknown areas existed where Norse descendants could be living.

The fact that the Norse population was no longer there, and that the new population of Eskimos was non-white and non-Christian made no difference to the Danish king. The territory was regarded as being under indisputable Danish sovereignty on an equal footing with Iceland and the Faroe Islands. Despite their quite different origins the inhabitants were regarded as the King's subjects because they lived in his land, and the King for his part felt entitled to rule over them as well. However it has to be understood that this was the Danish point of view. For their part the Greenlanders have always regarded Greenland as their country and the Danes or Norwegians as foreigners. They have tolerated the foreign presence, and to a certain extent have also used it for their own benefit. For his part the Danish King was free to think of the Greenlanders as his subjects. After all, he did them no harm.

At first the main 'civilising' task was to Christianise the local population, a mission that was supposed to be financed by the profits from trade. In 1731

the priorities came clearly into the open when a new king ordered that the establishment in Greenland be abandoned because it ran a substantial deficit. Hans Egede successfully appealed to the king's conscience to allow the mission work to continue. Since then no Danish government has ever taken any initiative to abandon Greenland.

The missionaries had a clear policy: paganism was to be rooted out, and therefore they did not tolerate shamanism or any other part of the Greenlanders' culture which they considered to be rooted in heathenism. Modern research has claimed that in this way the missionaries destroyed the weak structure of authority within Greenlandic society. The policy of the Trading Company was more cautious. It soon realised that buying hunting products from the Greenlanders was the only way to make a profit. Thus from 1776, organised as a state company named the Royal Greenland Trade Department, it encouraged and supported traditional hunting, leaving Greenlandic society otherwise untouched. This led to the growth of a latent antagonism between the two services. The missionaries were certainly inclined to interfere in Greenlandic society as they regarded their mission as having a higher priority than that of the Trading Company. The result of this schism was a paternalistic native policy. Legal and administrative interference was possible, but the regulations were vaguely formulated and put into practice with caution.

In the Instruction of 1782 which laid the foundation for Danish rule in Greenland, it was stipulated that the King's servants should *'meet the inhabitants with love and meekness, come to their assistance whenever they can, set a good example, and take care that they come to no harm in any way.'* The instruction continues: *'Should anything indecent be committed by the Greenlanders, like either theft or various coarse vices, then the merchant must advise them in a most indulgent*

*way to abstain from it. Should this fail, or should the felony be very coarse indeed, they should be punished according to the circumstances and the character of the crime.'*<sup>1</sup> In case of epidemics or famine among the Greenlanders, they should be given provisions, those for the poorest being free.

For the Greenlanders this was hardly very oppressive. In 1856 Hinrich Rink, inspector in South Greenland, characterised the Greenlanders' perception of their legal position as follows: first, they should be helped and fed when they were genuinely in need; and second, they should be set a good example and given admonitions, but only punished according to the circumstances of the particular case when they really broke the rules.<sup>2</sup> One could say that this showed a very exact understanding of the instruction of 1782.

In 1814 Denmark lost another war. This time the cost was the cession of Norway to Sweden with the exception of Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. It is not entirely clear how Denmark managed to exclude these dependencies from the cession. However, a British divide-and-rule policy towards Denmark and Sweden seems a plausible explanation.<sup>3</sup> The loss of Norway did not affect the administration of Greenland, which had never been ruled as a part of Norway, but the great historical transformations in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars did. The widespread process of industrialisation and the increased power of political liberalism were both developments with profound impact in Greenland.

The minor impact was felt in economic policy. The state trade monopoly was maintained, especially after an experiment with a private trade department decisively failed in 1840. The purposes of the state monopoly were then more clearly formulated. Thus, in that year a commission agreed that the state ought not to profit from the trade, but rather let any surplus benefit the Greenlanders. The financial authorities accepted

1. "med kærlighed og sagtomdighed omgås indbyggerne, være dem til hjælp i hvad man kan, foregå dem med gode eksempler, samt nøje tilse, at dem ingen uret eller overlast i nogen måde vederfares." and "Skulle noget usømmeligt af grønlændere begås, som enten tyveri eller andre grove laster, da må købmanden med al lemfældighed formane dem til at afstå derfra. Frugter dette ikke, eller forseelsen er særdeles grov, straffes de derfor efter omstændighederne og forbrydelsens beskaffenhed." (Bobé 1936: 371).

2. Letter to the Minister of the Interior by Rink (1856: 233): "1) at de skulle hjælpes og fødes, når de virkelig trænger til det; 2) at man skal foregå dem med et godt eksempel, samt formane dem, og kun når de virkelig forser sig, straffe dem efter bedste skøn."

3. Gad 1979: 187-205.



Fig. 1. Light kayaks are easily carried ashore from open water and over the ice bream. The photo is from around 1900 and probably taken near Qeqertarsuaq in Northwest Greenland. Photo Jens Daugaard-Jensen/Arctic Institute.

this, although they insisted that a decent rate of interest on the state's investments in Greenland had to be paid first.

The trade surplus was ploughed back into Greenland in two ways. First, the prices paid to the Greenlandic producers were raised to stimulate their purchasing power. Second, some expenditure was initiated to benefit the whole society. In 1845 two teacher training colleges were established to improve the quality and increase the number of teachers of primary schools, and another physician was employed to raise health standards. A few Greenlanders were sent to Denmark for further education. In 1837 luxury articles such as coffee, tea, sugar and pearled grain were released for sale generally having previously been withheld from the market to avoid '*spoiling*' the Greenlanders. The sale of spirits and beer was still restricted. Against this background it seems fair to conclude that the material living standards of Greenlanders improved during this period, based on a sound economic foundation in trade.

The influence of political liberalism in Greenland reached its high point with the establishment of local assemblies, which gave elected Greenlanders the opportunity to participate in local government. Such

assemblies are a well-known feature in colonial administration, especially in the British colonies where at first the councils were composed of higher civil servants and in some cases also of white colonists. Later, natives were admitted and the council's authority grew. In the end the councils developed into parliaments based on universal suffrage, and the administration became a responsible government. This stage marked the transition from colony to dominion, and the last governor could be welcomed as the first High Commissioner.

In Greenland something vaguely resembling the British colonial councils existed under the terms of the Instruction of 1782, which required the colony manager to listen to his employees' advice if he was uncertain how to handle a case. The provision was little used, and by the middle of the 19th century the issue was opened from quite another angle, inspired by the introduction of local assemblies in Denmark in 1841 headed by the local priest. Each district in the colony got in 1857 a guardians' council with the highest-ranking civil servants and appointed Greenlanders as members. The council was empowered to appoint new members when a vacancy occurred among the Greenlanders. Set up in 1857 as an experiment, they were put





Fig. 2. Nuuk 1910. The white house to the left was build for Hans Egede, the first missionary in Greenland from 1721 to 1736, and it is the oldest building in Greenland. The Greenland governors resided here for many years. The church and the nearby house of the dean are seen further up the hillside. Photo Morten P. Porsild/Arctic Institute.

on a permanent basis in 1862. As in Denmark a priest (missionary) headed the council, and the colony manager was accountant. Their principal task was to take over poor relief, which till then had been administered by the Trade Department's staff. The councils were also allowed to spend money on any project which they considered to be the common good in the district. Their income was directly related to production, since the Trade Department contributed 20 per cent of the value of its purchases of Greenlandic products. A so-called re-partition was introduced to promote the utmost economy with public funds and to encourage industry. This envisaged that all funds remaining after payment of expenses should be divided among the Greenlandic seal-hunters according to the size of their catch, which meant in other words that the more industrious got the larger shares.

In addition to their economic duties the guardians' councils also held judicial powers where Greenlanders were concerned. Civil cases and minor offences could be dealt with summarily on the spot, but for major offences the council only held powers of inquiry and had to refer the case to the governor suggesting a suitable punishment. There were no written laws apart from three short paragraphs outlining illegal activities:

(1) Unauthorised use of property belonging to

others such as using their tools without permission; damaging such tools; keeping other hunters' catches without payment; taking possession of driftwood which another person had already dragged above the high water mark;

(2) Simple theft and evident disobedience to the authorities;

(3) Capital crimes such as manslaughter and other serious offences such as concealment of births.

In all other cases unwritten Greenlandic law applied. The Danish authorities were obviously very reluctant to impose rules, which might contradict the Greenlandic sense of justice.

Not much research has been done into the activities of the guardians' councils. However, from the published accounts it is clear that a series of precedents were made, either following the direct rulings of the authorities or as approval of suggestions from the guardians' councils. The history of this development will not be told here, but it should be noted that the fight against contagious venereal diseases from the crews of visiting ships led to some firm prohibitions such as a ban in 1890 on Greenlandic women going on board those ships.

The guardians' councils operated till 1911 when their authority was transferred to new municipal councils. The historical assessment of their activities



has varied with time. All the same, it seems fair to say that the councils played an important part in the establishment of democratic processes in Greenland. This point was made by Oldendow in 1936<sup>4</sup>.

The commercial principles, which were laid down in the instruction of 1782, applied almost unchanged till 1950. The prices of goods sold to the Greenlanders (trading-out) and the prices for Greenlandic produce (trading-in) were the same all along the coast regardless of internal transportation costs. The reason for this was to maximise the catch by inducing the Greenlanders to cover as large a hunting ground as possible.

Thus the Greenland economy operated on highly politicised prices. To the prices laid down in Copenhagen for goods destined for Greenland were added varying percentages to cover freight and other costs according to the importance of the goods in question to local production in Greenland. Quite low percentages were put on producer goods such as rifles, gunpowder, lead, iron and steel. Stoves and coal were even sold at a loss in the nineteenth century in order to get more blubber for export rather than being used locally in the traditional way for heating. The trading-in prices were set with a view to the Greenlanders retaining what they needed to maintain production over the long term. Economically speaking this was so they could provide for investments, in real terms keeping blubber for heating and hides for clothes and for coating the kayaks and boats.

While the profit on the goods sold in Greenland could hardly cover the costs of providing them, that on Greenlandic products sold in Copenhagen financed the entire Danish presence in Greenland – at least when the trade did not incur losses. Seen over the period 1721-1900 it could be argued that the Danish state did not lose on the Greenland trade. An account from 1904 made the balance Dkr. 3.5 million in favour of the state.<sup>5</sup> This result was due to the royalties from the cryolite mining at Ivittuut which had begun in 1857, totalling Dkr. 4.1 million.<sup>6</sup> Annually from the 1880s the trade department was unable to cover its overall expenses even with the royalties.

**Table 1.** Population of West Greenland (except Thule), 1789-1901. The figures for 1789-1824 are taken from the literature, the rest are from official censuses. The figure for 1789 is too unreliable to calculate a growth rate.

	Greenlanders	Euro-peans	Growth rate per annum %	
			Greenland	Denmark
1789	5,122			
1805	5,888			0.71
1816	5,836		-0.08	
1824	6,331		1.02	
1834	7,356	196	1.51	0.87
1840	7,877	251	1.15	0.77
1845	8,501	234	1.54	1.03
1850	9,352	225	1.93	0.84
1855	9,648	248	0.63	1.28
1860	9,648	232	0.00	1.31
1870	9,586	239	-0.06	1.05
1880	9,72	280	0.14	0.99
1890	10,207	309	0.49	0.99
1901	11,19	262	0.84	1.11

## Changes in traditional Greenlandic society

Obviously changes took place in Greenlandic society from 1721 to 1900, and it can be assumed that the Danish presence played a major part in this.

### Growth in population

As table 1 shows, the Greenlandic population has grown steadily except for the years 1805-16 (the war of 1807-14) and 1855-70. The stagnation and decrease 1855-70 only occurred in southern Greenland. Apart from that, growth has been more uneven than in Denmark, doubtless because of the smaller number of people. Table 1 also shows the few Europeans (most of them Danes). The variation in numbers of the Europeans was probably due to involuntary winter stays by ship's crews.

From these figures it could be argued that Greenland can support about 5,000 people with its traditional mode of production. Growth would then be the result of division of labour by gradual incorporation in the world market through Denmark.

4. Oldendow 1936: 69.

5. Rigsdagstidende Vol. B 1904/05: 150 ff.

6. Statistiske Meddelelser 1912, 4. R. 39 b. 2: table 18 A.

Table 2. Occupation of Greenlanders, % (official censuses).

	1834	1860	1890	1901
European occupations				
Administration	0.0	1.1	1.8	0.0
Trade	5.6	7.4	6.3	6.2
Mission, church, school	8.2	9.1	3.8	4.7
Other	0.0	0.0	0.2	2.0
All	13.8	17.6	12.1	12.9
Greenlandic occupations				
Hunters	86.2	82.4	87.9	72.4
Fishermen				14.6
Other				0.1
All	86.2	82.4	87.9	87.1
Number employed	1,290	1,971	2,407	2,749

Occupations

Pre-colonial Greenland was a society of hunters and gatherers. With the colonisation new ways of earning a living were introduced, as the Greenlanders were drawn into the work of the mission and the trade department. In the nineteenth century this Greenlandisation became a very conscious policy because local labour was much cheaper than workers imported from Europe. The development is shown in table 2.

The figures for occupations are somewhat unreliable for earlier periods. The numbers of people employed full-time in European occupations are reliable enough, but part-time employment is harder to estimate. The same consideration applies to Greenlandic occupations. Fishermen were first counted separately in 1901, but fishing had already been an activity earlier, since the Greenlanders' traditional hunting included fishing. Only significant changes are worth noticing. The table shows that the percentage of Greenlanders in European occupations fluctuated around 15 per cent. Nevertheless, because of a growing population while the number of Europeans barely changed, the Greenlandic share of European occupations was increasing. Table 3 shows this.

Greenlanders occupied nearly all the subordinate positions, and during the century they formed also a growing proportion of the skilled workers. Only at the top level was there a reverse trend. None of the 3-4

Table 3. Europeans jobs occupied by Greenlanders, % (official censuses).

	1834	1860	1890	1901
Catechists	100	100	100	99
Crew (labourers, sailors, apprentices)	75	88	100	100
Midwives	0	95	100	98
Artisans	34	62	82	99
Formen, skippers	13	68	87	87
Outpost managers	0	30	51	64
Colony managers, manager assistants	7	3	4	0
Overall percentage	59	73	78	86
No. of Greenlanders	175	248	291	355
European jobs, total	297	477	373	415

doctors or the 10-13 missionaries was a Greenlander in this period.

Greenlandic society at the turn of the century

Some 11,000 Greenlanders lived in small settlements scattered along the west coast from Qaqortoq (Julianehåb) in the south to Upernavik in the north. On the east coast a single trading and mission station was established at Ammassalik in 1894. Some 400 Greenlanders had their homes in this area. In 1910 a mission and trading post was founded in the Qaanaaq area to serve about 200 people. The Danish state was reluctant to extend its trade monopoly to this area, so the station was a private initiative.<sup>7</sup> However in 1937 it was taken over by the state.

Along the west coast were approximately 200 settlements, the number of inhabitants ranging from around fifty to 300-400. Their material lives were mostly based on subsistence economy with seal hunting as the main occupation. The seal meat was eaten; most of the blubber was sold to the Royal Greenland Trade Department but only a quarter of the hides were sold.<sup>8</sup> The remainder were used for the kayaks and umiaks<sup>9</sup> and for clothing. Income from what they sold was spent on imported tools, mainly sewing needles

7. Müntzberg & Simonsen 1996: 210.  
8. Lists of catches in SSOG-46: table 156; sales in Meddelelser 1882-1908.  
9. An umiak is a large skin-clad boat rowed by 8-10 women, used for transporting people and goods only.



Fig. 3. This is a picture of all Danes living in Nuuk in April 1905. They are placed on the staircase of the house of the dean, C.W. Schultz-Lorentzen. Photo C.W. Shultz-Lorentzen/Arctic Institute.

and knives, but also rifles, with one for every two male inhabitants.<sup>10</sup> Wooden boats from Denmark were introduced in the 1880s; in 1900 there were 157 and still more were to come.<sup>11</sup> Consumption of imported food was modest. The total of imported meat would have given only 11 grams if it had been consumed just by the Europeans. A considerable quantity of fresh meat was delivered by the Greenlandic hunters to the Europeans, and is in fact recorded abundantly in contemporary sources.<sup>12</sup> The same calculation on imported butter and fat would imply that the Europeans consumed 52 grammes a day, which is probably suffi-

cient. Other provisions such as flour, groats, biscuits and coffee were imported in greater quantities than the Europeans could consume, and a proportion was clearly sold on to the Greenlanders. If shared equally it would give them a daily ration of 10 grams of coffee and 84 grams of cereal,<sup>13</sup> – a somewhat modest contribution to their nutritional needs –. The extent of the subsistence economy can also be seen from the fact that the 85 per cent of the Greenlanders who were hunters and fishermen sold goods to earn an average of Dkr. 100 a year. By contrast the lowest-paid workers in Greenland were paid between Dkr. 250 and 600 a

10. There were just over 2,000 rifles in Greenland and a male population over 14 years of age of a mere 4,000 (SSOG-12: table 10, 3A).

11. SSOG-12: table 10.

12. Marquardt 1992: 174

13. SSOG-12: table 16.

year.<sup>14</sup> Even if we include the hunters' private sales to the non-hunters, it is safe to characterise the native economy as predominantly one of subsistence.

In the smallest settlements (boplads) the Greenlanders could live their lives pretty much undisturbed by the Danish presence apart from the overall conditions of their existence stemming from it. No Europeans lived permanently there. There might be a native community council member and a so-called 'reader' to teach the children reading and writing when he could spare the time. Maybe they were lucky enough to have one of the fifty-five native midwives in their settlement;<sup>15</sup> if not, they had to go to the nearest trading station or colony. That journey could take a day, if indeed the weather conditions allowed travelling at all.

The trading post (udsted) had a store where the Greenlanders could sell their produce and buy imported goods. The store manager was a civil servant, often a native who got his goods from the colony to which he belonged and to which the Greenlandic products were transported. The trading post also had a room for church and teaching undertaken by educated native catechists. From 1845 onwards there was formal teacher training in the country, and long before the turn of the century nearly all adults were able to read and write. The trading post was very much a native community. The store manager could be a Dane – a quarter of them were at that time – but in that case he would be fluent in Greenlandic and often married to a Greenlander. Several times a year, however, the schooner from the colony would call for commercial and administrative reasons and might bring in people who could only communicate through an interpreter. A visiting physician would certainly need one, whereas a visiting priest would not since the Danish priests serving in Greenland were thoroughly educated in the Greenlandic language.

The biggest station in each district was called a colony. At the time there were thirteen of them. From south to north in order (Danish names in brackets): Qaqortoq (Julianehåb), Paamiut (Frederikshåb), Nuuk (Godthåb), Maniitsoq (Sukkertoppen), Sisimiut (Holsteinsborg), Aasiaat (Egedesminde), Qasigiaanguit (Christianshåb), Ilulissat (Jakobshavn), Qeqertar-

suaq (Godhavn), Appat (Ritenbenk), Uummannaq and Upernavik and on the east coast: Ammassalik. In each district a colony manager, a Dane, was the superior of all staff except the priests and catechists, and the physician – if you were so fortunate to have one of the three in Greenland living in your colony. In that case you would also have a small hospital, often with a nurse educated in Denmark. The Danish educated priests of whom nearly every colony had its own were responsible for all school and church matters in the district. Usually the colony was provided with a Dane second in command. He ran the store, and supervised the work of the skippers of small boats, carpenters, coopers, and common labourers who were employed in the service of the Trade Department. A colony foreman, often a craftsman himself, usually undertook the actual supervision.

Economically, each of the thirteen colonies functioned independently and had direct communication with Copenhagen. However, the colony managers were subordinate to the two inspectors, one in Qeqertarsuaq for the northern part of the west coast, and the other in Nuuk for the southern part. The inspectors were the highest-ranking civil servants, and had overall supervision of all activity in Greenland except – once again – the church and school. They had direct access to the minister responsible for Greenlandic affairs. Most were recruited from the ranks of the Royal Greenland Trade Department, and following old practice, all cases referred to the minister passed via the board of that Department which thus effectively administered Greenland. The Department had the monopoly of all commerce with the Greenlanders, and its servants in Greenland were in charge of nearly everything related to the administration of the community.

Thus Greenlandic society at the turn of the century had been profoundly influenced by the European presence since 1721. Paganism had disappeared from the west coast and left behind a people as Christian as any. Thanks to the mission the language had become a written one, finding its long-lasting shape in the orthography of the Moravian Brother Samuel Kleinschmidt in the mid-nineteenth century. Another profound feature was the racial mixture with the Euro-

14. SSOG-12: table 27; Report 1908: 59.

15. Census 1901 (Statistiske Meddelelser 4-14-5).

peans, partly as the result of relations with visiting sailors and other fortuitous romances, partly as the result of regular intermarriage especially among the humbler strata of the colonial staff. In the late nineteenth century racial mixture was so common that the official censuses ceased to distinguish between genuine Greenlanders and crossbreeds. All were counted as Greenlanders. Although the public services as well as trade and communication had been set up by the Danes, about 15 per cent of the Greenlanders were employed by the Royal Greenland Trade Department or by the church and school authorities.

Most undisturbed was the primary occupation, the catching of sea mammals based on one man hunting from a kayak. In the north, from Disko Bay and further north, the dog sledge was still an indispensable means of transport during winter. Among manufactures the imported rifles, iron and steel had long been indispensable. The Greenlandic language had survived. There had been no cultural imperialism due to the Lutheran practice of reaching souls in their native tongue. Borrowed words to describe imported goods and ideas existed, but surprisingly many were translated into Greenlandic. Many others were so greenlan-

dised that their European origin was hard to trace including, for example, Christian names borne by almost all Greenlanders.

Hitherto this society had been administered by rules made by the Royal Greenland Trade Department and the government. The Danish Parliament set up in 1849 had only taken part in Greenlandic matters when the economy was involved. When debating the yearly budget, which covered Greenland as well as the metropolis, Parliament was eager to keep expenses low, especially by reducing the size of the administration, which it thought was overstaffed. Twice – in 1851 and 1863 – Parliament set up special commissions to look into the matter, but the recommendations in the resulting reports were not acted upon. By 1863 even a recommendation to prepare for the abolition of the trade monopoly came to nothing. The overall objective – the well being of the Greenlanders – and probably the fear of incurring greater expenses later – induced the government to carry on with the established system.

At the turn of the century that part of the picture changed.

# Years of reform 1900-1912

The period between the turn of the century and 1912 was a turbulent one where Greenlandic affairs were concerned. For the first time the Danish Parliament passed acts concerning Greenland. The Greenland mission became a separate church in 1905. They also established two provincial councils (landsråd), one for the north and one for the south of the west coast and sixty-two municipal councils (kommuneråd). These were intended to expand the Greenlanders' participation in the governance of their provincial affairs. In this period too efforts to encourage new economic activities in Greenland were intensified.

The cause of this transformation could be sought in conditions in Greenland or circumstances in Denmark. Had development in Greenland been so misconceived that something had to be done? Or was there a new political climate in Denmark that spilt over to Greenland to make a new start? The latter certainly seems to be the case.

There is little evidence of deteriorating conditions in Greenland, which might have provoked reformers to take action. Some statistics suggest a decline in the seal catch, while others indicate a steady rise in the standard of living. The statistics for the seal catch before 1903 are defective, but lines can be drawn deduced from the sales of hides and blubber to the Royal Greenland Trade Department. The sale of seal hides to the Department reached peaks in 1885 and 1894, but overall the level in 1900 was only slightly lower than ten years before, and blubber sales show a fluctuating but generally upward trend to 1911.

Living conditions seemed to have improved. The number of people living together in one house gradually decreased. From an average of ten people per house in 1880, the number fell to 8.4 in 1890 and 7.5 in 1901.<sup>16</sup> Research in some places seems to suggest that this meant more space per person.<sup>17</sup> The distribution of poor relief decreased dramatically during the 1880s

and 1890s, which may mean improved living conditions, but it may also be the result of a more restrictive practice. The revised rules from 1881 stated that aid should be given only when people were in danger of starving while the wording of the 1872 rules was "*aid for those who by winter time did not have the most essential clothing and tools*". Over all, however, the evidence certainly suggests that no decline had taken place; rather there was an improvement.

If any tension existed in Greenland, it was found in the guardians' councils. In these the missionaries were supposed to co-operate with the Trade Department officials. The system had worked since the 1860s and a *modus vivendi* had been found. The sharpening of the latent tension around the turn of the century clearly seems to have received its impetus from changes in the political climate in Denmark as new missionaries came to Greenland with new ideas.

## Greenland enters struggle between political parties in Denmark

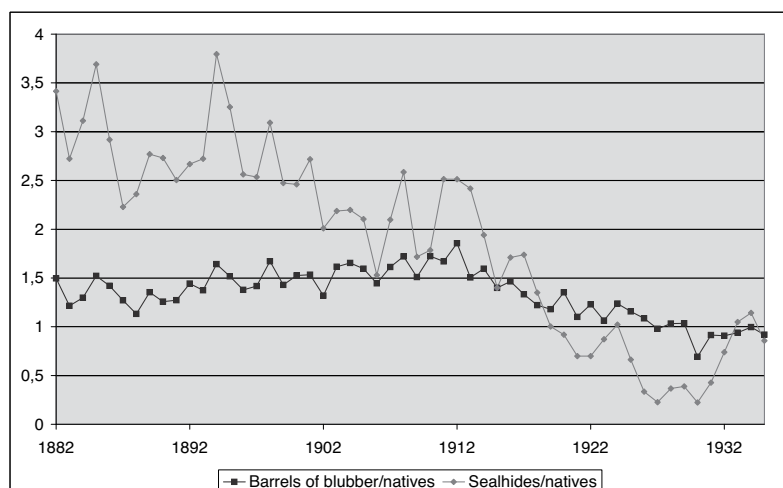
Under the Danish constitution of 1849, revised in 1866, governments were appointed by the King. The Conservative administrations of the 1880s and 90s thus governed with a majority of their opponents in the lower chamber, though with a majority in the upper chamber. From 1901, after years of political struggle, it became a fixed principle that the government could not hold office when opposed by a majority in the lower chamber. In Danish historiography this is called 'the change of system', and it cleared the way for social and political reforms, for which the new party in power – the Liberal Left, consisting of the wealthier farmers and progressive liberals from the towns – had long strived. However, the new government had to take the Conservative majority in the upper chamber

16. SSOG-46: table 31.

17. SSOG-46: table 35.



Diagram 1. Native sale (SSOG-46: table156).



into account, which made the urban liberals uneasy, and after 1901 the growing Labour Party, the Social Democrats, ended its co-operation with the Liberal Left which had lasted from the days of struggle for new constitutional practice. The tensions within the governing party led to a new party, the Radical Left, being formed in January 1905. Its supporters were progressive liberals in the towns and small farmers.

Already as a group within the ruling party these voters had brought Greenland into Danish party politics, with the willing support of the Social Democrats. The rallying points were rule by the people, social equality and intellectual freedom. The administration of Greenland was well suited to push forward general principles. The unhampered rule by civil servants, the exclusion of Greenlanders from political influence, the low standard of living compared to Denmark, all were vigorously attacked. But first the situation had to be made known outside the offices of the Royal Trade Department. An opportunity for this arose in 1902.

A well-known journalist and writer, Mylius-Erichsen, who aired his radical views with a sharp-pointed pen in the newspaper *Politiken*, was allowed to visit Greenland by the new Minister of the Interior despite warnings from the Trade Department. Thus the so-called 'Literary Expedition' took place in 1902-4. In his application Mylius-Erichsen had not concealed his intention to look at Greenland with a critical eye, and his articles from the summer of 1902 were full of criticism of the Royal Trade Department. From the begin-

ning he made it clear that his purpose was to shed light on the country and its administration.<sup>18</sup> Enlightenment was a banner of the Radical Left.

No articles could reach the press while the Literary Expedition remained isolated in Qaanaaq in 1903, but politicians who later joined the Radical Left found other corners of the administration where enlightenment was needed. In 1903 some cases were discovered of staff helping themselves to "redundant" goods from the Trade's warehouse in Copenhagen. C. Th. Zahle, later a member of the Radical Left and Prime Minister, acknowledged the precautions taken by the government, but spoke in Parliament of a small enclave left over from old autocratic regime where carelessness was the norm, in which light and fresh air were needed. The Social Democrats backed him eagerly. The newspapers *Politiken* and *Socialdemokraten* pursued the issue and filled their pages with stories from former employees of the administration about malpractices. The board of the Royal Trade Department and other civil servants denied the accusations in the press, but the Minister of the Interior could not ignore the criticism and ordered an investigation. Although this eventually cleared the accused, the heated debate inevitably left the public with the impression that something was rotten in the state of Greenland, and created a perfect basis for demanding changes in the way it was governed. Further impetus came from critical voices in Greenland as well.

<sup>18</sup>. I thank Jens Peter Andersen for allowing me to use his unpublished thesis for this account.

## Turbulence in Greenland<sup>19</sup>

The discussion in Greenland was entirely a matter for the Danish civil servants.

The Greenlanders did not participate at all, and in their monthly magazine *Atuagagdliutit* the heavy criticisms of Greenlandic affairs were not mentioned.<sup>20</sup>

From the very beginning of colonisation in 1721 Trade Department and Mission had different objectives. The Mission's objective was to bring Christianity to the heathen, and the Trade Department's was to secure the economic foundation of the Mission and if possible earn a profit for its financial backers, private citizens and the Crown. Each branch of the colonial administration thought of itself as the more important, and this often led to local quarrels. Naturally, as friendship may follow strange trails, there is much evidence of cordial relations between individual missionaries and colony managers. When the guardians' councils were established, the two branches were brought together with the missionary as chairman. It was painful for the Trade Department to be subordinate to a missionary, even more so, if he should be absent and a native senior catechist took the chair in his place.<sup>21</sup> Such latent tensions broke out openly when new personnel from Denmark came to Greenland.

Among the latter the missionary C.W. Schultz-Lorentzen was pre-eminent. As chairman of the Aasiaat guardians' council, he soon came to be at odds with the board of the Royal Trade Department. A trivial case concerning erratic book-keeping in 1899 became a matter of principle when Schultz-Lorentzen disputed the board's authority to decide in the matter and wanted the case heard by the Minister of the Interior. However, the Minister decided in favour of the board, also on the question of principle. Later, when Schultz-Lorentzen was transferred to Nuuk as missionary and head of the teacher training college, and consequently became chairman of the guardians' council there, trouble started again. In 1903 the hunters in the fiord of Kangerluarsussuaq (Grædefjorden) had been denied a store at their settlement, which the guardians' council deplored at its autumn meeting. It was far from usual for guardians' councils to have words with the board of

the Trade Department, and it became worse when the Danish members of the council paid for a commodity depot at Kangerluarsussuaq out of their own pockets. This was open defiance of the inspector's and the board's wisdom. Finally in 1904, the board authorised the Trade Department to establish a depot of its own in Kangerluarsussuaq. Perhaps the outcome whetted the appetite of Schultz-Lorentzen, for more was to come, and in Nuuk he did not stand alone as in Aasiaat. Together with the physician Gustav Koppel, he developed new rules of procedure for the guardians' council to give the Greenlandic members the greatest possible influence. The two reformers returned to the original idea about the creation of the guardians' councils, in their words: to initiate municipal self-government that would be independent both of the Trade Department and of the Mission. They argued that the guardians' councils had to be empowered to criticise the inspector's and the ministry's administration of Greenlandic funds.

The guardians' council in Nuuk approved the new rules at its spring meeting in 1904, and during the summer Schultz-Lorentzen and Koppel were active propagating their ideas. At a meeting at Paamiut in August, attended mostly by missionaries, the so-called 'Frederikshåbpunkter' (the agenda from Paamiut) were approved. They criticised the board's suggestion for new rules for the guardians' councils (to be dealt with later) asserting that the guardians' councils should formulate the new rules themselves. Also the Greenlanders' lack of real influence over their own affairs was criticized. Their efforts succeeded inasmuch as the Paamiut guardians' council supported the proposals on their autumn meeting. Before that, however, the course of events in Nuuk became turbulent. In August the inspector dismissed Schultz-Lorentzen from the guardians' council on dubious grounds. He protested forcefully, and in response sent his new rules of procedure in a circular letter to all guardians' councils to be implemented forthwith. He was attempting to be ahead of the board with a *fait accompli*.

Such an open rebellion gained however limited support. Even the newly-appointed guardians' council chairman in Nuuk had second thoughts as he revealed

19. The following is based on Andersen 1979, who has used unpublished sources in the National Archives.

20. Karen Langgård 1999: 50.

21. Oldendow 1936: 70.



by enclosing a private letter to the other chairmen telling them to avoid misinterpretation of the rules of procedure because that might, as he put it, nourish the existing distrust and suspicion of the authorities. Avoiding the issue was easy for the chairman in charge at Maniitsoq who was the colony manager because both the missionary and the catechist were unable to attend. He simply returned the circular letter to Nuuk without discussing it with the guardians' council at all. In Qaqortoq the guardians' council was also slightly irritated by the way Schultz-Lorentzen had acted, but felt able to support his main idea. Only in Paamiut and Ilulissat were reactions positive. The other seven guardians' councils said nothing – apparently the circular letter was not even put on their agenda.

So no united front against the Trade Department's board was created. It was hardly a Greenlandic 'uprising' since no Greenlander had participated in the discussions which were confined to some Danish civil servants who, to judge by their arguments, were inspired by the new tide in Denmark and tried to change the prevailing system in Greenland as well. The board of the Royal Trade Department viewed the matter very seriously, and wanted to see the participants put on trial for their indiscipline. But before that could be done, events in Denmark had moved on to the point where a new act of Parliament was introduced, which would reduce the power of the Trade Department in Greenland and increase the Greenlanders' influence to a far greater degree even than Schultz-Lorentzen and Koppel had suggested. No charges were brought against them. On the contrary, in 1904 Schultz-Lorentzen had already been co-opted to help in the preparation of new laws for the church and education in Greenland. Koppel was honourably discharged from the service in 1906 with his pension.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Act of 1905 concerning church and education in Greenland<sup>23</sup>**

The first result of the debate in the early years of the twentieth century was the act of 1905 which regulated

and improved both the church and education. This was the first legislation passed by the Danish Parliament specifically for Greenland.

The act was passed at a time when the reformers in Denmark were clarifying their main points regarding Greenland. The rallying points became: separation of the Trade Department from the civil administration in Greenland and municipal self-government for the Greenlanders. One of the reformers, Mylius-Erichsen, had returned home with the 'Literary Expedition' in 1904, and severely criticised the Greenland administration in an internal report. From bottom to top, no one was spared, and Mylius-Erichsen offered to join a committee dedicated to the Greenlanders' welfare.<sup>24</sup> The Ministry reacted in a relaxed way to this far from relaxed criticism. Later, it used Erichsen as a special expert on Greenland, perhaps hoping thereby to preempt criticism from the Radical Left. The main issue arose in the Finance Committee on 17 December 1904 when the Minister of the Interior promised to consider the possibility of separating administration and trade.<sup>25</sup> The following month C.Th. Zahle again showed his interest in Greenland policy when he spoke in favour of reform during the debate on the budget bill in January 1905. In his phrase a major reconstruction was needed to promote the culture and self-government of the Greenlandic nation.<sup>26</sup>

A clear connection existed between these initiatives in Denmark and the reformers in Greenland. Mylius-Erichsen referred explicitly to them in his report, and Zahle in his speech referred to '*a very renowned and capable civil servant in the mission*' and especially the report produced by Schultz-Lorentzen when the bill concerning the church and education in Greenland was on the agenda in February.<sup>27</sup>

Several times over the years, missionaries had suggested improvements in the education of both children and catechists. The new Liberal Left government accepted the task, and asked Schultz-Lorentzen to work together with the other missionaries in Greenland to produce a report on the future organisation of

22. Reports 1907: 1.

23. The following section is totally based on Andersen 1979.

24. Mylius-Erichsen 1904; Andersen 1979: 41 f.

25. Minutes from the Committee of Finance 17 December 1904 (Andersen 1979: 42).

26. RTFF 1904-05: 1960; Andersen 1979: 43.

27. RTFF 1904-05: 1954, 2722 ff. On both occasions Zahle regretted that he was not a personal acquaintance of the person in question.

the school system. Their report suggested enlarging the school for catechists by (among other things) employing a teacher educated at a Danish teacher training college, thus attaching more weight to ordinary school subjects in Greenland's still predominantly religious education. The ensuing Act embodied this proposal. Other regulations were made to augment the number of Greenlandic educated catechists. The bill unanimously passed both chambers of Parliament, which was regarded as a victory for the reformers in Greenland – the more so since it so abundantly represented the ideas of Schultz-Lorentzen. In 1906 he was appointed the first rural dean in Greenland, a position created by the act.

## The Governing Act of 1908

### The preparatory work, 1903-07

In April 1903 the new director of the Royal Trade Department, Carl Ryberg who had been appointed in 1902, urged the Minister of the Interior to scrutinise the rules governing the guardians' councils with a view to making changes. The administration of justice required particular attention, but also poor relief, subsidy, and repartition (the technical term used to describe the yearly repayment to the hunters of the balance left over in the coffers of the guardians' councils) should also be revised. The intention to reform was immediately communicated to the guardians' councils to enable them to comment on a draft version the following year. As mentioned above, some of the Danes in Greenland were dissatisfied by the passive role envisaged for the guardians' councils in this procedure; they wanted greater changes than those the director suggested. However, Ryberg persisted with his suggestion despite the criticism from the missionaries in Greenland, which was essentially that the guardians' councils should be placed directly under the Ministry of the Interior, thus by-passing the Royal Trade Department. Up till this point the suggestion was consistent with the reformers' ideas, but where greater influence for the Greenlanders was concerned,

Ryberg went much further than the reformers. He wanted to exclude Danes altogether from membership of the guardians' councils, leaving the Greenlanders alone to decide – although under the close supervision of the inspector and with the colony manager as accountant.<sup>28</sup>

However, it was no longer possible merely to revise the guardians' councils, since Zahle as we have seen already, had presented the main demand in his speech on the budget: self-government in Greenland and separation of the trade from the administration. Parliament very much favoured stimulating the economy and education of the Greenlanders to achieve self-reliance and a 'higher culture'. By passing the law on church and education in April 1905, it had already done something as we have noted for the cultural side of society.

Meanwhile, from February 1905 Mylius-Erichsen was strongly criticising the Danish administration of Greenland. He had supporters in the press, and the criticism grew into a real assault on the Trade Department and its director Carl Ryberg, who finally responded by requesting to be tried for his conduct of affairs. He was totally acquitted.<sup>29</sup> Thus the minister of the interior received Ryberg's proposal in a time of crisis, and he did not endorse it straight away, asking for comments from among others Schultz-Lorentzen and Mylius-Erichsen. They were told that a bill separating the trade department and the administration was being prepared. The two reformers saw no merit in Ryberg's proposal. Schultz-Lorentzen especially criticized the exclusion of Danes from the guardians' councils arguing that this placed the assemblies totally in the power of the inspector.<sup>30</sup> Even if Schultz-Lorentzen genuinely wished to secure real influence for the Greenlanders, we must bear in mind that Ryberg's proposal would have prevented the missionaries playing the role in the guardians' councils which they had hitherto played with good results.

As well as asking experts in Denmark, the Ministry also consulted the guardians' councils directly in August 1905 on their views concerning reform. This inquiry received a most peculiar treatment. The in-

28. Letter of 7 June 1906 from the Director to the Minister of the Interior, National Archives (Oldendow 1936: 87-90; Andersen 1979: 52ff).

29. Oldendow 1936: 94-7; Gad 1946: 193f; Andersen 1979: 51f.

30. Andersen 1979: 55.



Fig. 4. Very few pastures are available in Greenland, and the growing season is too short and cold to produce fodder enough for even a small herd of cows. Attempts are made though, e.g. on this pasture near Qaqortoq, about 1900. Cows were also held in the Norse period. Photo Henrik Deichmann/Arctic Institute.

spector for South Greenland, Ole Bendixen, openly sought to avoid it by sending the guardians' councils a string of leading questions instead of the consultation document; he was forced to recall these letters and send the Ministry's letter. In spite of this, only the Sisimiut guardians' council put the request on the agenda, the rest is silence.<sup>31</sup> However, the Ministry did receive an answer. In November 1905 the inspector for North Greenland, Jens Daugaard-Jensen, dispatched his *'strictly personal views'* to the Ministry. He agreed with Ryberg on excluding Danes from the elected councils, and went further in proposing the abolition of the guardians' councils, and their replacement by an advisory council in each of the two inspectorates. These councils should be consulted on the enactment of laws and regulations for Greenland. Local admini-

stration of poor relief and the subsidy would be the responsibility of new municipal councils. However, the administration of justice would have its own organisation. Daugaard-Jensen also favoured separation of the trade from the administration in Greenland and the administration of Greenland from Denmark.<sup>32</sup> With this proposal Daugaard-Jensen thrust himself into the midst of the ongoing debate.

The debating group was soon enlarged. In 1902, a new association had been formed, the Danish Atlantic Islands, its main purpose being to retain the Danish Virgin Islands in the West Indies. The association's members were colony administrators and important businessmen, who wanted to strengthen the bonds between the colonies and the mother country by making them more profitable to Denmark. The Green-

31. Andersen 1979: 58-62. The author went through the minutes from the Guardians' councils and found no record of any discussion.

32. Oldendow 1936: 106-14; Andersen 1979: 62 f.

landic section of the association was heavily weighted by the radical reformers in the debate, among them Schultz-Lorentzen and Mylius-Erichsen, who used the association to make contact with influential circles which were certain to be sympathetic to the idea of separating the trade and the administration. Their membership did not however mean that their concerns were focused on Danish business rather than the Greenlanders as Schultz-Lorentzen later clearly demonstrated.

The anxious controversy over Greenlandic matters also engaged the old guard. The civil servants in the administration and especially the Trade Department felt that they had been subjected to many unjust accusations, and in 1905 to counteract them they founded the Greenlandic Society, of which civil servants, retired as well as active, could become members. Its object was to tell the public the truth about Greenland and to work for the benefit of Greenlandic society and the civil servants there. The Society made suggestions to the authorities, and from 1906 published a year-book, which in 1953 became a monthly periodical, which is still in print. Throughout the years the Greenlandic Society has taken part in the ongoing debate on Greenland and published a series of books. In 1926 its membership was opened to the public.

### **Economic issues**

Besides administrative and political reforms the reformers in Greenland wanted to modernise the economy by introducing new occupations for the Greenlanders since they did not consider that sealing could provide them with a living. Animal husbandry and commercial fishing were suggested. Cattle and sheep had been raised in the medieval Norse settlements, and it was argued that it should be made possible again. In fact sheep farming had begun on a modest scale in this period. On his own initiative a Greenlandic priest, Jens Chemnitz, kept a few sheep at his vicarage in Narsaq Kujalleq, South Greenland, and the experiment was copied by other private operators. Not till 1913 did the Royal Trade Department become involved, creating breeding stations to produce a stock of sheep and to advise Greenlanders wanting to try their hand in the business.

Fishing was more promising. In the middle of the nineteenth century some fish was exported, but that came to an end as the supply of fish declined. How-

ever, by 1903 Atlantic salmon and halibut were included in the monopolised export, because Danish civil servants had begun to export these fish privately, and the Trade Department wanted part of the profits. No shift in policy was intended. As the debate progressed, the Royal Trade Department repeatedly stressed that sealing had always been the foundation of the Greenlandic economy and would continue to be in the future. Other occupations were welcome provided they did not harm the sealing.

Reformers in Greenland, backed by the new political majority in Denmark, continued to put pressure on the Trade Department to become involved in developing fisheries, and in 1906 a Faeroese, Napoleon Andreassen, was hired to try deep sea fishing in Greenlandic waters. No cod in significant quantities was found. Adolf S. Jensen continued state-initiated fishery experiments from 1908, again with little success. However, commercial fishing for halibut started in 1910 in the south, almost exclusively in a single fiord, Alluitsoq.

These endeavours can be seen as a response to pressure from the Danish political establishment, the more so since private enterprise had become interested in the opportunities in Greenland.

Private enterprise had its place in Greenland, but did not form part of the economic life of the Greenlanders. Since the 1860s a private company had mined cryolite in Ivittuut, but it was an entirely expatriate business. All workers were imported from Denmark and no contact between them and the local population was allowed. The mining company paid the state royalties, which were tacitly placed at the disposal of the Royal Trade Department, thus helping to cover part of the overall deficit. By the turn of the century more companies had become interested. In 1902 a wholesale dealer, Berneburg, got a twenty-year concession to mine anything except cryolite in Greenland. The concession was on the same terms as the cryolite mining: no local labour, no contact with the population and a royalty to the state. Until the 1930s the company mined copper, graphite and mica at several small sites. Such an enterprise was welcomed by the Royal Trade Department, since it presented no threat to the sealing and the trading monopoly.

Another application from a private company concerning whaling could be handled inside the overall policy because the Royal Trade Department managed

to turn it into a joint venture in 1903-4. Commercial whaling was not considered a desirable occupation for Greenlanders, and as co-partner the Royal Trade Department could ensure that its interests were respected. However, the Minister of the Interior feared the enterprise would run at a loss and rejected the application.

More threatening to the traditional policy were four new applications in 1905. Three of them were from relatively small companies that wanted to engage in deep-sea fishing as well as fishing in the fiords and rivers; they also wanted to buy fish from the Greenlanders and employ them in the industry. The fourth application was from the Consortium, a group of large Danish businesses also active in the Danish Atlantic Islands – and supported by some of the Greenlandic reformers. The Consortium would do it all: fishing, whaling, sheep rearing, reindeer breeding, eider ducks, and fox rearing for furs. The company wanted to employ Greenlanders.

The Royal Trade Department firmly rejected these applications. The buying of fish from the Greenlanders and their employment with the interested companies would endanger the sealing making the population more dependent on European imported food. Furthermore, fishing might in time become an occupation for the Greenlanders, but letting these companies in would make it almost impossible for the Greenlanders to compete. The Trade Department considered the consortium's proposed procedure for employing and paying their workers objectionable. Not only would the Consortium exploit the business opportunities in Greenland on a massive scale, but it also would change the Greenlanders into employees working for low salaries. The Trade Department predicted the extinction of the Greenlandic population if such enterprises were allowed.

However, the Ministry wanted a second opinion, and referred the applications to Schultz-Lorentzen and Daugaard-Jensen. It wanted their opinion not only on the project but also on the maintenance of the state monopoly itself. Although the two referees wanted reforms in Greenland, they completely sup-

ported the Trade Department in rejecting the applications. As Schultz-Lorentzen bluntly put it, *'the sole aim of private capital is to enrich itself at the expense of the Greenlandic population'*.<sup>33</sup>

The unanimous rejection of the idea of breaking the Trade Department's monopoly by the Ministry's advisers effectively settled the case. Later in the year the Ministry set up a committee to look more closely into the Royal Trade Department, but the scope of revision was restricted with the statement that *'the trade shall continue be a monopoly under the Crown'*.<sup>34</sup>

The committee was composed of three wholesale merchants, two ship-owners and three civil servants. Its sole task was to examine the working of the Trade Department, and not surprisingly the majority of the private businessmen concluded that its expenses could be reduced. The civil servants, especially the director of the Royal Trade Department, expressed their scepticism at the realism of the suggested reduction. The committee's report, completed in February 1908, had no relevance to the Governing Act, which had already been prepared for Parliament about January 1907. The bill was to a large extent an extension of Daugaard-Jensen's proposal duly elaborated by the civil servants in the Ministry, the Trade Department and the inspectors. However, the Minister of the Interior, Sigurd Berg, had had no response from the guardians' councils, so in the summer of 1907 he went to Greenland to confer with them in person. On 15 February 1908 the bill was at last presented to parliament where it got through easily, perhaps because it had been so thoroughly prepared over a long period, perhaps because everyone agreed with its main principles.

### The terms of the Act<sup>35</sup>

The Act concerning the Governing of the Colonies in Greenland became law on 27 May 1908. It definitively separated Trade from Administration. The Trade Department became a special division, headed by a trade manager who had direct access to the Minister, as had the director of the administration. This division, still bearing the name 'the Royal Trade Department', controlled the purchase of goods for Greenland,

33. Answer of February 1906 (Andersen 1979: 74). General on private enterprise, see Bro 1991.

34. Report 1908: 3.

35. The information is taken from 'Rigsdagstidende' publishing the minutes of the Danish Parliament, and from 'Grønlands Landsråds Forhandlinger' (LR), the minutes of the Greenland provincial councils.



the sale of Greenlandic produce, trade inside Greenland, and transport to and from Greenland. The argument put forward for this separation from the administration was that with business experts to run it, the Trade Department would work more economically. On the other hand the task of administering Greenlandic society had become so complex that a special department was needed.

In this way, it was asserted, the system would be best fitted to handle the Greenlanders' interests. The business argument had its followers among wholesale dealers and shipowners and in the ranks of parliamentarians. It was equally appealing for those who wanted profits to go to the state as for those who wanted the Greenlanders to have them. The separation of trade from administration was the over-arching idea of the reforming civil servants who had long before raised this question in Greenland. It also had its supporters in Parliament, especially in the Radical Left Party and the Social Democrats.

The Trade Department was not supposed to operate entirely independently in Greenland. The heads of the administration, the two inspectors, retained a supervisory role to ensure that the Department was run in a way that enabled the Greenlanders' economy to thrive. The two inspectors should keep an eye on the Trade Department's setting of prices, the setting-up of trading posts, and the volume of produce bought from the Greenlanders. In Copenhagen the director of the administration was responsible for the Trade Department in general.

Thus the difference between the new system and the old was negligible. The desire to improve the trading economy was made explicit, but this was to be achieved by selling operations in Denmark, not by improving the local economy to the detriment of the Greenlanders. On the contrary, it was intended to make them better off. In economic terms the intention was to make Greenland self-sufficient. The Radical Left Party and the Social Democrats tried hard to incorporate in the act a guarantee that the Greenlandic population would benefit from any profit in Greenland, even from mining concessions. The majority of the internal Parliamentary committee agreed that any profits the Trade Department made should benefit Greenland, but those from mining were another matter. At the second reading in Parliament, the spokesman for the governing Liberal Left Party

maintained the view that the government and Parliament should be free to dispose of any profits which might come from for example a profitable gold mine. This is probably why the act stated only that the monopoly trade should be carried out at the state's expense. Again, this is not greatly different from the earlier basis of economic policy. From the 1880s the state had run a deficit on Greenland, even allowing for the royalties from the cryolite mine.

More radical changes appeared in the political-administrative structure. The guardians' councils were abolished and their responsibilities divided between two new agencies: provincial councils and municipal councils; the latter had the task of administering poor relief and subsidies, and were also entitled to provide services for the common good in the municipality. The remainder of the revenue was to be distributed, as before, among the producers i.e. the hunters and fishermen. All in all, sixty municipalities were established on the West Coast, ranging from thirty to 360 inhabitants. The electoral system remained unchanged from the guardians' councils, the franchise being restricted to heads of families who could elect only proficient or formerly proficient seal hunters. The Radical Left Party and Social Democrats tried in vain to introduce eligibility for males aged twenty-five and over, but the government stuck to the possibility of electing a proficient younger seal hunter and excluding an inferior older one.

Thereafter, the Minister sought the views of the provincial councils before amendments to the proposals were made. The hearings took place in 1911-13, and the final decree of 16 June 1913 broadly incorporated the councils' proposals bringing radical change. The voting age was fixed at twenty-two, and any man aged twenty-five who was subject to Greenlandic justice (see later) could stand for election regardless of occupation provided he had not received poor relief or been sentenced for a misdemeanour less than a year before the election. There were some deviations from the proposals of the provincial councils. In the North they had argued that receiving poor relief should not exclude a person from joining the electorate, and in the South they wanted the Greenlandic priests and senior catechists included, although they were subject to Danish justice.

While the municipal councils continued the local administration of the guardians' councils, greater

responsibilities were assigned to the new provincial councils whose members were elected by the municipal councils. Qualifications were the same as for the municipal councils so no Danes were eligible. Schultz-Lorentzen was not pleased, but the Danish parliamentarians upheld Ryberg's 1905 proposal. As the Minister of the Interior said in Parliament, *'It is essential to know the Greenlanders' opinion – the Danes can be reached through other channels'*. Not surprisingly, at the first election all members were seal hunters except for three who had presumably retired from that occupation. The councils were to meet once a year to discuss matters of common concern for the province. Issues could be put on the agenda by the Danish government or the Greenland administration, or by the councils themselves as they pleased. However, the provincial councils had only an advisory function. The government had no obligation to hear the provincial councils before enacting laws concerning Greenland, but as the importance of the councils increased, the government generally sought their advice. Their decision-making powers were restricted to the funds in their care.

There were three funds: the municipal funds, the provincial funds and the common fund. They were financed, as in previous years, by a charge of 20 per cent on the purchase price of Greenlandic produce for export paid by the Royal Trade Department. A new source was opened with the Act of 1908, which introduced a 2 per cent duty on all salaries paid to Greenlanders. The income from the charge and duty was divided among the three funds. The local municipal fund got two-thirds, the provincial fund two-ninths, and the common fund got the remaining one-ninth.

The freedom of the provincial councils to decide how to spend their fund was limited. If the inspector agreed, they could support municipal funds that were in deficit, and reward capable hunters with loans for house-building and the purchase of rifles – like the former guardians' councils. The Minister had to authorise any other use of the money and also controlled the common fund with the aim of benefiting the Greenlandic population in general. The provincial councils were entitled to suggest how the fund should be applied. We shall see later how the Greenlandic agencies spent the money.

New structures were also introduced in the ad-

ministration of justice. From the beginning of colonisation in the eighteenth century, the incoming Danes had remained under Danish civil and criminal law, while the Greenlanders managed their justice as they had done since time immemorial. Little by little, the inspectors had taken over responsibility for dealing with serious criminal offences of Greenlanders such as murder and arson. However, civil law remained in the hands of the Greenlanders without interference from the Danish authorities. That system was continued in a modified form in the guardians' councils, in which the Greenlandic members were to give their verdict before the Danish members had their say. Criminal offences were placed under the inspectors. However, the highest-ranking Greenlanders in the administration were placed under Danish laws.

This dual system was recognised by the act of 1908 which placed all persons designated as of 'Greenlandic nationality' under Greenlandic justice except Greenlanders with high rank in the civil service who were appointed directly by the crown or the minister such as the colony managers and priests. The existence of separate systems of justice, for the colonisers and the colonised, in this case the Danes and the Greenlanders is a common feature of colonial empires. It is often considered discrimination against the natives. A closer look at the rules in Greenland will reveal whether this was indeed the case there.<sup>36</sup>

It was ruled that the municipal councils would decide cases concerning inheritance and the administration of a deceased Greenlanders' belongings, normally according to common Greenlandic custom. If considerable capital or goods were in question, an official division between the heirs should take place. If the deceased had been employed in public service, the inspector should participate in administering the estate – apparently, in order to secure the administration its outstanding debts. The inspector administered the estates of persons placed under Danish law, although his verdicts could be appealed to the Danish High Court. Both systems aimed to protect the interests of minors.

The municipal council judged civil cases between Greenlanders in an ordinary trial, while the inspector, accompanied by two Danish lay judges, settled suits against persons under Danish law. If no settlement was

36. Kgl. Anordning vedr. Retsplejen i Grønland af 18/5-1910 in B&K 1910: 172.



Fig. 5. The South Greenland Provincial Council in session for the first time in 1911. The gentleman in uniform is inspector Ole Bendixen. Photo Arctic Institute.

reached, the case would be tried in Copenhagen. A mixed court would try civil cases between people belonging to different systems. Each colony district had a mixed court with the inspector as chairman, and two Danes and two Greenlanders as lay judges. It is not easy to say which system best served the interests of an injured party – e.g. how a Greenlandic malefactor's treatment by the municipal council would compare with that of a mixed court. Systematic research of the years 1938 to 1948 has shown that the Greenlandic attitude of mind was more lenient to malefactors than a Danish court would have been<sup>37</sup> so the injured party might have enjoyed better protection under Danish than Greenlandic law.

Criminal law – which in Greenland covered all cases to which punishment was attached, was considerably milder under Greenlandic than under Danish law, especially where the severity of fines and the nature of other punishments was concerned. The municipal councils were authorised to fine the Green-

landers for offending against the rules set by the councils. Other cases against Greenlanders were brought before the mixed courts in which the Greenlandic members had to vote first, then the Danes, and finally the chairman. The inspector had to ensure the legality of the procedure, but there was also a right of appeal. Criminal offences were to be judged by the standards set for the guardians' councils in 1872,<sup>38</sup> which fall into three categories according to the sentence which could be imposed by the court:

1. A fine of Dkr. 4 payable to the provincial fund and an indemnity to the person against whom an offence had taken place. This could be levied by the mixed courts for use without permission of property such as tools belonging to others, damaging such property, keeping another person's catch of fish or seals without payment, taking into possession drift wood which somebody else had already dragged above the high tide mark.

37. Goldschmidt 1957.

38. Preliminary regulations of the Guardians' Councils and their funding 31 January 1872 (Lovtidende 1872).





Fig. 6. A municipal council meeting in Nuuk 1927. Every settlement over 100 inhabitants elected members to the municipal councils which at least should have 3 members. They wore a badge on the sleeve and an official cap outdoors because they also had certain police functions beside distributing poor relief and acting as court in dispute among Greenlanders. Photo Arctic Institute.

2. A fine of Dkr. 10 to the provincial fund and an indemnity to the victim. This could be imposed in a case of plain theft. Furthermore, a clear case of disobedience to the authorities and superiors was punishable by this penalty.
3. With capital crimes the mixed courts would investigate the case, and refer it to the inspector. This would be the case with manslaughter cases and other serious crimes including clandestine child-birth.

The inspector could fine anybody placed under Danish law who broke the by-laws of the municipal councils, and he could increase the fines according to the parallel Danish rule and the offender's financial position. The intention was that the impact of the fines on the Danes should be no less than on the Greenlanders. Only Danes could be charged with infringing the trade monopoly, there was no law forbidding the Greenlanders from bypassing the Trade Department in their sales, although they forfeited their right to 'repartition' if they did so. If a case against a Dane was serious

enough to warrant imprisonment or dismissal from the civil service, the inspector acted in the capacity of examining judge, and judgment in the case was referred to Copenhagen. The intention was clearly that those subject to Danish law in Greenland should get more severe penalties than those under Greenlandic law, but whether this was in fact what happened is not clear.

## The revision of 1912

The passage of the 1908 act was expected to meet all Greenland's needs. There was no one who did not have cause for satisfaction. The Greenlanders were taking a greater part in administration, and institutions had been set up to make their views known to the Danish political world. The Trade Department had been separated from civil administration, to some extent at least.

Still, satisfaction was not universal. Schultz-Lorentzen continued to criticise both the exclusion of Danes from the Greenlandic councils and the amount

of power exercised by the inspectors<sup>39</sup> though his views were largely ignored, but the separation of the Trade Department and administration proved almost impossible. Because the Greenlanders' interests were considered paramount, the administration was inevitably involved in all trade issues in the capacity of either decision-maker or adviser. Relations between Ryberg, the head of the administration, and the new head of the Trade, Oscar Wesche, were strained, and confusion began to appear. Although the inspectors and the health service were unquestionably under the direction of the administration, the colony managers and other staff had obligations to the Trade Department as well. In the case of contradictory orders, which was to be obeyed?<sup>40</sup>

The remedy was to re-shape the Act of 1908 and create a single command system for all Greenlandic issues. A single director was put in charge over all staff

in all branches, including schools and churches. Over these matters the director would be answerable to the Minister for Church and Education, but in all other matters to the Minister of the Interior. Under the director a trade manager should buy and sell in Denmark and be advisor to the director on all trade matters.

Apparently to mitigate the exclusion of Danes from the Greenlandic councils, the Danish civil servants in Greenland were allowed – singly or collectively – to make representations to the inspector on questions of general interest to Greenland or to themselves, and the Minister could allow them to meet officially for this purpose.<sup>41</sup>

After this peace reigned for a long time in matters concerning Greenland, partly because of the soundness of the act, and partly because Jens Daugaard-Jensen, who became director in 1912, had a special gift for getting things done smoothly.

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39. Oldendow 1936: 129.

40. Oldendow 1936: 133.

41. The Act of 8 June 1912 (B&K 1912, 3: 340-42).

# The Daugaard-Jensen period, 1912-1940

These were quiet years for politics and administration. Management was centred on the Administration of Greenland (Grønlands Styrelse), which had complete overall control of the different services. The main fields were civil administration, trade, church and education, and health. There were also the Trade Department's business in Denmark and transport to Greenland. The director held all the threads in his hands. It may seem as if Daugaard-Jensen enjoyed

absolute power, but the situation was not quite as it had been formerly. Parliament had become more watchful, and now the Greenlandic councils existed to voice Greenlandic opinion. Despite these limits the Administration continued to dominate in Greenland, and every aspect of its society. It controlled, it supported, and it saw to it that the tasks were carried out. There was a story in Greenland that when a little girl in school heard about baby Jesus being placed in a



Fig. 7. Director of the Greenland Administration Jens Daugaard-Jensen (1871-1938) in his office in Copenhagen in the 1920es. He served in the Greenland administration all his life, started as an assistant in 1893 and became the inspector for Northern Greenland in 1900. 1912-1938 he was Director of the Administration of Greenland. His competence earned him respect and trust not least of the Greenlanders. He cautiously led the Greenlandic society into modern times and was one of the most important civil servants in twentieth century Greenland. Photo Arctic Institute.



Fig. 8. A Greenland halibut caught in western Greenland in the 1920es. The commercial halibut fishing in south Greenland took place in open sea. It started 1910 under Danish managers who towed the Greenlanders' small boats to the fishing places to set the long lines. Photo Holger Dan Møller/ Arctic Institute.

manger, she cried out: 'Why didn't the Administration send a cradle?' The almighty Administration was certainly a present reality.

## Population growth and employment

From the 1880s the population had grown steadily, and the growth became even more rapid in the first half of the new century as can be seen in table 4. The lower rate 1911-21 was in part due to the deadly influenza epidemic in the summer of 1919 which resulted in 249 deaths, and a reduction in the total population of 126 persons in that year. Note that the growth rate in Greenland was maintained after 1920 while decreasing in Denmark due to a decline in fertility.

Greenlandic occupation structure remained very stable until 1930, as is shown in table 5. Unfortunately there was no census between 1930 and 1945, so it is not possible to determine whether the shift in occupation apparent in 1945 took place in the 1930s or during the war. Among the Greenlandic occupations a marked shift to fishing took place. We will look into this issue later.

The censuses reveal which positions Greenlanders held in European occupations. Table 6, unfortunately only up to 1930, shows that Greenlanders dominated the first four categories with relative fewer as foremen and skippers. Only three Danes were employed in this category in 1911, ten in 1930. Among the priests the Greenlanders grew to have a solid majority. Only at the highest-level was Greenlandic participation modest.





Fig. 9. Cod was the main catch. Piles of dried and salted cod in a fishery house in Paamiut 1919. Photo Jens Daugaard-Jensen/Arctic Institute.

The proportion of Greenlanders in the different branches of colonial service is shown in 7. Significant changes occurred in administration and mining. The growth of Greenlandic employment here was due to a growing number of jobs in the Greenlandic councils and advances in communication. The opening of a coalmine at Qullissat in 1924 explains the growth in mining jobs. The difference in 1930 between the employed with or without families is simply due to the excess of young unmarried men among the Danes. These changes in employment structure were caused by changes in the economy between 1912 and 1940 to which we now turn.

Table 4. Population of Greenland 1901-38, except Thule, with the Danish growth rate for comparison). \* 1930-40.

	Europeans	Greenlanders	Growth rate	
			Greenland	Denmark
1901	262	11,19		
1911	382	12,51	1.12	1.19
1921	266	13,401	0.69	1.19
1930	399	15,345	1.52	0.93
1938	383	16,97	1.27	0.80*

## Change in the Economy

Between the wars Greenland experienced a shift from an age-old subsistence economy to a modern fishing

Table 5. Greenlanders by occupation 1911-1945, %. \* Family included.

	1911	1921	1930	1930*	1945*
European occupations					
Administration	2.9	3.6	2.9	1.8	2.3
Trade	6.3	7.7	7.4	8.6	18.0
Church and education	6.0	6.3	4.3	5.1	6.5
Other	0.6	0.7	1.7	1.2	7.1
Total	13.8	18.2	16.2	16.8	33.9
Greenlandic occupations					
Hunters	73.0	66.5	49.0	n.a.	41.6
Fishermen	11.1	15.1	32.0	n.a.	20.1
Other	0.1	0.2	2.8	n.a.	4.4
Total	84.2	81.8	83.8	83.2	66.1
Numbers employed					
	2,902	3,154	4,139	15,32	16,457



Diagram 2. Seal catch 1887-1934 West Greenland per inhabitant.

economy, a shift which had been seen earlier in other parts of the North Atlantic. In the later 19th century Iceland and the Faroe Islands shifted from a predominantly agrarian society to sea fishing as the main economic activity. In Greenland the shift from a hunting society was in many ways a greater leap. In none of the three places did changes occur overnight, but in Greenland they were certainly very rapid. Let us look at the details. Sealing declined from about 1910 from an annual level of eight seals per inhabitant to barely five in 1934 as can be seen in diagram 2.

Fortunately, and certainly related to the decline in the seal catch, there was an expansion in two new industries: fishing and sheep-breeding.

### Fishery

Even minute changes in the climate have a profound impact on a society at the margin of habitation such as Greenland throughout its history. From drilling of the ice core it can be deduced that the Norse immigration took place towards the end of a mild period with average temperatures of a half degree Celsius above those at the end of the twentieth century. The Norse disappearance took place during a cold period which reached its lowest point around 1350 with an average temperature of two degrees Celsius below our times. About 1700 the average temperature rose by one degree, and renewed colonisation took place. It continued in spite of a slight fall of a half degree till 1900 when a new warmer period began.<sup>42</sup> From about 1870 the temperature has been recorded on a regular basis,

Table 6. Proportion of Greenlanders in European occupations 1911-30, mining excluded.

	1911	1921	1930
Catechists	100	100	97
Crew	100	100	100
Midwives	99	99	100
Artisans	94	98	93
Foremen and skippers	96	90	76
Trading post managers	78	85	83
Priests	18	71	77
Colony manager and manager assistants	9	4	6
Proportion of Greenlanders in European occupations	87	91	84
Number in European occupations (Greenlanders and Danes)	508	616	728

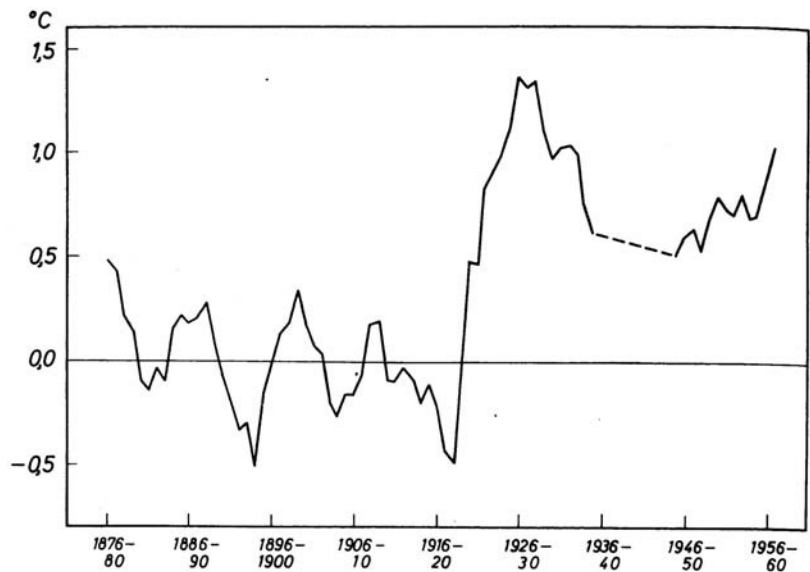
Table 7. Proportion of Greenlanders in colonial service, 1911-45. \* Family included. \*\* Administration and health service combined.

	1911	1921	1930	1930*	1945*
Administration	30	80	57		63
Health service	90	90	84	83+	88
Trade	83	87	83	91	95
Church, education	95	98	96	97	91
Mining and similar	8	14	30	52	85
Overall proportion	65	75	72	86	91
Overall number (Greenlanders and Danes)	702	763	932	2,958	6,126

42. Dansgaard 1975: 72.



**Diagram 3.** Variations in Surface Temperature (degrees Celsius). Variations April-September in West Greenland between Paamiut and Disko, 5-year deviation from average, 1876-1915 (TG Grønland 1965: 400).



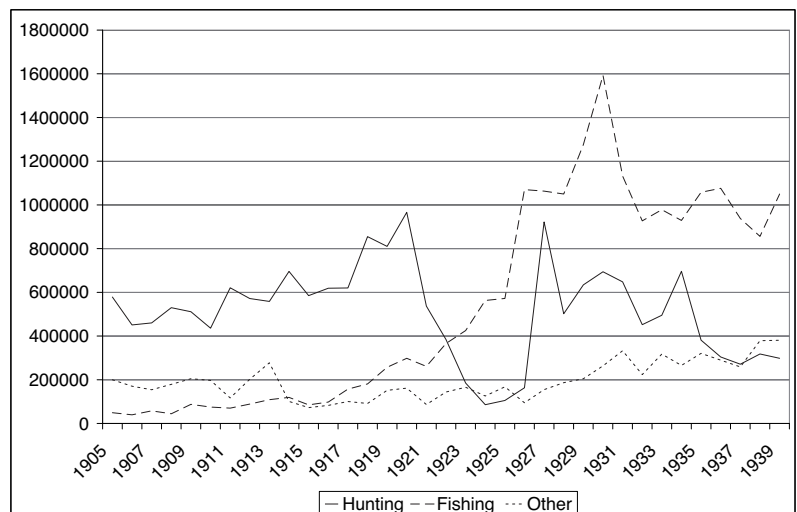
and its precise development can be plotted as in diagram 3.

The decisive change in temperature began in 1916 and reached an all-time peak about 1930. How many fish this change brought into the Greenlandic waters cannot be known, but the catch rose explosively. In diagram 4 the value of the fish catch is set against that of the traditional hunting products.

These statistics record the amount brought to Denmark during a calendar year and therefore differ slightly from annual figures from Greenland, which are reckoned in fiscal years (April – March). Obviously the main trends are the same. Fishery products rose

steadily from an insignificant beginning in 1915 to a peak in 1930, intersecting the curve for hunting products in 1923.

The change from seal hunting to fishing was most marked in the South, and had weightier consequences than a mere exchange from the rifle and harpoon to the fishing line. Boats were needed as well as land-based factories to process the fish, which in those days meant producing salted fish. The number of wooden boats owned by Greenlanders rose rapidly from 157 in 1900 to 287 in 1920, and 1,471 in 1935. Soon the first motorboats owned by Greenlanders made their appearance. In 1925 there were only two, eight in 1929,



**Diagram 4.** Greenland exports by value, DKK (Danish Statistical Yearbook).

**Table 8.** Building of fish processing plants in Greenland 1910-1939 (SSOG-46: table 196).

	Plants built	m <sup>2</sup>	total m <sup>2</sup>
1910-14	11	725	725
1915-19	3	129	854
1920-24	24	1506	2360
1925-29	21	1077	3427
1930-34	52	3144	6571
1935-39	14	1104	7675

thirty-eight in 1934, and in 1939 seventy-two. Some were paid for in cash, but most were financed by loans from the administration.

The building and operation of the fish processing plants were tasks for the administration. The Greenlanders themselves had no experience of running a fishing industry and had no capital to invest. During the years 1910-39 125 fishing plants were built, a development shown in table 8.

These figures show a rise in processing capacity, but we cannot be certain whether it met the actual needs. The south provincial council was constantly asking for longer opening hours and additional buildings. The change to fishery could explain the migration from the smallest settlements to the bigger ones, which took place in this period, but there must be or have been other factors as well since the phenomenon also occurred in North Greenland where fishing was still a supplementary occupation.

### Sheep breeding<sup>43</sup>

Only in the southern part of Greenland, that is the district of Qaqortoq (Julianehåb), did climatic conditions allow a significant amount of animal husbandry. As

has been mentioned, in 1906 the priest at Narsaq Kujalleq (south of Nanortalik), Jens Chemnitz, gave it a try using sheep from the Faroe Islands, and systematic breeding began in the state breeding stations in 1913-1915.

With the milder climate the herds grew steadily. In 1915 there were only 200 sheep, 2,000 in 1926, 5,000 in 1929, and about 10,000 in 1936. Then came two hard winters, which reduced the flocks to 7,000. The number of sheep farmers also increased. During the 1920s they numbered 100, and shortly before the Second World War 200; however, only about fifty had sheep rearing as their main business. Thus in the overall economy sheep-farming was of minor importance, except in Qaqortoq district, which was hardest hit by the dwindling of the seal stock; there sheep-farming also led to a dispersion of settlements because conditions for sheep farming were most advantageous deep in the fiord lands, while sealing was most promising at the outer coast. The meat produced – between 22 and 48 tons a year – was mainly sold in Greenland to the quarry at Ivittuut and to ocean-going ships. The rest was sold in Denmark in widely varying quantities.

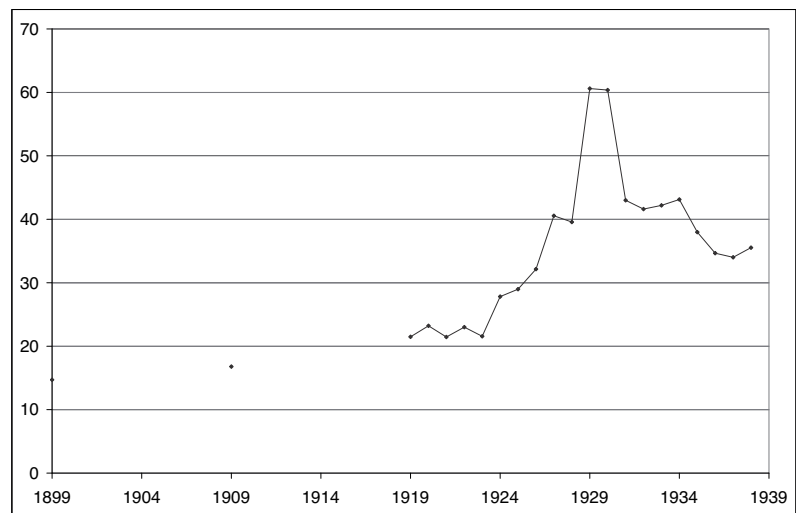
As a new occupation sheep farming certainly had the attention of the administration and the provincial councils. The latter offered loans for building of sheep-cotes (1920), and in 1925 they ruled that sheep farmers could share the so-called repartition, which originally was meant for seal hunters. This gesture was a vindication of the new occupations in the ongoing debate between the Greenlanders about who counted as a real Greenlander. This topic will be dealt with below. By 1936 sheep were so numerous that marking was made compulsory.

**Table 9.** Settlements by size of population (SSOG-46: table 21).

	North Greenland				South Greenland				Total
	<50	51-200	>200	Total	<50	51-200	>200	Total	
1886	23	39	0	62	34	39	4	77	139
1901	56	38	1	95	44	38	4	86	181
1921	46	45	3	94	31	43	7	81	175
1938	30	46	7	83	29	40	11	80	163

43. SSOG-46: section 9; Sigurdsson 1938; Walsøe 1936; Christensen 1946; G-50 5, I: 124-38; Minutes from the Provincial Councils 1911-35.

**Diagram 5.** Greenlanders' income from sales to the Trade Department (actual prices) (SSOG-46 table 282).



### Other social developments

The shift in basic economic activity had an impact on many parts of society. The modernisation and Europeanisation of society might have happened anyway, but there can be no doubt that the decline of sealing and the growth of fishing speeded the process.

The money economy became ever more dominant. Public statistics cannot show every aspect of that process, but the development in money income from the trading-in of Greenlandic products can be shown, see diagram 5.

Clearly visible is the distinct rise in the 1920s, when the money income from trading-in more than doubled. This diagram understates the money actually in circulation, because besides trading-in, the Greenlanders earned money from sales to private citizens and from salaries.

The distribution of different kinds of money

income has been calculated for some districts. Table 10 shows one from Disko Bay (Qasigiannugit) and another from South Greenland (Qaqortoq).

Seen over these thirty-eight years a shift of 10 per cent of income from trading-in to wages is significant, but not dramatic. The selling of Greenlandic products – fish and seals – still counted for over one-third of the income.

The increased money income was used for investment in businesses, building houses, and the purchase of imported food – necessary to compensate for the decline in sealing. From 1901 to 1930 the number of dwelling-houses grew from 1,503 to 2,525, proportionately more than the increase in population. Thus the number of inhabitants per house was declining, namely from 7.5 in 1901 to 6.1 in 1930,<sup>44</sup> resulting in more space per person.<sup>45</sup> In addition domestic heating was improved since almost all the Greenlanders'

**Table 10.** Distribution of money income by kind among the Greenlanders (SSOG-46: tables 444-5).

	Qaqortoq district			Qasigiannugit district		
	Wages	Trading-in	Miscell.	Wages	Trading-in	Miscell.
1899-1904	40.9	48.6	10.5	42.3	48.6	9.1
1910-14	46.4	43.2	10.4	40.3	51.2	8.5
1920-24	51.0	40.7	8.3	46.3	45.5	8.2
1930-1934	41.8	46.6	11.6	44.7	45.1	10.2
1935-38	50	36.2	13.8	52.1	38.2	9.7

44. SSOG-46: table 31.

45. SSSOG-46: table 35, 36.

**Table 11.** Lending from the Greenlandic funds to house building and business equipment (SSOG-46: table 63).

	House building (%)	Business equipment (%)	Total Dkr
1915-26	68.4	31.6	32,272
1927-31	86.4	13.6	164,553
1932-36	86.4	13.6	234,464

**Table 12.** Health sector in Greenland (SSOG-46: tables 41, 42). \* 1900.

	Expenses Dkr	Doctors	Nurses	Midwives	Beds
1910	85,186	7	4	84	*30
1930	314,239	10	11	100	240
1935	393,459	10	16	112	325

houses were fitted with stoves. Thus some of the increased cash income was used to improve living conditions.

To a large extent the money for houses and business equipment was borrowed from Greenlandic funds which, as mentioned earlier, were generated from the Trade, so in a sense their source would be Greenlandic production at least if there was a trade surplus overall. This had not in fact been the case since 1885 except for some years during the First World War. From 1935, however surpluses were produced by the increased demand for cryolite used for making aluminium, which in turn was used for building aircraft. The earlier deficit was made up by the Danish treasury, but carefully recorded so that Greenland could repay it should that ever be possible. In those days balancing the government budget was a virtue also where colonies and dependencies were concerned. No state financing of economic activities in those areas was intended, but in Greenland it happened by default.

Most of the lending from the Greenlandic funds was for house building, as shown in table 11.

The improvement in housing conditions should have benefited health, but expenses also grew in the expanding health sector. It appears that this expenditure was not related only to health conditions and

needs, but followed an overall expansion of the economy.

Compared to Denmark, Greenland had more midwives and hospital beds but fewer nurses. The ratio of doctors was similar. No clear picture of the health of the population emerges from the figures. The differences between Denmark and Greenland were too great for any valid comparison to be made. The general opinions aired in contemporary sources were that there was more disease in Greenland than in Denmark, and that the health service was less comprehensive, partly at least due to the vast distances between settlements in Greenland.

The change to fishing resulted in a greater trade in goods with the outside world. The decline in the huge amounts of meat from sealing necessitated increased food imports. Diagram 6 shows the two kinds of food for which demand rose in that period.

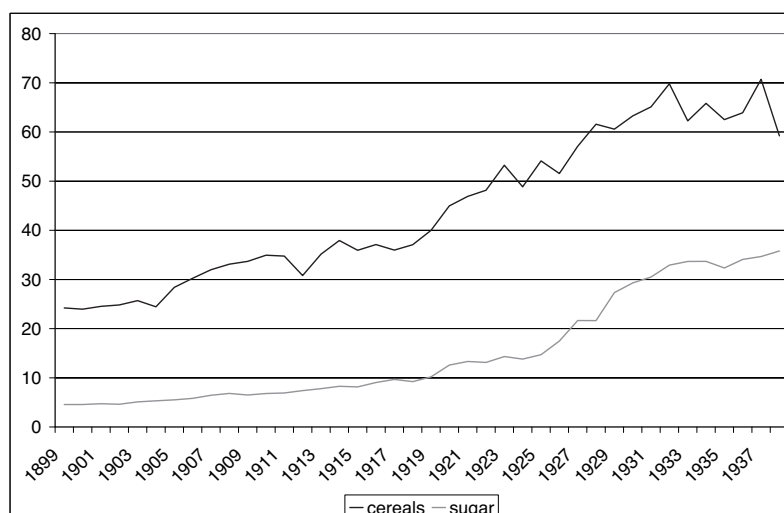
This development had profound implications. The daily sugar intake per person had grown from 12.5 grams in 1899 to 98.8 grams in 1938. In spite of this increase of 700 % it was still some 15 kilos a year less than Danish consumption. Likewise daily consumption of cereals and beans rose from 66.3 grams to 162.2 grams in 1938. Seen in terms of bread it corresponded to an increase from two to five slices daily.<sup>46</sup> The proportion of imported food consumed by the Greenlanders has been calculated. In 1910-15 imported food accounted for 22%, in 1915-20 for 24%, and in 1930-5 for 50%.<sup>47</sup> Individual consumption of other imported goods rose too: clothes, wood products, fuel, ironware and tools, while goods such as coffee, tea and tobacco were in constant demand.

This increased trade demanded a corresponding increase in internal transport capacity. More numerous and heavier coastal freighters were used. The total of register tonnage rose from 466 in 1900 to 1,487 in 1938. Because motor power replaced sails at the same time, the quicker voyages meant a significant expansion in transport capacity above the growth in tonnage. Transatlantic freighters also replaced sails with motors, which reduced voyage time. The average transit time for Copenhagen – Greenland – Copenhagen in 1900 was ninety-nine days; in 1938 it had dropped to fifty-eight. The number of ocean freighters was nearly

46. SSSOG-46: table 330.

47. SSSOG-46: table 456.

Diagram 6. Consumption in Greenland of imported food per inhabitant (SSOG-46, Table 315, 329).



the same, but thanks to the higher speeds more trips could be made in a year. Thus the transatlantic tonnage capacity rose from 5,576 in 1900 to 9,998 in 1920 and 25,480 in 1930.<sup>48</sup>

Not only did transport of goods across the Atlantic increase but other forms of communication rose as well. The number of letters sent to Greenland in 1900 was 3,297, but it had risen to 14,100 by 1930 and to 25,350 by 1939.<sup>49</sup> Wireless telegraphy was introduced in 1925 with three stations (Qeqertarsuaq, Nuuk and Qaqortoq). By 1939 there were twenty-seven stations all over Greenland. The transmitting station was Qaqortoq from where the traffic was cabled to Reykjavik in Iceland and thence to Copenhagen. Already in 1927 a short-wave transmitter in Qaqortoq could send the traffic all the way to Copenhagen; the number of telegrams rose from 300 in 1925 to 6,500 in 1930 and 13,000 in 1939.<sup>50</sup>

Thus a tremendous change had taken place before the Second World War so Greenland was in no way an untouched aboriginal society. Commercial fishing had largely overtaken hunting as the primary occupation of the people, and this involved a much greater trading relationship with the outer world at large, and an expansion of the internal structure of society. Even if

some of these developments might have taken place anyway, it is fair to conclude that the decline in the stock of seals and the arrival of a huge quantity of fish precipitated the modernisation of Greenlandic society in this period.

## Cultural Developments

### The Greenlandic debate<sup>51</sup>

At the beginning of the twentieth century Greenlanders began to discuss the future of their country and their own role in the process. This could have been in reaction to Danish discussions of the question or to the changes taken place in Greenlandic society. In their monthly periodical from 1861 they had encouraged each other to be more industrious as seal hunters, more skilful in rowing kayak and more far-sighted in storing enough of the catch to last through the winter. The perspective was clearly that they depended on the seals – but could use fish as a supplement when sealing produced insufficient catches.

By the turn of the century when fish became a product to be traded-in, a fierce debate took place between defenders of traditional sealing and advo-

48. SSSOG-46: table 72a, 72b.

49. SSSOG-46: table 199.

50. SSSOG-46: table 211. Radiotelegraphy was already in use in the cryolite mine at Ivittuut and in Ammassalik in 1924.

51. Since the 1980s, scholars at Ilisimartusarfik (the University of Greenland) have researched texts printed in Greenlandic, especially the newspaper *Atuagagdliutit* from 1861 and *Avangnâmioq* (the northern magazine) from 1913. Their publications enable non-Greenlandic readers to get an impression of what was going on among the Greenlanders.

cates of new ways. The strong feelings stemmed from the fact that sealing was a core element in their self-identification as Greenlanders: a good Greenland was a good Christian and a good hunter. When hunting from kayaks the Greenlanders greatly excelled the Europeans, who for their part encouraged the Greenlanders to achieve excellence in hunting because its products were what kept the society in being.<sup>52</sup> The traditionalists maintained that fishing could be no more than supplementary because fish could not provide them with the hides with which they covered their kayaks and umiaks, while the advocates of new ways argued that with a dwindling stock of seals the society would die out if nothing else could be found. If other nations could subsist on fish, so could the Greenlanders.

The debate on national self-consciousness was fed by another stream. The group of Greenlanders with European occupations: employees in the trade, the church, and the school system had hitherto supported the traditional view that a real Greenland was a seal hunter, but now some of them opposed the idea that seal hunting should be the test for being a true Greenland. A more modern notion of nationalism was expressed, based on common language, history and love of country.<sup>53</sup> Clearly a new group of people was fighting for its right to a place in society.

### **Peqatigiinniat**

The sense of a new era dawning also stimulated the setting up of Greenlandic organisations notably with the founding of the Peqatigiinniat association in 1908.<sup>54</sup> Its roots were mainly Christian, its stated purpose to promote a Christian way of life in togetherness and induce others to do the same. This was clearly

inspired by contemporary revivalist movements in Denmark: while the Greenlanders took the initiative and called the meetings, they were supported by the Danish missionaries, not least Schultz-Lorentzen who in 1908 reported to friends in Denmark the happy news that a true revivalist movement had been founded.<sup>55</sup>

The revivalist trend was not the only one in Peqatigiinniat. Concern for this world was a constituent part of the movement. If any outside influence for this is to be found it may be the Folk High School movement in Denmark based on the ideas of the priest, poet, and parliamentarian, N.F.S. Grundtvig, who argued that a true and industrious human life was a prerequisite condition to a true Christian one.<sup>56</sup> Certainly, the strong national tone in Grundtvig's writings is to be found also in Peqatigiinniat, but as a Greenlandic one. The Greenlandic parallel to the songbook of the Danish Folk High School from 1908, *Erinarsuutit*, did contain Christian as well as patriotic songs that praised the country, and which are still regarded as the heart of Greenlandic song. The outstanding contributors were Jonathan Petersen in Nuuk and Henrik Lund in Narsaq, who wrote a national anthem. Its last verse was:

It is no longer good to hold oneself back -  
Kalaallit, arise and go forward!  
A human life is to be valued;  
Start believing in what you can do for yourselves.<sup>57</sup>

The movement spread along the coast from Qaqortoq in the south to Disko Bay, but it did not reach the northern districts of Uummannaq and Upernavik due to lack of interest among the local missionaries,<sup>58</sup> or the East Coast and the Qaanaaq area.

52. Langgård 1999: 40-50.

53. Langgård 1999: 57.

54. The association in Nuuk was initiated on 13 March 1908, the date most often cited as the starting point (Thuesen 1988: 90). However, a similar association was formed on 7 September 1907 in Maniitsoq (Petersen 1990: 107), and already in 1906 enlightening meetings in the parish of Narsaq Kujatdleq were summoned under the name 'peqatigiinniat' (Langgård 1998: 16). Even if 'peqatigiinniat' literally means association, the term was only used for this kind of organisation. For other meetings and organizations other words were used. The reason why the Nuuk initiative is seen as the starting point may be that it alone aimed to spread the idea to other parts of Greenland.

55. Thuesen 1988: 87.

56. Langgård (1999: 52) points to this.

57. Translated by the author. The Greenlanders were often reproached for their 'self-restraint' by the more audacious among them.

58. Thuesen 1988: 98f.





Fig. 10. Teaching at the small settlement Saqqarliit in 1936. Judged from the altar in the background the room also served as church. Photo Jette Bang/Arctic Institute.

In the beginning there were weekly meetings with prayer and Bible reading, but there were also talks on how to improve the material conditions of life. Members visited the sick, collected funds for church building, and arranged great summer meetings, 600 people gathered at Ilulissat in 1912 to hear the Gospel and speeches about the need for material progress.<sup>59</sup>

Peqatigiinniat still exists in some places, but it lost its momentum in the 1920s. Its significance lay in its ability to gather native citizens around the idea of progressing in the same direction as other civilised countries. Such movements are a common feature in all colonial societies.

### Schools

Education is the key to progress, and the spokesmen for the Greenlanders repeatedly pressed for teachers in Greenland to be qualified. Over the period 1900-40 the number of school and church staff developed as shown in table 13.

Clear trends were that Greenlandic preachers took over from the Danish ones, that Danish and Greenlandic teachers trained in Denmark began to arrive,

and that the number of catechists without education decreased. There was also an increase in the number of people whom the preachers and teachers had to

Table 13. School and church staff in Western Greenland, 1910-37 (SSOG-46: table 394, 399, 404). \* 1921.

	1910	1920	1930	1937
Danish priests and qualified preachers	12	7	5	6
Greenlandic priest and qualified catechists	4	10	12	13
Danish teachers	0	0	4	9
Greenlandic teachers	0	0	3	4
Catechists (educated at college)	45	60	68	69
Catechists (educated otherwise)	52	49	56	78
Catechists (without education)	83	62	46	45
Total	196	188	194	224
Children attending school	2,67	2,870*	2,64	3,345
Population	12,486	13,474*	15,527	16,917

59. Petersen 1990: 114.

serve. In 1910 there were 14.8 children per teacher and 63.7 people per preacher, and in 1937 these numbers had increased respectively to 16.3 and 83.3.

The school curricula were expanded. More hours were devoted to reading and writing, also to scripture, history and science. A novelty in this period was the teaching of Danish: beginning in the 1920s it rose sharply until the war – according to the rural dean this was more a sign of growing popular interest, rather than the teachers' ability and facility in the language.<sup>60</sup>

### Teaching Danish in the schools

The growing interest in the teaching of Danish in the Greenlandic schools may seem at odds with the nascent pre-nationalism of that period, but clearly the Greenlanders' nationalism was not directed against their colonial masters the Danes, whom they viewed as friends dedicated to furthering their progress. Indeed this was the official policy, and the Danes with whom the Greenlanders came in contact were civil servants sent to Greenland to implement that policy, and those they met in Denmark mostly held similar views. At the teacher training college Danish had always been taught as a means of gaining access to a bigger literature and wider horizons of knowledge, and that was exactly why Greenlandic parents now wanted their children to learn Danish: they should be equipped to cope with the new times ahead. Furthermore, because the upper layer of society in Greenland consisted of Danes, a Greenlander would feel more important knowing their language. This was the view of an experienced observer, the later rural dean Aage Bugge a Dane born and raised in Greenland.<sup>61</sup>

Introducing the Danish language in Greenland had never been part of official policy, partly because of the missionary aim to reach souls using their own language, and partly also because of the practical obstacles. And there was no need to learn Danish as long as the main goal was the preservation of a traditional, high-producing seal economy. With the introduction of a more diversified economy and the need to learn new occupations brought in from abroad the choice

was either to translate everything into Greenlandic or to use the working language associated with the innovations. This is the core problem where the modernisation of a traditional society is concerned. It is well known for example from the spread of industrialisation in eastern Europe that the better the Czechs mastered the German language the better they could manage in the new machine age. This development produced in response a more vigorous Czech nationalism to preserve the national identity.<sup>62</sup> A similar development took place in Greenland, but not until several decades after the Second World War. For the time being the Greenlanders chose Danish as the instrument of their own progress.

Already in 1914 Mathias Storch, later (1927) rural dean in North Greenland advocated to his colleagues in the church that Danes should be employed as teachers, but he did not gain support for this proposal. In 1919 the suggestion was carried through the convention,<sup>63</sup> and the reluctant Danes became convinced that this was actually the wish of the Greenlanders. The question was also raised in the provincial councils (see below). A member from the north deplored in 1919 that the Danish priest had left because this had resulted in a deterioration of the children's knowledge of Danish.<sup>64</sup> Against this background it was natural for the committee which was to prepare a revision of the governing law for Greenland in 1920 unanimously to recommend the introduction of Danish as a subject in Greenlandic schools. The committee stated the purpose of the policy was to develop the Greenlanders' moral and economic maturity to the point where they would be able to live in free communication with the rest of the world once the present state of isolation had come to an end. They believed that to achieve this end it was essential to attach Greenland as closely as possible to Denmark and bring Danish civilisation and culture to the country.

This was their reason for supporting the teaching of Danish in Greenland. The ethnocentricity of their language was not uncommon at a time when the idea of 'the white man's burden' still lingered on, but it was

60. B&K 1934: 212.

61. Bugge 1931: 5-19.

62. See among others Plamenatz 1973.

63. Bugge 1931: 10f.

64. LR-N 1919 in B&K 1920: 318.

indicative of the general mood among the Greenlanders that the proposal was also supported by the few of them on the committee. The reading of the bill in Parliament took place in 1923 and the Liberal Left, the Social Democrats and the Conservatives were supportive, stressing that the introduction of Danish was the wish of the Greenlanders. The degree of emphasis on the benefit to them and the assurance that such a move could give for the attachment of Greenland to Denmark in the future varied among the members. The spokesman for the Liberal Left Party, J.C. Vanggaard, stated unequivocally that the Greenlanders should be made as Danish as possible so that the country could later be opened up without the danger of losing it. The Radical Left expressed fears that compulsory teaching in Danish would offend the nascent national movement in Greenland, and remained unconvinced by the minister's assurance that it was the Greenlanders' own wish.<sup>65</sup>

Due to other circumstances the bill was postponed in 1923 and a parliamentary delegation travelled to Greenland to meet the two provincial councils and a number of municipal councils to seek the views of the Greenlanders. Doubts as to the reality of the demand to make Danish a subject in their schools were made clear by the fact that the delegation asked this same question in all its consultations. Everywhere the Greenlanders strongly supported Danish-language teaching.<sup>66</sup> This closed the issue.

At the next reading of the bill in Parliament in January 1925 support for compulsory teaching of Danish in Greenland was total. Compulsion was not an issue. The subject was so highly esteemed in Greenland that all children who had the opportunity participated.<sup>67</sup> On the same occasion in 1925 compulsory school attendance was introduced for all children aged between seven and fourteen as in Denmark. Until then children in Greenland had started to attend school as soon as they wanted it, often much earlier than seven, and continued till their confirmation which was often

after the age of fourteen. Thus, the change had the peculiar result of reducing the number of pupils. In 1921 the percentage of children aged between five and fourteen attending school was 78.9, but in 1930 it had dropped to 68.7.<sup>68</sup>

In this matter the Danish politicians could be sure that they were on solid ground. Not only was the bill carried through Parliament unanimously, but all social levels in Greenland were also in favour. Further assurance could be found in the speech, which the explorer and writer Knud Rasmussen gave before Parliament in February 1925 having just completed his famous fifth Thule expedition from Greenland through the Inuit areas of North America which had won him tremendous acclaim. He reported the positive experience in Alaska where English had been the compulsory medium since 1890. He subscribed to the American view that only by letting the Eskimos slip into the ruling culture could they have a chance of survival.<sup>69</sup> The years up to the Second World War saw no change of public opinion in Greenland in this matter – indeed the Greenlandic politicians pressed for improvement in the teaching of Danish.

In 1935 the ministry tried to conciliate by describing the goal as leading the children to read, speak and write Danish.<sup>70</sup> However, the problem was not the zeal for education but finding qualified teachers. Therefore in 1937 Pastor G. Egede suggested in the provincial council that the teaching of Danish should be expanded by sending more teachers from Denmark to Greenland. This was agreed,<sup>71</sup> but the following year the ministry answered that the results of the ongoing teaching should first be evaluated, and that Danish teachers would have trouble in teaching Greenlandic children who only understood Greenlandic. But Pastor Egede was determined and raised the question again; once more the provincial council supported him unanimously arguing it was necessary beyond any doubt to learn Danish as a link to the outside world, and because Danish is a cultural language. (probably

65. RTFF 1922-23: 2762-3958.

66. Vanggaard 1923: 27, 31, 36, 42, 52, 57, 60, 61, 71 and 90. The message was repeated in Parliament on 27 January 1925 (RTFF 1924-25: 4080 ff).

67. Aage Bugge (1926: 44).

68. Aage Bugge in his report for 1933/4 in B&K 1935: 464; SSOG-46: tables 22, 404.

69. Rasmussen 1925: 5.

70. Decree of 24 May 1935 §11 (B&K 1935: 586).

71. LR-S 1938: 9.



Fig. 11. The Danish King Christian X visited Nuuk in 1921 to celebrate the 200 years anniversary of Danish rule. He is saluting women wearing their finest dresses. Photo Harald Lindow/Arctic Institute.

meaning that it is a vehicle for art and science). It was impossible to take the Greenlanders back to their traditional stage, and that was why the endeavour should be to make them capable of competing with other nations.<sup>72</sup> The ministry gave in and in 1939 announced that it would try to get more Danish teachers to Greenland.<sup>73</sup>

Similar examples of seeking new goals were to be found in other aspects of Greenland's cultural life. In 1930 Pastor Mathias Storch published a novel, *'Strejflys over Grønland'* (Gleam of Light over Greenland), in which a single provincial council speaking for the whole of Greenland, and Greenlandic representation in the Danish Parliament were envisaged. Through education and cooperation with the Danes the Greenlanders should become capable of having an open

economy in free communication with the outside world. In 1931 Augo Lynge, later a prominent politician, published a book *'Ukiut 300-nngornerat'* (300 years after) which foresaw a modern Greenland with factories and a deep sea fishing fleet working in friendly cooperation with Danes. Thus there is no doubt that the Greenlandic elite was much in favour of a modernised Greenland, and saw assimilation with Denmark and the Danish language as the only possible way forward. To what extent the common Greenlanders shared this view cannot now be determined. There is no evidence that the spokesmen lacked support. Aage Bugge wrote in 1931 that the passive incomprehension of the introduction of Danish teaching, which could be felt at times in certain circles, was definitely on the way out.<sup>74</sup>

72. LR-S 1938: 35.

73. LR-S 1939: 101.

74. Bugge 1931: 6.

## Political Development

### Provincial councils

The role in society of the provincial councils which were set up in 1911, and the exact nature of their cooperation with the authorities in Denmark have not yet been systematically analysed. In 1936 Knud Oldendow (the office head of the Greenland administration) wrote a survey for the councils' twenty-fifth anniversary. Considering his position and the occasion for writing it, the book has virtues. It carefully characterises the inspectors and governors and conveys the nature of the issues debated; most of them are raised by the authorities but others raised by the members. Oldendow implies cautiously that the inspectors/governors should be credited with the smooth running of the councils. The trend over time is a growing capability on the members' part to use the councils to promote development in Greenland. This observation was later confirmed by counting the issues raised by members compared to those put before the councils by the authorities.

Research into the minutes of the periods 1911-16 and 1934-8 reveals that whereas 37% of the issues raised by the members in the first period concerned Greenland as a whole, as many as 72% fell into that category in the second period. Table 14 indicates that a smooth development had taken place between the periods. The minutes also reveal the occupational balance of the members (Table 15).

The replacement of hunters by employees, especially catechists, is obvious. Other self-employed occupations apart from hunting were only represented in the southern provincial council – by a carpenter and a writer. It was usual for nearly all members to be replaced at each election. This could hardly be explained by dissatisfaction on the part of the electorate since it had no direct vote. The election committees were quite small – rarely with more than ten members, so the high rate of replacement is likely to mean that membership was seen by the election committees' members as a rotating duty. Some individual cases may illustrate certain aspects of the work in these councils. In 1911 the administration put a number of issues before the councils to be added to a newly ratified act toget-

**Table 14.** Issues raised in the Provincial Councils by members, % (SSOG-46: table 57).

1911-15	16.8 %
1916-20	23.3 %
1921-5	36.1 %
1926-30	43.1 %
1930-5	60.6 %

**Table 15.** Provincial council members by occupation, 1911-39.

	1911	1917	1923	1927	1933	1939
Self employed						
Hunters	17	18	10	7	9	4
Others	–	–	–	1	–	2
Employed						
Church and school	5	2	6	8	8	6
Trade and crafts	–	3	5	5	2	8
Others	1	–	2	2	4	3

her with some other cases in which Copenhagen wanted rules that would apply in the whole of Greenland. Reaching a decision took a considerable time because if the two councils reached different opinions, the administration in Copenhagen would send them back to get agreement. The provincial councils were very reluctant to yield to each other's opinions, so in some cases different rules were issued for the North and the South. Typical cases were those about where Greenlanders were allowed to build houses, and the question of who could benefit from the repartition of common funds.<sup>75</sup> Some issues raised in 1911 were not resolved till 1916. The inspector for North Greenland wanted to introduce rules laying down which municipality had the responsibility of paying poor relief when individuals moved between municipalities, and laying an obligation on a house holder to maintain those living his house. A member in the North Greenland provincial council suggested that the municipalities should be permitted to pay an allowance to members for attending meetings, and although the inspector regarded the suggestion as unreasonable, the matter was pursued in the following years, and was finally accepted in 1916.<sup>76</sup>

Most of the rules common to the whole of Greenland, which arose from the discussions in the provin-

75. B&K 1913-17: 50, 140, 232, 234.

76. B&K 1916: 410.



cial councils, came from their own initiatives. If north and south agreed, the ministry would often simply implement the agreement, such as the order of 22 July 1914 on the handling of firearms.<sup>77</sup> In other cases the final rules represented a blend of northern and southern views, such as the all-important possibility of lending funds for the construction and purchase of more expensive equipment.<sup>78</sup>

Even when issues were put before the councils by the administration in Denmark, the councils did not automatically accept suggestions. When the inspector in Nuuk suggested that borrowers should pay 4% interest on loans, all members strongly disagreed and argued that loans should be interest-free. On top of that, it was agreed that if borrowers' repayments were regular, they should have their debt reduced by 4% of the repayment. If this was not a special Greenlandic understanding of the idea of interest, it was certainly consistent with the age-old Danish way of disciplining the Greenlanders: not by punishing failure to follow rules, but by rewarding compliance. The final rules allowed interest-free loans, but did not include a reward for prompt repayment.<sup>79</sup>

Most of the issues raised by the members concerned minor improvements in everyday life like the ability (1913) to buy petroleum for hunting expeditions, and the idea (1914) of teaching orphans and the children of civil servants in kayak rowing at public expense.<sup>80</sup> But certain issues caused a loud and clear protest to be delivered to the government in Copenhagen. In 1924 Denmark agreed to let Norwegians hunt in the uninhabited areas of East Greenland, but although East Greenland did not come within the jurisdiction of the provincial councils both addressed the matter in the same year. They were outraged because they assumed it would damage their own hunting, and because they had heard nothing about the agreement with Norway before it came into force. The provincial councils' statement brought them to the

point of renouncing their allegiance to Denmark. In the South provincial council they thought it *'quite incomprehensible'* that the government could do such a thing without having *'a moment's doubt'* as to whether such an agreement would be harmful to the Greenlanders and thus weaken their trust in Denmark.<sup>81</sup> In the north the tone was even sharper. The agreement was a Danish *'failure'*, *'Denmark had forsaken the Greenlanders'*, *'an unexpected and crushing blow to everyone in Greenland'* Denmark had *'nullified all the expectations for the future which the Greenlanders had vested in it.'* Hereafter there was *'no possibility of a genuine cooperation with Denmark.'* The mood was well expressed by the hunter Ludvig Siegstad who in no way gave the impression of being a naive colonial, *'even if the Greenlanders are insignificant people, they know very well that elsewhere in the world governments do not make decisions of such crucial importance to an entire people without consulting them first, and the Greenlanders had certainly expected Denmark to ask them before a decision was made concerning a land which they call their own.'* The council concluded by thanking all who had supported their case. This obviously excluded the Danish government.<sup>82</sup>

This episode was unique at the time, and certainly gave Denmark a salutary warning as to how far it could go without forfeiting the loyalty of the Greenlanders. Trust in Denmark had its limits when the Greenlanders felt their interests threatened.

## More Legislation 1925

### *The Preparations in Greenland*

The governing act of 1908 stipulated in its final paragraph that a revision should be made no later than ten years after the first election of the provincial councils. The act of 1912 obliged the Minister to let Greenlandic issues be discussed in a committee to be made up mainly of men on active service in Greenland. Thus no immediate reason for establishing the committee has

77. B&K 1914: 238.

78. Regulation of 21 July 1914 (B&K 1914: 227).

79. LR-S 1911 in B&K 1913: 63.

80. LR-S 1912 in B&K 1913: 104; LR-N 1912 in B&K 1913: 130; LR-S 1913 in B&K 1914: 194. Petroleum was not for sale generally to the Greenlanders due to the danger of setting the houses on fire.

81. B&K 1925: 289f. The Agreement of 9 July 1924 was approved by Parliament 26 June and announced 28 July. The provincial councils responded on 1 August 1924. Somebody must have taken immediate action to let them know.

82. B&K 1925 p. 301-304.



to be looked for in the circumstances of December 1920. The ministry had already asked the provincial council members to discuss the impending revision with the people, so that they could make their recommendations at the council meetings planned for 1920. There seems to have been lively debate all over Greenland: so many suggestions were presented at the council meetings that the total was not even listed, and of course some were accepted and others rejected by the councils. The ensuing lists of the two councils were very different because the proposals submitted to them were different, and because neither council knew what the other had proposed. There was not enough time for the usual procedure of comparing proposals via the long transatlantic communication route to and from Copenhagen. This procedure prevented the Greenlanders from presenting an agreed Greenlandic position.

The two provincial councils did agree in wanting to allow Danes in Greenland to be eligible for council membership, and to maintain the current voting age of twenty-two and the age of eligibility at twenty-five. This was because a small group of Greenlanders had hitherto been unable to vote, namely those appointed to their positions by the King or the Minister. They were subject to Danish laws and hence had no voting rights, as in the case for example of the catechists with authorisation to preach. Both provincial councils wanted them included in the electorate, either on an equal footing with other native Greenlanders (southern council) or through inclusion in the Danish electorate (northern council).

The provincial councils disagreed over the issue of repartition. In the South they wanted the funds to be used by the community while in the North they wanted the current situation to continue.

Each provincial council had proposals the other did not have, of differing political importance. The North proposed a district elected council at an intermediate level between the municipal and provincial council. This would of course expand the Greenlanders' political influence in their own affairs.

In the South the council urged that one council should not be able to stop the other implementing rules which the latter desired. As has been seen, neither leg-

islation nor practice prevented different rules from emerging in the two parts of the country. In spite of this, the South provincial council had felt itself overruled when the government made common rules based on the views of the North. Furthermore, the South provincial council wanted more power placed in the hands of the inspector by expanding his authority to approve the decisions of the municipal councils. It also wanted to expand the power of the council itself by having an elected rather than an appointed chairman, and it wanted direct access to the Ministry by-passing the Greenland administration in Copenhagen. It seems that the Greenland administration was beginning to be seen in the same light as its predecessor the directorate for the Royal Greenlandic Trade Department before 1912 – as an obstacle to the uncensored views of the Greenlanders reaching those responsible for political decision-making in Denmark. In a display of self-consciousness ahead of its time the South provincial council deliberately kept its distance from the Greenlanders appointed to the new committee, who had not been elected by the provincial councils and therefore could not represent them on the committee.<sup>83</sup>

This episode typifies a common feature of colonial political history: the desire of local authorities – whether native or sent out from the home country – for more power to be transferred from the centre. It also shows a sharp awareness of their position and role among the Greenlandic politicians in the early 1920s.

#### *The 1920 committee*

As stipulated by the 1908 Act the committee consisted almost entirely of 'men in active Greenlandic service'. Members were the two inspectors, trading post managers, and a couple of colony managers, physicians, priests, and officials in the central administration. There were 22 in total excluding the chairman, director Daugaard-Jensen, who apparently did not participate in the discussions. Three of the members were Greenlanders: Pastor Karl Chemnitz of Nuuk; the trading post manager David Olsen of Sisimiut; and Rural Dean M. Storch of Ritenbenk. Knud Rasmussen was also a member although he was not in the Greenlandic service. Born of a Greenlandic mother and a Danish father he had a foot in both camps. In his works

83. The debate of the South provincial council in B&K 1921: 374-6, of the North provincial council in B&K 1921: 282-8, 393.

Greenlanders as well as Danes were referred to as 'we', and in Greenland he counted as a Dane.<sup>84</sup>

The situation was advantageous to the official class. The political task had been done by the provincial councils and the administrative work of preparing the report for decision by Danish politicians was now to be done by the committee. A characteristic of the report of 1921 was that it was divided into minority statements from varying groups within the committee, as if everyone wished to state his own opinion rather than work out a firm body of proposals. In forty-three cases the members were at odds. Close analysis of these cases reveals two groups, whose views were closer to each other than to anybody outside the group. This was a majority group of thirteen, counting among others the personnel from the Trade Department and the two inspectors. A more radical minority group of seven counted among others Schultz-Lorentzen and Knud Rasmussen. Among the Greenlanders Chemnitz stood firmly with the minority group, and Storch usually did while David Olsen mostly sided with the majority. These were not fixed groups because some or all who usually voted with the minority group sometimes actually jointed the majority.

In spite of these divergences the committee agreed on several important points. One was the essential purpose of Danish rule in Greenland: *'the development of the Greenlanders to self-reliance, that is to a moral and economic maturity that will enable them to live in free communication with the rest of the world in the future when the present isolation is ended.'*<sup>85</sup> What was to be done? As mentioned earlier, the answer was to tie Greenland to Denmark as closely as possible. The committee also agreed on righting the wrong of 1908 when Danish officials had been denied access to the elected assemblies in Greenland. It proposed a new assembly based on districts in which they would fill up to half of the seats, and proposed further that Danes who had lived in Greenland for two years or longer should have ordinary voting rights and eligibility for

both the municipal councils and the provincial councils. Over this the committee agreed with the provincial councils. The members also unanimously agreed on extending the teacher training college in Nuuk with a branch to prepare Greenlanders for work in the trade and the administration, so eventually there would be more Greenlanders in higher positions.

The committee not only commented on the proposals from Greenland, but made recommendations on its own initiative. Where production was concerned it emphasised traditional sealing and barely noticed the new fisheries. The committee attributed the success of the emerging fishery to exploration, and recommended that sealing also should be thoroughly explored and sustained by experts. This, however, never happened.

The committee had better luck in proposing old age pensions in Greenland, which the North provincial council had already discussed in 1920. Both parties assumed that this would be financed from the Greenlandic funds, on which the expense had fallen hitherto. The proposal became law in 1926, however, with financial support from Denmark to give higher pensions than had been envisaged in 1920.

Thus, of the proposals from the provincial councils, the committee had supported some, ignored some, and made others of their own.

#### *The Passing of the Governing Act of 1925*<sup>86</sup>

The bill for the government of Greenland was first introduced in 1922, but was postponed till 1924 because of a parliamentary election and the consequent return of Denmark's first Social Democratic government. The bill it proposed was however nearly identical to that of 1922 and was based on the majority and significant minority recommendations of the 1920 committee. The profits on the Greenland trade would be divided into two halves, one going to Greenland and the other into a special emergency fund to be used in case of future deficits. If this fund exceeded the current investment in Greenland, calculated at Dkr. 6 mil-

84. Karen Langgård 1998: 11.

85. Report 1921: 15: 'Grønlandernes udvikling til selvstændighed, det vil sige en sådan modenhed i moralsk og økonomisk henseende, at de kan blive i stand til at leve i fri forbindelse med den øvrige verden, når landets nuværende afsondringstilstand engang i fremtiden ophører'. 'Selvstændighed' meaning 'standing by yourself' is in the text translated as 'self-reliance', because the term 'independence' would imply a breaking from Denmark which was in no way envisaged.

86. RT 1924-25.

lion, a new decision would be necessary. With this the usual policy for nearly a century was written into the law. Denmark should not profit from the Greenlanders' toil, but kept the option open to profit from any other economic activities that might arise.

Following a recommendation by the 1920 committee a new district based assembly was introduced – the 'sysselråd' – consisting of the municipal council chairmen and the members of the provincial council elected in the district. The numbers would be increased by Danish civil servants becoming members to equal the number of Greenlanders. The election procedure for the provincial council remained unchanged. Members were chosen by electoral assemblies of members of the municipal councils and district councils in the constituency. All Danish parties happily supported the Greenlandic wish to allow Danes to be elected to their assemblies. In fact only two were elected before the Second World War, the physician Laurent Christensen of Qaqortoq (1933-38), and Morten P. Porsild, head of the Arctic Research Station in Qeqertarsuaq in 1927-38.

While the numbers qualified to be elected to the provincial councils were thus increased the councils' rôle and tasks remained unchanged. However, the power to make loans and support for construction and purchase of working tools by Greenlanders were transferred to the new district councils with the exception of loans to sheep farmers, which continued to be administered by the South provincial council. The district councils were also entrusted with the approval of regulations decided in the district's municipalities. Municipal councils still maintained public order and relieved needy people whether or not they were considered to have brought their situation on themselves. However, relief for the physically disabled was to be paid for by the new district councils because this was a costly item and recipients were not evenly spread among the municipalities; The district was thus moving in to even out the financial burden between the municipalities. These retained the right to spend on any matter defined as 'for the common good' but the rest of the income was to be distributed to the providers as before.

There were also changes in the judicial system. The governor (new title *landsfoged*) was to be the judge in all cases tried under Danish law, with appeal to the Danish provincial court in Zealand and he should have qualifications similar to those of judges in

Denmark. In criminal cases he had the role of prosecutor as well as judge who passed sentence. When these cases resulted in more than a fine or confiscation they were handed over to Copenhagen for final decision. For those subject to Greenlandic law the jurisdiction was shifted from the municipalities to a district court. The appointed chairman of the district council backed up by equal numbers of Danes and Greenlanders were judges in all cases under Greenlandic law. If there were procedural flaws, the governor could quash the verdict, but otherwise the district decision was final.

Parliament went beyond approving the proposals from the 1921 committee and the Ministry, and decided that the Ministry of Education should be involved in planning the Greenlandic school system and the further education of catechists in Denmark. Furthermore, an inspector to supervise Greenlandic schools should be appointed. The law laid down that the Danish Ministry of Health should have a say in all health care matters concerning Greenland. A clear tendency of these regulations was to end the Greenland administration's sole responsibility for Greenlandic matters. It also signalled a wish to make conditions in Greenland more similar to those in Denmark.

Parliament also clarified the intention behind the Greenland trade, *'All trading in Greenland shall have the purpose of improving the economic conditions of the Greenlandic population, and it is reserved for the Danish state, supervised by the Ministry of the Interior. The Greenlanders are permitted to trade freely with each other,'* and it decided on a standing parliamentary committee exclusively to keep an eye on Greenlandic matters. The Minister was not happy fearing that this would interfere in the administration. However, the law did not address what became the most important question in the coming years: the progress of Greenlandic economic life. The Danish parliamentarians were much more concerned with development in fishing and sheep rearing than the committee of 1920 had been perhaps in response to the ever-growing fishery in Greenland or simply because these occupations were much more familiar to the parliamentarians than sealing and fowling. However, nothing came out of the debate, with only J.C. Vanggaard of the Liberal Left suggesting that certain selected Danes should settle in Greenland as pioneers in fishing and sheep farming.

References were made in the debates to the need for financial sacrifices where Greenland was con-

cerned, but balanced budgets were the creed of the day, and the Greenland administration saw itself as obligated to keep the yearly deficits as low as possible, just as formerly. The Minister shared this opinion; in a speech in 1927 he saw in the deficits a serious danger of Denmark losing Greenland because he feared that the Danish taxpayer would not foot the bill indefinitely.<sup>87</sup> This fiscal policy meant an extremely frugal administration and reluctance to invest, but in spite of this, during the next ten years the accumulated deficit rose to Dkr. 3 million, and Parliament underwrote it willingly. From 1936 ordinary income and special income from royalties increased, and by 1940 the accumulated balance had reached a surplus of Dkr. 9.2 million. The key factor was the royalties from cryolite mining which rose from Dkr. 2 million in 1930 to Dkr. 7.5 million towards the end of the decade.

#### *The Act on Hunting and Fishing*<sup>88</sup>

The governing act we have been considering was related partly to the administration of Greenland and partly with the relations to Denmark. The act on hunting and fishing was to shield Greenland from the world outside. Some regulations were maintained such as the internationally agreed demarcation line three nautical miles from the coast inside which only Greenlanders and Danes residing in Greenland could operate<sup>89</sup>. No one else could go inside the zone without advance permission. New sections of the act established a more detailed procedure for punishing trespassers, and dealt with the explicit jurisdiction of the governor. An expansion of foreign fishing was expected, so dealings with foreign fishing fleets would be an inescapable part of the governor's future work. The Minister explained that the growing stock of fish would attract foreign interest so a legal framework was needed. Parliament agreed and only made a small alteration to the bill to the effect that fines for trespassing should go to the Danish treasury and not to

Greenlandic funds. Fines had not been authorised in previous regulations.

In the debate C. Zahle of the Radical Left took the opportunity to argue that Danish and Faroese fishermen and sheep farmers should be allowed to settle in Greenland and operate as pioneers, and the Conservative Halfdan Hendriksen raised the possibility that Faroese fishermen could have stations on land to support their fisheries outside the 3 nautical miles limit. The Minister, C.N. Hauge, promised to consider these suggestions favourably.

Some years later, on 20 March 1929, a new government issued a regulation on acquisition of farmland in Greenland by Danish farmers, to whom *'the Administration found occasion to allocate land in order to be pioneers in farming'*.<sup>90</sup> This idea came not from the Greenlanders, who favoured regulation but had not mentioned Danish farmers settling,<sup>91</sup> but from the Permanent Greenland Committee.<sup>92</sup> The provincial council wrote to the Committee that *'it was definitely against giving Danish farmers land that could be used by the Greenlanders, but it had not suggested change in the regulation because the administration was still in charge of finding occasion to allot land to the Danes, and thus no real change in prevailing rules had been made'*.<sup>93</sup> This was a very subtle way to indicate that the council were against giving land to Danes, but it did not protest because it trusted the administration would find no occasion since the Greenlanders could use all land.

It would appear that governor Oldendow substantially contributed to this sort of interpretation. The provincial council was flatly against it, but he must have persuaded it to have trust in the Greenland administration and not protest directly. After all, it was his duty as an official to carry out the intentions of his Minister. The Permanent Greenland Committee remained unpersuaded, and urged the administration to find suitable Danish farmers to settle in Greenland. It preferred Danish to Faroese farmers although the

87. Hauge 1926-27.

88. Proposal of 27 February 1925 (RTFF 1924-25: 5478). First reading 4 March 1925 (RTFF 1925: 5692-96).

89. The article 2 continued: 'and for those to whom the Ministry will issue special permits according to the hitherto existing regulations.' At the time the Faroese were already knocking at the door, and this extension was meant to open it.

90. B&K 1929: 218.

91. LR-S 14 July 1926 in B&K 1927: 628.

92. Minutes 18 May, 1 June, 28 June and 29 June 1929 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

93. Minutes 19 December 1928 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

Faroese were accustomed to working in mountainous terrain and thus in theory better suited to Greenland, but Danes would bring the Danish language and culture with them.

In the period that followed the administration apparently paid more attention than the Permanent Greenland Committee to the views of the provincial council. Thus in 1939 the new director, Oldendow, could tell those taking part in the Danish-Greenlandic negotiations that advantage had not been taken of the permission to settle Danish farmers in Greenland. This was '*because the atmosphere was unfavourable*'.<sup>94</sup> This is a typical case of colonial administrators fighting hard to defend the interests of 'their' natives from the encroachment of other interests. This time the administrators won, but it was a victory they were unable to repeat.

#### *The 1926 Act on Old Age Pensions in Greenland*

The social security system in Greenland was simple: families were supposed to take care of their members, although people in extreme need could be helped from municipal funds. The 1920 committee had found the existing system unfair to those who were careful with their means and suggested an old age pension available to all. An additional reason for this was that an old age pension had been a civil right in Denmark for people without means since the 1890s.<sup>95</sup>

The new Social Democratic government that took office in 1924 was sympathetic. The minister in charge of Greenland visited his province the following year and this convinced him that '*age-old Communism*' in which the people shared what little they had was '*diminishing or had disappeared altogether*' through the influence of an expanding money economy. On the basis of his report the Permanent Greenland Committee assisted in preparing the bill.<sup>96</sup>

The law gave an old age pension to every Greenlanders over fifty-five who was unable to provide for himself, his wife, and any children under sixteen, provided that he led a respectable life and stayed clear of the law and poor relief in the previous three to five years. The district councils were to deal with the appli-

cations and pay the costs, being reimbursed by the treasury up to a limit of Dkr. 100 per person and Dkr. 150 per couple per year. This was about twice the amount suggested by the 1920 committee, and therefore much more than anybody had asked for. It was only between one third and a quarter of the old age pension in Denmark, but since wages for unskilled work were ten times higher in Denmark than in Greenland, the pensioners in Greenland were relatively well off. In presenting their case to Parliament the Minister referred to the Greenlanders as '*constitutional Danish citizens*' with the probable implication that the state was responsible for taking care of them as other citizens. Parliament needed apparently no persuasion, and passed the bill. The provincial councils were not consulted before the bill was passed, and thus its enactment was made conditional on their acceptance. But no problems were expected, and in fact both provincial councils expressed their hearty thanks for the gift.<sup>97</sup>

#### **The quarrel with Norway over East Greenland**

On 5 April 1933 the International Court in the Hague ruled that occupation of areas of East Greenland by the Norwegians was without legal basis and therefore invalid. This put a stop to a public quarrel with Norway over Greenland, especially the eastern side, which had soured relations between the two kindred peoples.

'Occupation' of areas of Greenland sounds somewhat dramatic, but the events themselves were on a modest scale. On 28 June 1931 five Norwegian trappers planted the Norwegian flag at a point on the east coast and declared the area between Carlsberg Fjord in the south and Besselfjord in the north to be Norwegian. It was an uninhabited coastal expanse of 450 km. and included the area where Norwegian (and Danish) hunting was allowed under the 1924 agreement. But who in Denmark or Greenland would lose a moment's sleep over what certain Norwegians had said to each other during a stay in East Greenland? However, it became a matter of high policy on 10 July when the Norwegian government accepted responsibility for the trappers' actions, although it did nothing else to give

94. Minutes of 22 August 1928 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

95. Report 1921: 78f.

96. Minutes 27 October 1925 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

97. B&K 1927: 625, 644.



substance to the occupation. Denmark immediately brought the case before the International Court in The Hague. The private pressure group in Norway supporting the occupation acted again on 12 July 1932 'occupying' the area, also uninhabited, south of Ammassalik extending to the southern tip of Greenland. This occupation was also covered by the International Court's verdict of 5 April 1933.

The background in Norway was a general Norwegian endeavour to acquire possessions in Arctic and sub-Arctic areas, such as the Svalbard archipelago in 1920 and Jan Mayen in 1929 to protect their hunting interests.<sup>98</sup>

This episode of rivalry between two European states over a territory outside Europe had all the elements of an imperialistic quarrel. Denmark legitimised its sovereignty over Greenland on the basis of medieval history and the Treaty of Kiel 1814, but had exercised authority only in the colonised districts after 1721. Uneasy over a possible challenge to its possession of Greenland it had extracted a declaration from the United States in 1916 related to the sale of the Danish West Indies that the USA 'will not object to the Danish Government extending their political and economic interests to the whole of Greenland.'<sup>99</sup> In the following years Denmark received similar declarations from other countries, and only Norway refused to cooperate in spite of a pledge from its foreign minister to do so.<sup>100</sup> Consequently, on 21 May 1921 Denmark declared that its control extended to the whole of Greenland, and a month later the Greenland Administration closed the East Coast to foreigners. Norway protested, and the negotiations to secure the continuance of its fur trapping in uninhabited areas of East Greenland resulted in the agreement of 1924, already mentioned.

The precarious situation in East Greenland drove the Danes to step up their activity to maintain their sovereignty. Colonisation of the Ittoqqortoormiit-district north of Ammassalik was strongly advocated by nationalistic circles in Denmark, who paid for this

to be done although it was subsequently taken over by the Danish government. Scientific expeditions were operating, and there was some private fur-trapping. In 1920-4 the 'Østgrønlandske Kompagni' operated but it went bankrupt in spite of government aid. 1929 saw the start-up of the 'Østgrønlandsk Fangstselskab Nanok' but it too got into financial trouble, despite private and government support. However, it continued to operate, and some of its trappers later joined the wartime sledge patrol. It finally ceased its activities in 1952 when the government's financial support ended. The assertion of sovereignty was by then no longer needed.<sup>101</sup>

The verdict from The Hague was received with much rejoicing in Greenland. In 1933 the provincial councils took the initiative in thanking the government, pledging their trust, and expressing their best hopes for the future. In the South the King was congratulated on the recognition of his and the Greenlanders' right to the whole of Greenland, and the government was thanked for its efforts to win the case, the outcome of which '*carries in itself promises of a still more cordial connection between our country and Denmark and years of peaceful cooperation for the honour of Denmark and the benefit of Greenland.*' In the North authors of the statement were explicitly stated to be the Greenlandic members to avoid the impression that it had been dominated by the single Danish member of the council, Morten P. Porsild. It read '*We will only belong to the Danes. May Denmark protect our land and its sea. May the two nations, the Danes and the Greenlanders combine in cooperation and progress.*'<sup>102</sup>

### Faroese fishing in Greenlandic waters

The case in East Greenland was one of external danger where Danish and Greenlandic interests coincided. However, the situation on the west coast was more complicated: the intruders were not foreigners, but Faroese from another part of the Danish realm. To the Greenlanders the situation in the East and the West

98. Blom 1973: 13.

99. Signed by Robert Lansing, New York, August 4, 1916 (Danmarks traktater efter 1814: 596).

100. The Norwegian side is analysed by Ida Blom (1973). The verdict from the Hague is published by the Danish Foreign Ministry in 'Haag-dommen af 5. April 1933.'

101. Brun 1952.

102. B&K 1933: 83, 176.





Fig. 12. Eight Faroese trawlers anchored in Faroese Harbour in 1930. In the beginning, the harbour was just an anchoring place, later supplied with quays, ware houses etc by the users. The Greenland Administration built a radio station and placed a controller at the harbour. Photo The Greenland Administration/Arctic Institute.

was the same: a threat to their very existence. The Danish government saw it in an altogether different light, being also government of the Faroese.

Changes in the fishing industry were crowding the Faroese out of their local fishing grounds. Their hand lines and long lines were being damaged by the trawls of British and Germans vessels, and they lacked the capital to invest in modern equipment. So instead they headed north to Iceland and Greenland, and because their boats were relatively small they needed land stations to store their catch.

Letting the Faroese into inner Greenlandic waters created several problems. First, it would be a break with the age-old policy of isolation, which would be difficult to impose on other countries if it was once broken: the trade monopoly could not then be upheld because there would be no way of preventing unauthorised trade. The protective aspect of isolation would be lost. Secondly, fishing by others in inner Greenlandic waters could be detrimental to the Greenlanders' fishing and hunting with the increased activity probably scaring away seals and other prey – the

latter argument was repeatedly emphasised by the Greenlanders. The Danish government had to mediate between Faroese and Greenlandic interests.<sup>103</sup>

The government chose to support the Faroese, but not in everything they wanted. They did not get free access to fish in all waters, including the fiords, and they were not allowed to employ Greenlanders in their industry. Land for settlement of Faroese was out of the question. In 1927 they did get a land station near Ravns Storø near Arsuk in south Greenland to support their fishing in international waters. This place was 70 nautical miles from the fishing grounds, and solved no real problems for the Faroese, so they kept up the pressure. In 1927 a long struggle began in the course of which the government, by annual renewable laws, gradually extended the rights of the Faroese in Greenlandic waters.

The struggle was with the provincial councils who according to the 1925 law were to be consulted in such matters. In June 1925 the South Greenland provincial council stated in principle with no dissenters, that for the time being it could not consent to opening up the

103. The Faroese side is treated by Wählin & Kristensen (1996: 63-88).

country wholly or partly to Danish or foreign citizens. This was because of the great amount of work being put into the development of the new businesses of sheep rearing and fishing, and its potential for Greenland. Such opportunities should be reserved for *'the land's own children'*. But in spite of this the council consented to the governor's proposal to allow the Faroese to have the station at Ravns Storø on condition that there should be no fishing in territorial waters including the fiords, and that trial fishing should only be allowed for Danish ships and crews and not foreigners.

The general requirements for the land station were that (1) it must be a natural harbour not lived in by Greenlanders or used by them for hunting, and situated far from inhabited settlements; (2) the government must employ a supervisor at the station to ensure compliance with the laws; (3) the visiting ships must pay fees for services rendered; (4) access to the harbour must be granted to each ship individually; and (5) no Greenlander could be employed in the cleaning of fish. On the other hand, the provincial council would welcome specially qualified and interested Greenlanders participating in the fishing on equal terms with Danish crew; in fact the council would make it a condition for the permit that these Greenlanders would be taken onboard for instruction. The North Greenland provincial council agreed on the same principles.<sup>104</sup>

Thus, the provincial councils were not entirely against it, so after prior application the Minister gave a one-season permit in 1926 for the use of the natural harbour at Ravns Storø. The Faroese were far from satisfied. The government then gave in and passed an interim law, which allowed Danish fishing boats – again after prior application – to operate in Greenlandic territorial waters outside the skerries in the period 1 June – 15 October 1927. The area was also extended up to 64°07' N, totalling 97 nautical miles. The government explained this by reference to the difficult situation of the Faroese, and was uneasy at not having consulted the provincial councils first, but promised that they would be heard if there should be

later moves to make the interim law permanent.<sup>105</sup>

All the political parties were for this arrangement, and with only a Conservative, Victor Pürschel, warned against yielding to the *'nationalistic'* Faroese arguments and granting them a concession that both Greenlandic provincial councils had opposed, and which could be detrimental to Greenlandic fishing.<sup>106</sup> But Parliament, moved by the social needs of the Faroese, passed the act of 30 May 1927. The inconveniently situated harbour at Ravns Storø was replaced by another 54 nautical miles north later in the year close to the rich fishing banks of the Davis Strait. The new location was named Faroese Harbour<sup>107</sup>

Even though the provincial councils could not be consulted before the bill was passed, they could be and were consulted afterwards. For the South Greenland provincial council's meeting in July 1927 governor Oldendow, the chairman, had collected the heavy artillery. Besides the law text and the deliberations in Parliament he had provided the members with a copy of the report from the 1920 committee, a copy of a speech given by the former minister C.N. Hauge and about fifty newspaper articles covering the debate on the matter in Denmark. On top of that he reminded the provincial council of its heavy responsibility in the matter, and that it should issue a statement if it found the interim law consistent with Greenlandic interests, and if therefore the law should be made permanent. He himself understood the benevolent attitude of the Danes to the Faroese, but urged the council only to consider the interests of the Greenlanders. So in important aspects the future of Greenland could depend on the answers from the provincial councils. One can doubt whether the members believed his final declaration of personal detachment from the council's verdict.<sup>108</sup>

The south provincial council was unequivocally against the law and against the relocation of the harbour from Ravns Storø, but was in no position to reverse it. It was afraid that this was merely a first step towards letting the Faroese into the fiords where they would rob the Greenlanders of their fishing grounds.

104. B&K 1926: 436-8, 456f. Here Danish also means Faroese.

105. RTFF 1926-27: 5284.

106. RTFF 1926-27: 5303-09.

107. B&K 1928: 28.

108. LR-S 19 July 1927 in B&1927: 741-43.

The council also commented on the other elements in the Governor's package: it explicitly denounced lifting the monopoly at this particular time, and possibly admitting Faroese sheep farmers as settlers. But it also expressed confidence in the Danish management of Greenland, resulting in the Greenlanders becoming more self-sufficient.<sup>109</sup>

The North provincial council was not directly involved, but was consulted anyway, and its answer was confused. A majority statement expressed anxiety over the interim law and its possible extension, and vehement denunciations from member Mathias Storch at letting strangers in who had never at any time benefited the Greenlanders, and from member Frederik Lynge who protested against the passing of the law without prior consultation with the provincial councils. Other members were more sympathetic towards the prospect including the Danish member Morten Porsild who saw development potential in allowing the Faroese fishermen to teach the Greenlanders.<sup>110</sup>

In 1928, the same procedure was followed as in 1927. The unchanged act was passed in Parliament, and the provincial councils were asked for their comments on it. Meanwhile, the Faroese had offered to take Greenlandic crew aboard their boats on equal terms in order to give them experience of modern fishing. In the South they had acquiesced in the situation and made no protest, but there was lively debate about the benefit to Greenlanders on the Faroese boats. The majority opinion was against. In the North the council protested at not having been heard before the decision was made, but acquiesced in the *fait accompli*. A majority here was also against the Faroese fishing fleet having Greenlandic crews.<sup>111</sup>

In each subsequent year the act was passed, and the provincial councils were not heard any more even when some extension of the rights of the Danish fishing fleet was granted. In 1931 the area where fishing was allowed in territorial waters outside the skerries was extended further north, so that it now covered 180 nautical miles. A delegation from the Danish Parlia-

ment travelled to Nuuk to persuade the South Greenland provincial council to recommend the opening of another harbour to the Faroese fishermen. To pacify the Greenlanders the Faroese member of the delegation, Samuelson, a member of Parliament, spoke about the hardship of the Faroese fishermen and promised not to raise again the question of fishing in the fiords and the use of Greenlanders in Faroese fishing. The Greenlanders were swayed by this appeal and agreed to the new harbour on condition that the promises made by the Faroese were honoured, and that a more efficient system of control was introduced and thus end the numerous violations of rules by the Faroese fishermen. They were not asked to comment on the extension of the fishing area.<sup>112</sup>

In 1934 the new harbour was opened at Toqqusaq in the Maniitsoq district, and the South Greenland provincial council agreed to opening Faroese Harbour to vessels of all nationalities – this was implemented in 1937. In 1936 the provincial councils were asked also to agree to an extension of Faroese fishing within the skerries, which both firmly rejected. The situation seemed deadlocked: the Faroese exerted pressure, the Greenlanders resisted, and in 1937 the Danish government prolonged the interim law for 5 years. Meanwhile Faroese fishing in Greenlandic waters continued to grow. From 5% of all Faroese fishing in 1926 it reached nearly 50% in the late 1930s,<sup>113</sup> and about 40% of Faroese cutter crew were employed there.<sup>114</sup>

Not till the end of January 1939, when a new permanent law was passed were the Provincial Councils asked again. The procedure began with a meeting between the Faroese and Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning at which it was agreed to re-open Toqqusaq and Ravns Storø, and that another harbour should be established between Sisimiut and Aasiaat, all three being equipped like Faroese Harbour. Inshore fishing was allowed in the skerries but not in the fiords. The total coastline where fishing was allowed was also extended to a total distance of 425 nautical miles, from Arsuk in the south to Attu in the north. The Greenland

109. B&K 1927: 744-50.

110. LR-N 10-11 August 1927 in B&K 1927: 794-800.

111. LR-S 2 August 1928 in B&K 1928: 81-91; LR-N 23 July 1928 in B&K 1928: 133-5.

112. LR-S 22 July 1931 in B&K 1931: 735-743.

113. Wåhlin & Kristensen 1996: 65.

114. Fiskeriårbogen 1933-38.

administration in Copenhagen had resisted this on behalf of the Greenlanders but in vain. The agreement was presented as a bill in Parliament, and carried through, giving the Prime Minister the authority to implement the law after consulting the provincial councils in Greenland.<sup>115</sup> In the debate in Parliament much emphasis was given to the needs of the Faroese and to the arguments that the interests of the Greenlanders were not being jeopardised.<sup>116</sup> During the following months letters reached the Permanent Greenland Committee from Greenland expressing anxiety and objections to the fact that the law had been passed before they could have their say.<sup>117</sup> However, someone in the Danish political establishment must have been concerned about the reaction in Greenland for later on the Prime Minister pledged to let a Danish-Greenlandic commission meet and propose what should be done in Greenland. The newly-appointed director for the Greenland administration, Knud Oldendow, was sent to Greenland to *'make them understand ... and comply'*, as one member put it in a parliamentary debate.<sup>118</sup>

Even though Oldendow had had a hard job as governor in 1927 persuading the South provincial council it was much worse now. The law had been passed, and it contained substantial extensions of the rights of the Faroese fishing fleet in Greenlandic waters. The Prime Minister had put his authority behind the Faroese case right from the beginning in January. Oldendow had counteracted it as best he could, but his task now was to get the provincial council to accept without the loss of their goodwill towards the Greenland administration and Denmark.

As soon as the meeting began the pressure built up. The chairman, Governor Aksel Svane, appealed to the council to consider the status of Greenland as a part of the realm, and the importance of having good and harmonious relations with the Danish government. He urged the members to put themselves in the position of the Danish government and to trust that it had mediated between Faroese and Greenlandic interests in the best possible way. Oldendow was on the

defensive from the beginning. In his speech he brought a greeting from the King, on whose behalf he asked the members to pass it on to their constituencies. This was not lost on the audience: the royalist Greenlanders rose to their feet to honour the monarch. Oldendow asked the members to understand that the Prime Minister had only acted as he had done because he had no choice. Finally, he requested the councils to appoint two members each to participate in the Danish-Greenlandic negotiations in the autumn. With this invitation the two issues raised the year before – representation in the Danish Parliament and the amalgamation of the two provincial councils into one – were referred to the forthcoming commission.

In the debate the members were unequivocal in their rejection of the new law. The only consolation they could see was the reported support of Oldendow. Nevertheless, because the law had been passed in Parliament they did not vote against it – perhaps influenced by the words of the chairman, Aksel Svane, who spelt the situation out clearly during the debate: *'You must not forget that the most important point to be considered is the progress of the Greenlandic economy and culture. If the steady progress made hitherto is to continue then everybody has to ensure that the provincial councils and the Greenland administration are able to cooperate. A rift between the provincial councils and the government is much more dangerous than the intrusion of the Faroese. It would also become a rift between the provincial councils and the Greenland administration.'* In other words: if you want to remain on good terms with us, your closest friends, then do as we ask!

The final statement of the provincial council was as follows: *'The provincial council, taking all circumstances into consideration, is resigned to the law in question and does not contest its contents. This is because of a firmly rooted confidence in the Greenland administration, and because we fully understand the circumstances which forced the government to make the law. However, we make no secret of our regret that our right to be consulted on all matters concerning Greenland was set aside. It is our firm precondition that no further concessions*

115. Wåhlin & Kristensen 1996: 79-83.

116. RTFF 1938-39: 4483-98.

117. Minutes 10 and 26 May 1939 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

118. J.S. Vanggaard 6 March 1939 (RTFF 1938-39: 4899).

can be given, and that an efficient fishery inspection will be established according to our later proposals.' It was carried seven votes for one against and three abstaining.<sup>119</sup>

This had been a hard lesson in terms of practical politics, and the sound of arm-twisting lingered among the mountains throughout the summer.

The new law turned out to be of little benefit to the Faroese: later that year the Second World War broke out and no Faroese fishing took place in Greenlandic waters during the war.

### The Negotiations in 1939

The negotiations to which the provincial councils were invited in 1939 were initiated in the Danish Parliament by the Conservatives – a clear signal of their interest in Greenland. Victor Pürschel stated in the Permanent Greenland Committee in March 1938 that he wished to discuss the following matters: the position of the Greenlanders under the Constitution, their possible representation in Parliament, the differences between wages paid to Danes and Greenlanders in Greenland, the unsatisfactory teaching of Danish in the Greenlandic schools, and the access of Danish private individuals to operate in Greenland. He also wanted a committee to consider guidelines for the future development of relations between Denmark and Greenland. The committee accepted the relevance of the questions, but preferred to treat these '*in a confidential discussion by people with special insight.*'<sup>120</sup> The Conservatives did not give up. In October 1938 they proposed in the Upper House of Parliament a bill setting up a commission of twenty men to look into Greenlandic matters and suggest changes. Again, Greenland's supposed riches were the primary consideration: the mineral resources and the extension of fishing had to be researched. It was argued that some employment could also be created for Danes. Finally, the internal situation of the country needed to be examined.<sup>121</sup> In short this looks like a typical colonial policy – to maximise the value of the dependency to the colonial power – and as such was in line with the practice of the

other European colonial powers of the time, such as Britain in Nigeria with Lugard's 'Dual Mandate', and the French '*mise en valeur*', not to speak of the Belgian and Dutch policy in the Congo and East Indies (now Indonesia) respectively.

To the Liberal and Social Democratic side of Parliament the Conservative proposal appeared too wide-ranging. First, the Permanent Greenland Committee refused to accept that it could not handle the issue so a commission was not needed.<sup>122</sup> Then in the first reading in Parliament Thorvald Stauning, the Prime Minister, refused a commission, but supported the idea of looking into the matter. An internal Parliamentary committee continued the discussion, and a series of questions to the Prime Minister in December 1938 probably reveal where the hard-core interest lay. How much was the Greenland administration spending on mineral research? What was the total royalty from the cryolite mining, and how often had the director of the Greenland administration consulted the Permanent Greenland Committee in the last five years? This last question revealed a tense relationship between the Committee and director Daugaard-Jensen. Finally, some questions were asked about health conditions and schools in Greenland. The Prime Minister was still sympathetic to an enquiry, but not by a commission; the forum should be the Permanent Greenland Committee attended by the Greenland administration and representatives from the provincial councils.

The Greenlandic delegates: Pastor Gerhard Egede, the teacher Augo Lynge, the trade manager Frederik Lynge and Pastor Jens Olsen arrived in Copenhagen in the middle of July, the negotiations took place between 1 August and 7 September, but with the outbreak of war in Europe they had to be brought to a hasty end so that the delegates could return safely to Greenland. A report was drawn up, but never published.

The outcome of the negotiations made no noticeable difference, because there was general acceptance of the prevailing financial policy whereby development in Greenland should be funded as part of the

119. LR 1938-1947: 126.

120. Minutes from 16 March 1938, draft letter to the Prime Minister May 1938 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee, Box 4).

121. RTA: Law of 19 October 1938.

122. Minutes 26 October 1938 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).



Greenland Administration's budget. This was why any suggestion that greater financial efforts should be made resulted in a promise from the administration to scrutinise the cost of the various ideas. And of course the administration's wishes for Greenland were hampered when the country was cut off from Denmark by the German occupation in April 1940. The significance of these negotiations was primarily that they took place at all. For the first time representatives of the provincial councils negotiated Greenland policy directly with the Danish political establishment. Even if they did not altogether succeed in bypassing the almighty administration, they had come close to doing so.

The work of the committee was largely planned by the Danes.<sup>123</sup> Numerous issues concerning the Greenlandic society were put on the agenda, including the possibility of abandoning Greenland's isolation. The last of the forty-nine points on the agenda was '*special questions, which the Greenlandic representatives want to discuss*'. The provincial councils did not have the opportunity to prepare for the discussions, but the point of departure on every point was the position of the provincial councils on the issue, if any. Mineral research, the question which had aroused most interest among Danish Conservatives, lost its force during the discussions. Oldendow gave a report on the current state of coal mining and marble quarrying, and neither he nor the committee suggested any expansion. The Prime Minister reported on mineral research, but this was not even included in the final report.

As for fishing by the Greenlanders, which had slightly declined during the late 1930s, the Greenlandic delegation raised a number of questions, all urging expansion and further mechanisation, but these were fended off. The Greenland administration promised to investigate whether the number and size of fish processing plants and their business hours could be increased, and to look into the possibility of sending more Danish fishery experts to Greenland. The demand for higher prices was simply refused. This reluctance was due to the acceptance by everyone of the need for balanced budgets. The subcommittee on

fisheries had agreed with Oldendow that all these suggestions had to be evaluated by the administration to avoid any '*excessive expenses*'.<sup>124</sup> In the same way deep-sea fishing and fishing for other species besides cod and common halibut was curtailed, and the question of factory processing of the catches was not addressed although it was put on the agenda.

The debate on farming, which in Greenland means sheep-farming, centred round the possible benefit of allowing a few Danish sheep farmers to settle and become pioneers in the field. The possibility had existed since 1929, but had never been activated because the Greenlanders opposed it. Now the Greenlandic delegates were sympathetic to the idea, but wanted it discussed in the provincial councils first. This apparent change of view was only slight. The Greenlanders were used to Danish experts being hired by the Greenland administration to teach them new occupations. Such experts were used for fishing, and in the discussion in 1939 the committee emphasised the educational aspect; not much in the minutes and reports suggested that the Danish sheep-farmers should settle as colonists.

For the Danes there was another angle as well, outspokenly expressed by J.C. Vanggaard of the Liberal Left. His agenda was to argue that private business was superior to the sheep-farming stations run by the administration in Greenland. His tone was openly nationalistic: it was important to use '*loyal Jutland farmers*' rather than Faroese with their '*separatist tendencies*'.<sup>125</sup> But Oldendow was strongly against letting Danish farmers settle in Greenland. He did not believe that they could make a living out of it, and was very reluctant to take the sparse pastureland from the Greenlanders and give it to Danes. Nevertheless, the committee viewed the idea in a generally favourable way.

Kr. Lynge had raised the question of a coastal shipping line in Greenland in the South provincial council in 1938. He believed that the new impulses and experiences, which were resulting from this, would benefit the Greenlanders, as would increased trade between north and south. The 1939 committee discussed the

123. Report, minutes of head- and subcommittees, and appendixes (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

124. Minutes from subcommittee on fishery 7 August 1939 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

125. Minutes from subcommittee on fishery 22 August 1939: 8 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).



matter sympathetically, but referred it for further treatment by the administration and the provincial councils.

Health conditions were treated in the usual way. First an expert gave a detailed report of the situation and the administration's plans for the future, then the committee asked some questions, and finally the expert report was summarised in the overall report, which stated that the committee was satisfied with the plans and wished to see them realised. Such a procedure could indicate that the administration already operated as satisfactorily as possible within the budget.

The main issue concerning education in Greenland became the teaching of Danish in the schools. This divided the committee and the Greenlanders. A newspaper article by their colleague from the South, Augo Lynge, upset Jens Olsen and Frederik Lynge from North Greenland. The article argued that the Greenlandic language was ill suited for transferring new learning to Greenland and therefore had no future. Frederik Lynge responded that if this happened Greenlandic would be excluded from the family of civilised languages, and argued that the Greenlanders should keep their Eskimo language which they shared with other Eskimo peoples: their identity was embedded in the language. Jens Olsen said that the priorities of the Greenlanders' love were: their country, their language, and Denmark. In arguing his case Augo Lynge admitted to having previously been '*an Eskimo nationalist*', but was now convinced that the Greenlanders had to learn Danish, and have it as a teaching language so as to be capable of attending higher education in Denmark.

On the Danish side Vanggaard was the most radical. He scolded Th. Povlsen of the Radical Left for not being willing like Augo Lynge to see Danish introduced in Greenland; this, he claimed, was perverse national-

ism. Oldendow was also strongly opposed to any dani-fication of Greenland. He had asked thirty of his Greenlandic friends, and an overwhelming majority wanted to stick to their own language. He thought that a tiny group of educated Greenlanders scattered throughout the country wanted Danish as the medium of instruction.<sup>126</sup>

This episode is also characteristic of discussions between colonizer and colonized in the decolonisation process. The most westernised natives were on the committees, and in those days had a strong desire to Europeanise as much as possible in order to achieve economic progress. The colonial officials knew how few the élite were, and how different they were in outlook from their countrymen, and therefore sided with the silent majority. The officials were probably right, but they lost in the end when the views of the native élite prevailed, although in Greenland this process did not take place until the 1970s.

The final committee report took the line of the majority in the middle. The importance of keeping the Greenlandic language was emphasised along with the wish to improve the teaching of Danish in Greenland. The administration was told not to shirk either difficulties or expense.

In the final pages of the main report the Greenlanders gave their view. They bluntly rejected that Greenland should be opened up to others for the time being. What they wanted was a vigorous effort to develop Greenlandic society so free communication with the world outside could be established. They also rejected the idea of Danish fishermen and farmers settling in Greenland. These opportunities should be reserved for the Greenlanders.

The negotiations came to an abrupt end because of the outbreak of war. The final meeting was on 7 September, and two days later the Greenlanders were on their way home where they arrived safe and sound.<sup>127</sup>

126. The term 'Eskimo' was used in the Danish minutes. The Greenlandic-speaking delegates had used the word 'inuit' in their own language, which is now generally used in Danish in stead of Eskimo. The debate took place on 1-2. September (Minutes 1939: 63-90).

127. Jens Olsen published a report of his participation in the Greenlandic magazine, *Avangnâmioq*. It was translated into Danish and is in the archives of the Permanent Greenland Committee, box 4, sheet 3, appendix 6.

# The Second World War<sup>128</sup>

## Towards the war

The outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939 did not catch Greenland and the Greenland administration in Copenhagen completely off-guard. In the summer of 1939 extra raw materials for manufacturing tools, medicine and food supplies for the hospitals were sent to Greenland. Together with the normal supplies, these should have sufficed for three or four years. Just after the outbreak of war another 1,000 tons of emergency supplies were sent.

In the autumn of 1939 daily life in Greenland continued as usual, but behind the scenes, the governors and the administration exchanged telegrams about how to manage a possible emergency. For example, ration cards were printed. Before the occupation of Denmark on 9 April 1940 two ships with supplies had left for Greenland. Together with the ship from the Cryolite Mining Company, the Julius Thomsen, they arrived safely in Greenland. But the biggest ship, the Disko, was caught fully loaded at the quayside in Copenhagen.<sup>129</sup> Thus maritime traffic between Denmark and Greenland came to a stop, and was not

resumed till five years later, simply because neither the Americans nor the British would allow the government in German-occupied Denmark to have any authority in Greenland. The news of occupation was immediately brought to Greenland, and soon travelled far and wide. A Danish expedition on the Bache peninsula in Ellesmereland, Canada, got the message carved by visiting Polar Eskimos from Qaanaaq on a tin can in their depot: *'The Germans have captured the Danes and robbed them of their food. Only the King has not been taken. There is no more petroleum at the trading posts.'*<sup>130</sup> Inuit did not have a word for war between states so this was a pretty accurate description of the occupation, and good advice to be sparing with petroleum products.

## The situation for Greenland in April 1940

The occupation of Denmark presented Greenland with immense problems. How could it avoid being occupied by the belligerent powers? The Germans had Norway

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128. A comprehensive history of Greenland during the Second World War has not yet been written. However, Greenland's relations with the United States, and especially the question of the American bases from 1941, have been treated in scholarly works. Finn Løkkegaard researched these relations 1940-2 in his doctoral thesis of 1968. And Bo Lidegaard, in his doctoral thesis about the Danish ambassador Henrik Kauffmann in Washington, also covered Kaufmann's connections with Greenland. Both these publications have extensive English summaries. German scholars have treated the German war effort in the Arctic (see Henkels 1978; Nusser 1979; Rohwer 1968; Selinger 1991). The situation in Greenland during the war is described in a sequence of survey articles by the local authorities (see GSA 1946). The printed material from the administration in Nuuk is essential, and a magazine in Danish, *Grønlandsposten*, printed from 1942 in Nuuk conveys the mood in the country.

In this account I have also used material from the archives of the Permanent Greenland Committee in Copenhagen in which the reports from the governors in 1940 and 1945 have been useful, as has the survey of development in Greenland during the war made by the Greenland administration in Copenhagen. This survey is based on what was known in Copenhagen, especially from telegraphic correspondence between Greenland and America, which could be tapped in Copenhagen. Thus, this material is more rewarding for the period between the autumn of 1939 and the summer of 1940 concerning what should be done if relations were cut off, and what was done when they were.

129. Report Greenland Administration 1945: 3.12.

130. In Greenlandic: 'tyskit danskit tiguvait neqigssautauingdlo arsârdlugit kunge kisiat tigonago, tassa niuvertogarfitt tamarmik orssiúsvitjuung(nærput).' For a linguistic analysis, see Sørensen 1981.

also and could take the northern route to Greenland. Defences were non-existent, and could not possibly be organised with the means at hand. The German threat was made rather less acute by the British occupation of the Faroe Islands in April and Iceland in May; but that only brought the British threat closer. The United States initiated a hands-off policy towards Greenland by secretly telling Britain and Canada not to occupy Greenland to protect the cryolite mine in Ivittuut, but would not at that time intervene itself. However, the fortunes of war might change that situation.

Another problem was supplies. How and from where could deliveries reach Greenland? In spite of the extra supplies shipped across in 1939, some perishable goods were needed every year, and if the war dragged on, there would be a shortage of all the other items as well. How and where could Greenland products be sold? Previously all communications had been with Denmark, and now this route was closed. Supplies were vital. Should they fail and an emergency happens, the Greenlanders' trust in Denmark could be damaged beyond repair. For the administration safeguarding the living standards of the Greenlanders became tantamount to keeping Greenland for Denmark. In December 1940 they reported to the government that so far they had had no occasion to choose between their priorities which were, first, to ensure that Greenland continued to be a Danish crown colony and, second, to prevent the population being deprived of the necessities of life.<sup>131</sup>

## The relations with Kauffmann and the United States

Because of the close proximity of Greenland to the American continent the two governors had in reality no choice in their foreign policy but to come to an understanding with the United States, not least because of the situation with supplies. Canada was at the time a less attractive alternative because it had joined Britain as belligerent, and such a relationship

could bring Greenland into the war. Furthermore, the United States did not favour an exclusive Greenland-Canada link. Both countries established a diplomatic presence in Nuuk in 1940, but trade with Canada was not established till 1941.

Seeking a relationship with the United States was not simple. The governors must not appear to be inviting the Americans to come and take over the administration. First the governors decided to wait for instructions from Copenhagen, but meanwhile they made a radio announcement that they would endeavour to secure the normal summer supplies from America.<sup>132</sup> The link to the United States had to be via the Danish legation in Washington. Already on 9 April Henrik Kauffmann, the minister there, had initiated his own policy independent of Copenhagen. He aimed to be the acknowledged representative of all Danish interests that were beyond the grasp of the Germans in order to make every asset available for the fight against Germany. Greenland and Danish ships outside Danish waters were the most valuable assets. To play this role Kauffmann needed to be accepted by the Danish diplomatic corps abroad and the local authorities in Greenland, and accordingly he initiated communication with them. On 13 April he cabled to the governors that he would no longer take orders from Copenhagen, and informed them that the United States tacitly accepted him as competent to negotiate on Danish interests despite this. Furthermore he planned to establish a committee in the United States to take charge of supplies to Greenland. The governors did not immediately reply, and on 16 April he cabled again stating that Britain would not allow any contact with Denmark and that they had to act independently. The governors had received no orders from Copenhagen, so in reply they gave cautious and non committal acceptance.<sup>133</sup>

The Greenland administration and Kauffmann had conflicting views of their relative positions. Kauffmann assumed that he had taken on the rôle of Copenhagen, while the governors knew that by the act of 1925 they were the supreme authority when Copen-

131. Report Greenland Administration 1945: app. The governors' report had reached the government through the American embassy.

132. MvGA 1940-41: 4; Løkkegaard 1968: 85.

133. Løkkegaard 1968: 85f.

hagen was out of reach so Kauffmann was now their representative! At first Washington supported the view of the governors, and in April the State Department gave its view that the governors were what remained of a sovereign Danish government, and undertook to acknowledge any authority they vested in Kauffmann.<sup>134</sup> However, Kauffmann finally won, and the decisive factor here was the agreement of 1941 concerning the bases in Greenland, which was made with Kauffmann. This resulted in a complete break between Kauffmann and Copenhagen, and an official US acknowledgement of him as a free and independent agent. The US government also gave him control of all Danish assets in the USA, so he had effectively the final say in Greenlandic matters as well, if he and the governors should disagree. This was unambiguously stated to Kauffmann by the State Department in October 1941.<sup>135</sup>

The governors were very much of one mind when it came to relations with the United States. The goodwill of the Americans was paramount, and their wishes had to be complied with. But there was a difference in their attitude on the appropriate degree of compliance. Eske Brun, the governor of North Greenland, believed that willing compliance was the best means to maintain Danish sovereignty in Greenland, while Aksel Svane, governor of South Greenland, preferred to yield only when in a position of unambiguous coercion. His attitude was parallel to that of the Danish government towards the German occupying forces: only to bend before an obviously superior force. He telegraphed the King in April 1941 that he accepted the base agreement only because of '*the extreme coercion of the situation*'.<sup>136</sup> The difference became clear in public when Svane gave a newspaper interview in the United States in August 1941, arguing that Danes abroad, especially those in Greenland, should follow the neutral line of their home government and not speak as if they were belligerent. '*A good Dane is a quiet Dane*'. This caused trouble for him, and for the rest of the war

he had no influence.<sup>137</sup> Strictly Svane had been the most loyal to his government, but the course of war forced him, and not Brun, into a defensive posture when he returned to Denmark in 1945.

Between Brun and Kauffmann there was complete agreement on high policy. Both chose to side with the Allies against Germany and were ready to make the resources they commanded available for the fight, but there was rivalry between them over who had the final say in Greenlandic issues. Personal ambitions may have played a part, but in addition their priorities were different. Brun's was to lead Greenland unharmed through the war in order to keep the Greenlanders loyal to Denmark, while Kauffmann had a broader goal to secure the best possible position for Denmark after an Allied victory.

While the United States was prepared to accord precedence to Kauffmann in October 1941, Brun never did so. As late as 1942 he would not accept Kauffmann as the final arbiter in Greenlandic financial matters or that he had assumed any of the powers formerly exercised by the Greenland administration in Copenhagen.<sup>138</sup> The main question which divided them, was the importance of supplies to Greenland. Kauffmann wanted greater reductions so that the Greenlanders, like the Danes back in Denmark, would have to lower their living standard somewhat: in other words, the Greenlanders should bear some of the burdens of the war and thus be able to put a larger surplus at Denmark's disposal after the war. Brun answered emphatically that the Greenlanders already lived at subsistence level and could not tolerate any reduction, and that if Danish sovereignty was to continue, the Greenlanders should not lose their confidence in the Danish regime. He argued that confidence would be undermined if the Greenlanders's conditions were to deteriorate.<sup>139</sup>

The direct cause of this discussion was control of the revenue from the cryolite mine, but there is no record of a serious clash. After all, they agreed on over-

134. Internal Note, State Department (Løkkegaard 1968: 89).

135. Løkkegaard 1968: 468-74.

136. Telegram of 12 April 1941 (Report from the Greenland Administration 1945: 43).

137. Løkkegaard 1968: 460-62.

138. Exchange of telegrams April-May 1942 (Report from the Greenland Administration 1945: 41-43).

139. Letter from Brun to Kauffmann, 17 May 1942 (Løkkegaard 1968: 446).

all policy, and Kauffmann had to rely on advice from within Greenland to assess what was needed, and did not wish to get involved in Greenland's internal affairs.

## The agreement on bases, 1941

Maintaining a hands-off policy in Greenland towards Britain and Canada steadily became more difficult for the United States. Aircraft were the main offensive weapon on the Allied side, and they were mainly produced in America. The biggest could fly non-stop from Newfoundland to Scotland, but the smaller ones had to be freighted on ships, something that became ever more difficult as German submarine warfare intensified. However, smaller planes could also be flown over if they could land and refuel on the way – which is where southern Greenland entered the picture: with an airfield there, the fighters could fly Canada-Greenland-Iceland-Scotland safely out of reach of the German submarines.

In the winter of 1941 joint pressure from Britain and Canada for a base in Greenland persuaded the Americans to act, and in February 1941 they decided to build the base themselves. The prospect of Allied victory was better now that Hitler had lost the air battle over southern England in the autumn of 1940, and in March 1941 the Lend-Lease agreement was signed. Now Britain could draw on American resources, and the United States was as close to being a belligerent as possible without losing neutral status. To maintain this image of neutrality where Greenland was concerned it was necessary that the Greenlandic authorities asked for protection. Interim protection of the cryolite mine in Ivittuut had already been established in 1940 when the Greenlandic authorities obtained permission from the United States to buy a gun and to hire US personnel to operate it. This should prevent stray German submarines from trying their luck at the mine.

When the Americans got the impression that Kauffmann was an easier person with whom to reach

an agreement than the governors, he was naturally their choice as interlocutor. During the negotiations he was therefore acknowledged as the highest representative of Danish interest in the United States, as already mentioned. On 5 April 1941 the two governors were then confronted with a 'fait accompli', which they could only accept or reject. Both accepted it, Svane emphasising that he had approved under coercion, while Brun only complained about the short notice and the incomplete text presented to them.

The agreement was dated 9 April 1941 thus alluding to the German occupation of Denmark exactly a year earlier. The agreement authorised the United States to establish such bases as were necessary to fend off attacks on Greenland. Danish sovereignty over Greenland in general as well as over the bases was confirmed although the Americans exercised jurisdiction over the bases. The agreement was to be valid until the two parties agreed that '*the present dangers to the peace and security of the American Continent have passed*'. (Article X)<sup>140</sup> This article was the tricky part. In spite of the stipulation that each party after '*due consultation*' could give notice of its intention to terminate or modify the agreement, the clause gave the United States a leverage over post-war Denmark in view of their relative strength.

Legally it was indisputable that neither Kauffmann nor the governors had any authority to conclude agreements that were absolutely binding on Denmark. Copenhagen dismissed Kauffmann, but not the governors. The reason was probably that if they were removed the way would be open for direct American administration of Greenland – an outcome which appealed to neither the Danes nor the Germans.<sup>141</sup> When the war ended Denmark was still unsure whether it would be accepted as ally, and therefore one of the first actions of the Danish Parliament after liberation in May 1945 was to give retrospective approval to the agreement and make Kauffmann a member of the liberation government.

The bases were established very quickly. In May 1941 the Americans surveyed possible locations, and in July the work began. Six months later the base was

140. Reprinted in Løkkegaard (1968: 362-7) in both languages.

141. Løkkegaard's opinion (1968: 395f).

142. Brun 1946 a: 48 ff.

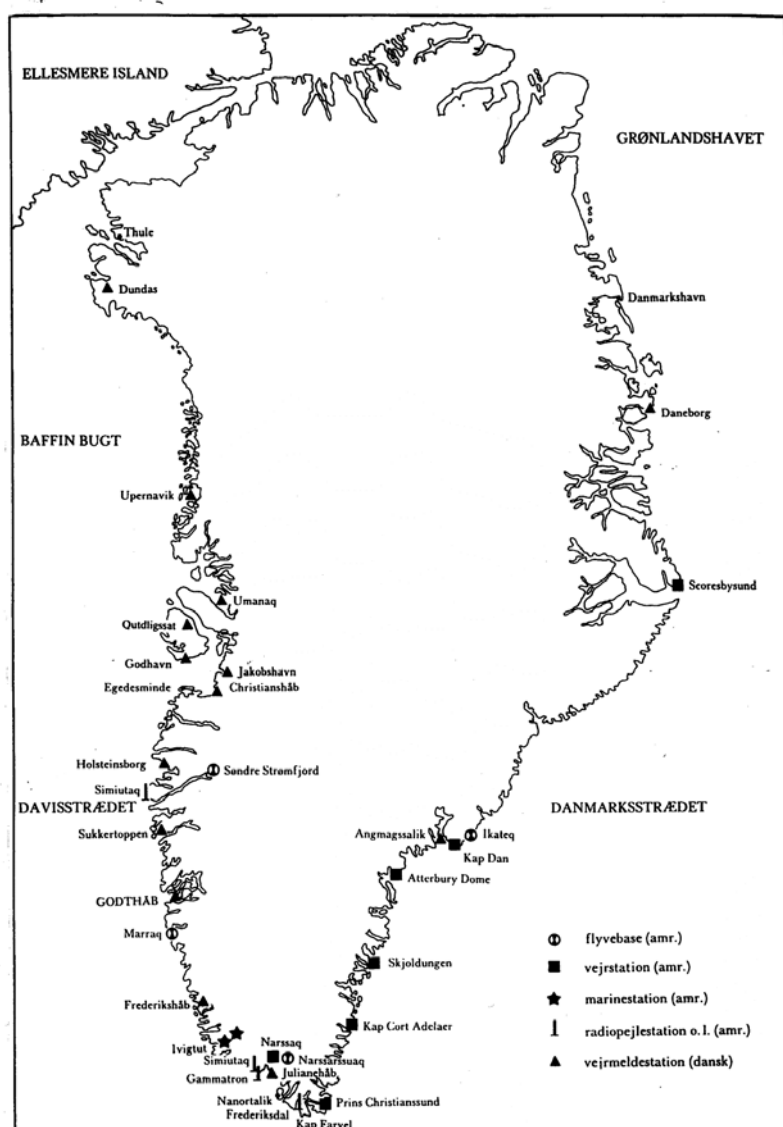


Diagram 7. War Time Bases in Greenland. Legend: Flyvebase (amr.) = American air base; Vejrstation (amr.) = American weather station; Marinestation (amr.) = American naval base; Radiopejlestation o.l. (amr.) = American direction finder station; Vejrmeldestation (dansk) = Danish weather reporting station (Kjær Sørensen 1983: 96).

ready to use.<sup>142</sup> By the end of the war the Americans had seventeen stations dispersed all over Greenland, four of which were air bases.

The nine weather stations run by the Danish administration were concentrated around the Narsarsuaq air base in the south.

It is difficult to judge the effect of the bases on daily life in Greenland. Most were far from inhabited places, and fraternisation with the local people was prohibited. Probably, the contact was no greater than could be expected when the nights were bright and clear and there was curiosity on both sides, although greater problems did occur around the base at Ammassalik (see below).

## Supplies and sale

The cryolite was the decisive export item as it had been before the war, and financed the deficit arising from trade in other commodities. The mineral was used as flux in the production of aluminium, essential for aircraft construction. Thus, cryolite had been in great demand since the mid 1930s, and the fact that Copenhagen was out of reach was no problem.

Business relations had already been established before the war with the Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company (Pennsalt) which had bought 25% of the production from Ivittuut, and could easily buy more, as could the Aluminium Company of Canada (Alcan),



which bought through the Americans. Production before the war had been around 50,000 tons of which 40,000 went to Denmark. In 1940 about 42,000 tons were shipped to the United States and Canada, in 1941 62,000 and in 1942 85,000. For the rest of the war shipments were smaller, averaging around 50,000 tons in 1940-4, as before the war.<sup>143</sup> However, prices rose slightly during the war and the earnings were therefore sufficient to cover the necessary imports. An interim board consisting of the governors, the government supervisor at the mine, and the manager of the mine was set up to legalise the sales.<sup>144</sup>

As already mentioned Kauffmann had by October 1941 managed to get control over the use of the income. Already in June 1940, he had got US\$ 500,000 from the Danish government to finance purchases for Greenland, and on both sides of the Davis Strait preparations for getting supplies were well under way. In April Kauffmann had set up a Greenland Committee in the United States for trading. He acted fast to pre-empt any action by the American Red Cross. He did not want emergency aid for Greenland, but merely sought normal business relations.<sup>145</sup>

On this point he agreed with the governors. When governor Brun arrived with a small delegation in July 1940 he had to co-operate with Kauffmann's committee because Kauffmann had charge of the money. Immediately after the occupation of Denmark the US government had seized Danish assets in the United States, and Pennsalt was not allowed to release payments received for the cryolite to the governors.<sup>146</sup> Co-operation between the 'Greenlanders' and the Danish-American committee was not very good, and it was not improved in the spring of 1941 when governor Svane became a US resident. In the autumn of 1941 Kauffmann's committee was dissolved, and a section of the Danish embassy took over the task of buying and sell-

**Table 16.** Imports by countries (tons) (GP 1943: 140; MvGA 1940-5: 184, 241).

	1942	1943	1944
United States	7,108	6,054	7,02
Canada	9,851	5,295	5,797
Portugal	1,525	1,585	1,57
Total	118,484	22,934	14,387

ing. The section was headed first by Svane, and from April 1942 by Tage Nielsen, a former employee of the Danish shipping company Lauritzen and the American trading partner Gillespie & Co. was replaced by the New York branch of the Danish Ø.K. (East Asiatic Company).<sup>147</sup>

No details of what was supplied were published either at the time or after the war, but it does not seem that any serious shortages occurred.

Some perishable foods were lacking, like potatoes, vegetables, pork, and dairy products during the summer of 1940.<sup>148</sup> Delays occurred due to the lack of shipping, and some goods were lower quality than previously. New items were also introduced to replace those which were no longer obtainable. Some of these were a clear improvement. For example, the Colza oil previously used for lightning was unavailable, as were lamps using animal fat. So in the autumn of 1940 petroleum was introduced for indoor lightning,<sup>149</sup> an event still remembered as a revolutionary improvement of daily life by those who were children at the time.<sup>150</sup>

Rationing had already been prepared in 1940 but was not put into effect until October 1942. Cereals of all kinds except rye bread, rye flour and sugar products were included – not due to lack of supplies but in an attempt to rely more on Greenlandic products.<sup>151</sup> Apparently the rationing was also sound financially,

143. Report Greenland Administration 1945: 85-87; Lerche 1946: 65f.

144. Report Greenland Administration 1945: 35.

145. Løkkegaard 1968: 74-83.

146. Løkkegaard 1968: 91.

147. Brun 1945: 30.

148. Governors' report 28 December 1940: 2 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

149. Brun 1945: 48.

150. Ole Berglund pers. comm. 1980; Ulloriannnguaq Kristiansen in Gynther & Møller (1999: 252).

151. Governors' report 28 December 1940: 43 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

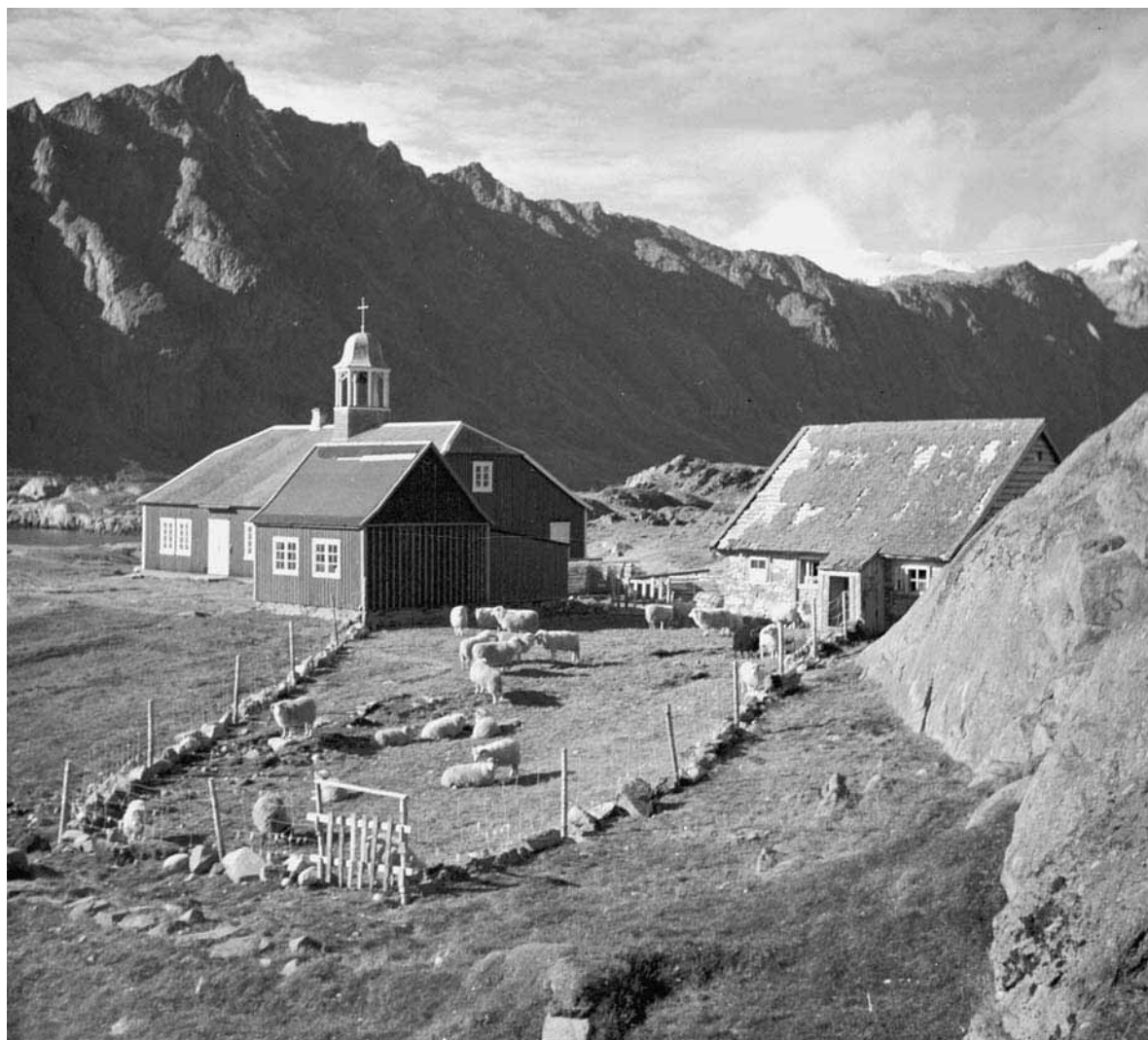


Fig. 13. The mild climate in South Greenland allows for sheepherding at a modest level. This is a sheep farm at Narsaq Kujalleq in the far south, 1936. Photo Jette Bang/Arctic Institute.

because imported foods were sold at a loss, at least if the cost of freight and trading were included.<sup>152</sup>

While daily consumption barely changed, the repair and renewal of machinery caused problems. The Americans could not deliver spare parts which therefore had to be produced at an extra cost. By 1945 much machinery was nearly worn out.

There was an acute shortage of shipping tonnage. The Allies needed all that was available, so the large supply ships that had previously called in at all harbours in Greenland no longer did, so instead the goods

were landed at a few transit harbours, and from there distributed along the coast by schooners. The complete supply system consisted of four main harbours: Qaqortoq, Nuuk, Maniitsoq and Aasiaat. Qullissat on Disko served for the transit of technical items, and Sisimiut for marine equipment and for tools in general.<sup>153</sup> Opinions differed on the success of this system. On the one hand the ocean freighters spent fewer days in harbour, and the coastal route used for distribution by schooners was something the Greenlanders had long called for. On the other hand the frequent

<sup>152</sup>. Trade inspector Axel Malmqvist (1946: 110).

<sup>153</sup>. Brun 1945: 30f.

reloading caused damage and losses. However the war and the consequent lack of tonnage forced the transit system into existence, and there was no choice.

Except for the transit system distribution in Greenland was unchanged. It was handled by the same personnel, who calculated prices according to the same principles as those used hitherto. The central entrepot abroad was now New York instead of Copenhagen, and American firms instead of Danish ones delivered supplies. Purchases could be made by post as before the war, the only difference being that deliveries were not from Dahls Varehus in Copenhagen but Sears and other US firms whose catalogues were printed in colour! The American market was important, but it did not enjoy a monopoly: some coal, flour, wood, sugar and textiles were obtained from Canada and salt was still mostly delivered direct from Portugal as before the war.<sup>154</sup>

Greenlandic exports, like imports can only be stated approximately. Cryolite was sold to the United States and Canada, but there was little demand in America for the other main article, salted fish. From 1941 exports to Portugal were resumed, and during the war most of the salted fish was sold here. However, small-scale deliveries went to Spain and the US,<sup>155</sup> and seal oil and seal hides periodically found a market in America, but there was no demand for sheep products excepting the hides. The sheep products were therefore used in Greenland, except that the wool was processed into knitting yarn in Canada.<sup>156</sup>

The overall balance of trade has not been investigated. There were rising prices for both exports and imports, but whether this meant an improvement or worsening of the term of trade is unclear; during the war, no staff was available to make such calculations.<sup>157</sup> After the war, Brun and Svane stated that Dkr. 23 millions from the cryolite income had been allocated to cover the trade deficit on other goods. This made an average of Dkr. 4.6 million a year and thus an increase of nearly 50% over the pre-war average of Dkr. 3.1 million. However, Brun maintained that the

**Table 17.** Total yearly landings of cod (tons, whole fresh fish). Conversion factor from fresh to cleaned fish: 14:10 (GSA 1946: 112).

	Tons	Value (Dkr)
1938/9	6,565	257,91
1939/40	7,05	276,964
1940/1	7,573	297,511
1941/2	10,398	445,629
1942/3	11,273	483,128
1943/4	11,543	497,7
1944/5	12,311	571,582

supplies in stock was increased by Dkr. 6-7 million leaving an actual deficit of about Dkr. 3.3 million, and thus the same level as before the war.<sup>158</sup>

## Greenlandic production

For some time before the war fish had been the main product. It was exported as salted cod, and cod was plentiful during the war.

Thus the catch nearly doubled during the war and thanks to rising prices fishermen's income more than doubled. The cod was both salted and dried; nearly all of the latter was sold in Greenland while the former was mostly exported.

Production of the traditional Greenlandic products also rose during the war. Blubber was traded in on a yearly average of 881 tonnes in 1940/4 a rise of 30% on the four years before the war where the average had been 679 tonnes. Seal hide production rose by 67% from an average of 15,500 hides a year in 1932/6 to 25,900 in the first four years of the war. Whether this was due to a larger catch or a larger sale from an unchanged catch cannot be ascertained because the catches were not printed during the war. It was not due to rising prices, because higher prices for these products were first introduced in March 1945.<sup>159</sup>

The business that ranked third in importance,

154. Malmqvist 1946: 104; Report Greenland Administration 1945: 64, 139f.

155. Report Greenland Administration 1945: 64f, 69.

156. Report Greenland Administration 1945: 147f.

157. Brun 1945: 23.

158. Minutes 30 January 1946: 17f (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

159. Figures for the production, see MvGA 1940-45.



Fig. 14. The first commercial fishery took place from rowing boats often tugged to the fishing place by a motorboat. Photo The Greenland Administration/Arctic Institute, 1919.

namely sheep farming, also increased during the war. This was due to mild winters and the farmers becoming more experienced. Ewes numbered 6,989 in 1939, and about 15,000 in 1945, and earnings from sheep farming accordingly doubled from Dkr 35,756 in 1939 to 70,744 in 1945.<sup>160</sup>

Whether this progress in Greenlandic production meant a corresponding rise in living standards is unknown because basic figures for consumption and consumer prices are incomplete. However, some of the main trends are discernible. The administration tried as far as possible to keep prices unchanged, but it did not fully succeed. The trading-in prices for fish were raised, as were those for shark and codfish liver. The trading-out prices were also raised although the price setting system was continued. This meant that prices for most essential foods and tools remained low regardless of purchase prices abroad. In order to maintain a certain balance in the economy a complicated

procedure for calculating higher prices was introduced. If purchase prices abroad exceeded selling prices in Greenland by more than 50-67%, then the selling prices were fixed at 80-85% of the purchase prices. This would certainly cause a deficit, because neither freight nor trading costs were included. However, some fixed prices were raised in 1942 and 1943. In March 1945 they were fixed at a assumed post-war level – this meant a rise from 15 to 100%, but again no clear picture emerges.<sup>161</sup> Brun claims in his report that the general economic development during the war lead to a rising standard of living for the free Greenlandic producers (of fish, and the products of hunting and sheep), and that the living standard for Greenlanders in employment was maintained by a general wage increase of 15% and the introduction of an allowance for families with children. Meanwhile, the real wages of the employed Danes decreased somewhat due to their higher consumption of imported goods.<sup>162</sup>

<sup>160</sup>. Christensen 1946.

<sup>161</sup>. Announcements about the Administration of Greenland, Nuuk, 1940-5, pp. 32, 90ff. Brun 1945: 22f.

<sup>162</sup>. Brun 1945: 22-5.



## The Administration

The war did not catch the governors totally off-guard when they assumed their new role as supreme authority. Already in August 1939 the Greenland administration in Copenhagen had drawn the governors' attention to their general authority stated in the law article 10 part 3: *'As the representative of the Danish government the governor is the general authority in the country (i.e. Greenland), and is authorised to make such arrangement as is needed to safeguard the needs of the population in extraordinary situations.'*

Referring to this law the governors declared on 23 April 1940 that they had taken over the authority of the Danish government until normal communications could be restored. In that capacity their power equalled the power of an autocratic monarch, executive, financial and legislative. They had to consult the provincial councils, but as 'government' they had the final say, because no decision in the provincial councils was valid without approval of the minister in charge. And the minister was now the governor! This change, forced by circumstances, meant that everything could be done much faster; it was no longer necessary to wait for decisions from Copenhagen. Everything could be decided in Greenland and executed right away. Eske Brun remembered the situation as *'quite pleasant'*.<sup>163</sup>

No autocratic monarch ever ruled in a political vacuum, and the governors did not do so during the war. They worked hard to continue the administration in the same spirit as before, and in order to do that they needed the loyal co-operation of the population including the provincial councils. They seem to have succeeded, – if at bad moments they ever feared obstruction from the Greenlanders, this according to the records was unfounded.

When on 9 April 1940 the division from Denmark took place the governors were at their respective offices, Svane in Nuuk and Brun in Qeqertarsuaq, but it soon became clear that all essential functions needed to be carried out at one place. Nuuk was chosen because the US and Canadian consulates were

there, and it remained accessible by ship during the winter. The governors also decided that one of them should be in the United States to organise supplies to Greenland, and Brun was to go first.

In July 1940 he and his small delegation went off to the United States, and immediately found themselves at odds with the Greenland Committee appointed by Kauffmann. Kauffmann persuaded the US State Department to request Brun to return to Greenland in October 1940 in spite of his plans to stay in America for the whole winter.<sup>164</sup>

Brun stayed at the cryolite mine in Ivittuut during the winter of 1940/1, and Svane took a short trip to America in November-December. In April 1941 Brun returned to Nuuk, and in June Svane left for America, and thus things remained for the rest of the war, whether because the Americans wanted only one governor in charge in Greenland as Svane suggested after the war,<sup>165</sup> or because of his unfortunate public statements in August 1941 as Kauffmann later hinted.<sup>166</sup>

From 1941 there was in effect a central administration in Nuuk because there was only one governor and all foreign business and all government actions took place there. Here too were the central offices of the trade administration and the district physician who took over the health administration of all Greenland. The district physician for North Greenland had been on vacation in Denmark in April 1940, and he remained stranded there during the war. Already before the war the church and schools had their main office in Nuuk. The only teacher training college and the only rural dean was placed there. Judged by the reports from the central administration in Nuuk the system worked well. How it was viewed along the coast remains unknown.

## The provincial councils

Bearing the Norwegian 'occupation' in East Greenland in mind, it was not surprising that the Greenlanders closed ranks around the Danes in times of danger. But

163. Niels Højlund pers. comm. 1971. See also Højlund 1972: 14, note 4.

164. Løkkegaard 1968: 174-80.

165. Svane 1945: 15.

166. Kauffmann's Greenland Report 1944 (Løkkegaard 1968: 477).



Fig. 15. The South Greenland provincial council in session 1939. At this meeting, the council was asked to accept a law allowing an expansion of the Faroese fishery, a law which was already carried in Parliament. That is why the new director of the Greenland Administration, Knud Oldendow, was present. He is seen to the left at the window. The gentleman to his right is Governor Aksel Svane. The two Danes alone wearing ties. Photo Arctic Institute.

what to be done when the protector himself needed protection? This powerful expression of the mood of the time has often been quoted: *'For the moment we are like young birds separated from their mother, uneasily flying around and calling her.'*<sup>167</sup>

The new situation in April 1940 had to be discussed with the provincial councils, but they could not convene till 3 May, and by then the governors had already established the connection with the United States. The provincial councils now had to agree, but this was not a problem. They were informed of the situation and the plans for supplies from America, and the meeting passed off with no awkward incidents. All who took the floor expressed their confidence in the Danish administration, and gratitude to the Ameri-

cans, and the necessary resolutions were carried. The meeting lasted only one day.<sup>168</sup>

Only two more meetings were held during the war, in 1941 and 1943 – for some reason 1942 and 1944 were skipped. The two councils held joint meetings if for no other reasons than that only one governor was resident in Greenland. The issues brought forward by the members dominated the agendas because the councils had no legislation from Denmark to comment on, and because the governors suggested no changes that were not absolutely necessary for carrying on business. Further legislation had to be postponed till the end of the war.

The issues raised by the members arose from the problems of daily life. As representatives of the Green-

167. Lecture on Greenlandic radio by Abel Kristiansen, 4 December 1942 (*Grønlandsposten* 1 February 1943: 25 ff).

168. MvGA 1940: 1-10.



landic producers and consumers they expressed the wishes of producers for higher prices for their products and labour, and of consumers for prices of consumer goods to be lower. They also suggested that more fish processing plants should be built, and more motorboats obtained, and complained of the poor quality of goods. Governor Eske Brun as chairman said that in general the best available goods were being acquired and sold at a loss to keep prices down; that everything possible was being done to further business; and that all suggestions to improve business, the supply situation and the methods of distribution would be investigated.

In 1943 Brun directly asked the provincial councils to speak frankly about the wishes and hopes of the Greenlandic population for Greenland when the world reorganised after the war. The response was limited to a few issues that should be postponed till after the war when the connection with Denmark could be re-established. The two war-time meetings were very much alike in the sense that the procedures consisted mostly of a dialogue between single members and the chairman, especially in 1941 when the chairman tried to persuade the members to make decisions, which could be put into effect. In 1943, by contrast, he let the members debate and make decisions, which afterwards as 'government' he was unable to approve and carry out in full.

The personal relationship between the provincial councils and Eske Brun has only been recorded in general terms. They speak of great trust in the governor, and in his firm conduct of affairs – an impression, which the minutes bear out. He promised to rectify any muddle and investigate every single complaint. Several times he emphasised that Danes had no privileges in regard to supplies compared to the Greenlanders. When told by a member that some Danes had circumvented the regulation on foreign currency, he characteristically answered: *'I can guarantee you that if I discover any Dane violating the rules on dollars the person in question will regret it for the rest of his life'*.<sup>169</sup>

One can still only speculate whether the influence of the provincial councils on the administration of Greenland was greater during the war than before. Theoretically they might have exerted a greater influ-

ence since no second opinion was forthcoming from Copenhagen, and their wish to continue after the war as a single provincial council with one governor wielding enhanced authority suggests that they felt they had a greater say.

## The press

The distribution of news in Greenland before 1940 was very sparse. All families were provided with the magazine, *Atuagagdliutit*, free of charge, but it was only distributed along the coast once a year. Thus its 200-odd pages were unable to carry news. In 1941 the provincial councils suggested that it should be distributed twice and not once a year, and so it was. A smaller magazine printed in *Qeqertarsuaq* at Disko, *Avangnâmioq*, was distributed monthly in North Greenland, but it too contained no news as such. The provincial councils financed both these magazines. In *Narsaq* Frederik Høegh issued and sold the magazine *Sujumut*, and in *Nuuk* Augo Lynge issued *Tarqissuut*. This was the full extent of the written media. However, already before the war a brief summary of news was telegraphed from *Nuuk* to the local stations, and along with other announcements this was posted on the notice board in the trading shops.

This system was continued after the forced rupture from Denmark. However, the new situation called for more regular information to counteract all sorts of rumours – this was known in Greenland as 'kamik-mail', after the traditional short boot of the Greenlanders. In December 1941 Eske Brun set up a broadcasting station in *Nuuk*, and hired a stranded biologist Christian Vibe and the Greenlandic publisher of *Atuagagdliutit*, Kristoffer Lynge, to run it. Daily for one hour in the evening this station broadcast in Danish and Greenlandic news which it received from foreign stations, as well as talks, interviews, plays and music. Broadcasts began on 5 January 1942 and initiated an immediate and dramatic spread of information. Not everybody owned a radio; in 1942 only 100 did so but by 1945 this had grown to 400. Some radios were placed in community centres, and listening in at a neighbour's house was said to be a common practice,

<sup>169</sup> LR 1943: 10.

with the result that the news travelled far beyond the actual number of receivers.<sup>170</sup> Radio had come to stay. After the war broadcasting continued to expand, and is still the most important medium for discussion in Greenland, ahead of television.

Another phenomenon born during the war was the Danish-medium magazine *Grønlandsposten*, edited by Christian Vibe. According to the statement of Eske Brun in the first issue published on 16 March 1942 the idea behind it was to create a link between Danes in Greenland. Publication was twice a month; in contrast to the Greenlandic magazines it was not free, and advertisement space had to be paid for. Even so, it was widely distributed, also among Greenlanders who could read Danish. The magazine carried small pieces on daily life and is thus a good source for providing the background to administrative sources to life in Greenland. It also contained articles and a small amount of debate. After the war it was edited for two years in Denmark, and then in 1947-50 again in Nuuk to be merged with the *Atuagagdliutit* in 1952. Thereafter it was bilingual, and is still published (2005).

## Schools

The war created a new institution for teaching: a Danish school for the children of the Danish civil servants. Hitherto these families had taught their younger children themselves sometimes by hiring a private Danish teacher to serve several families. When the children were about ten years old they were sent to boarding schools or stayed with relatives to finish school in Denmark with the result that children were often separated from their parents for several years. The war made Denmark inaccessible, so new ways had to be found. In the summer of 1941 about ten older children were sent to schools in the United States and Canada, but as the war dragged on this solution had to be discontinued because of the danger from German submarines.<sup>171</sup>

In the autumn of 1942 steps were taken to establish Danish schools, and according to a proclamation of 21 August schools could be authorised if certain requirements regarding the number of pupils, the quality of the teaching staff, and the curriculum were met. The number of pupils had to be '*enough to count as a real school*'. Any child '*who had Danish as a natural means of expression and was able to understand subjects taught in Danish*' would be accepted. At least one of the teachers should already be employed in the Greenlandic educational system, and all of them should themselves have adequate education. The curriculum should be the same as at the Copenhagen grammar schools. These new schools were supervised like the Greenlandic ones by the local authorities and the rural dean.<sup>172</sup> They were tiny: in 1942/3 schools were established at Qaqortoq, Nuuk and Aasiaat with a total of twenty-three pupils, and in the following year Ivittuut and Paamiut were added, and the number of pupils grew to thirty-eight. By 1944/5 there were thirty-six pupils in total as the school in Ivittuut had closed.<sup>173</sup> The Danish schools continued for some years after the war; in 1946/7 the one in Nuuk had nine pupils.<sup>174</sup>

## A political incident

Private citizens too were responsible for some notable initiatives and a growing number of youth associations and sports clubs and leisure activities of all kinds were reported. In 1942 Augo Lynge established one of the biggest youth associations, named *Nunavta Qitornai* (the children of our country). Lynge's aim was to awaken the youth to a new era that was opening and take responsibility for Greenland in close co-operation with the Danes.<sup>175</sup> The emphasis on the Greenlandic initiative may have caused problems for Augo Lynge because in 1943 he was transferred from the teacher training college in Nuuk to a continuation school in Aasiaat 600 km. to the north. While it was normal for

<sup>170</sup> Vibe 1946

<sup>171</sup> Bugge 1946: 71-78.

<sup>172</sup> Proclamation in *MvGA* 1942: 98.

<sup>173</sup> Announcements about the Administration of Greenland 1944 p. 260.

<sup>174</sup> *Meddelelser* 1946-48: 14.

<sup>175</sup> Augo Lynge opening speech printed in the journal of the association *Inuusuttoq* (The Young). Quoted from the Danish version by Ulloriannquaq Kristiansen (Gynther & Møller 1999: 253). For a comprehensive analysis of the political ideas of Augo Lynge, see Thorleifsen 1991.

priests and teachers to be stationed at different places during their careers, it was rumoured that in this case his political activity had become inconvenient for the local authorities.

When Augo Lynge's relocation became known in Nuuk, the inhabitants met to discuss the matter. The headmaster of the teacher training college forbade the students to participate on the grounds that they should not be allowed to discuss their teachers in public, but nearly twenty students disregarded the ban. A meeting of the teaching staff was summoned on 19 March 1943 to decide on an appropriate punishment, and the headmaster had obtained the agreement of the supervisor, rural dean Aage Bugge, and the governor Eske Brun in advance that an example must be made of the student rebels. The question divided the teaching staff. The most open dissident was Jonathan Petersen, the Greenlandic poet and composer, who refused to accept that the reason for the transfer of Augo Lynge was the need for an experienced teacher in Aasiaat. He had heard rumours of other reasons. He also totally disagreed with banning students from participating in meetings in the town, and even questioned the headmaster's authority to do so. Other teachers pointed out to him that being in charge of a boarding school the headmaster had the authority to tell the students how to behave, and they were obligated to comply with the rules and orders.

Reluctantly, Jonathan Petersen accepted a mild punishment for violating an order. Augo Lynge himself agreed that discipline had to be upheld although he could see little harm in allowing the students to participate in the meeting, and he advocated leniency. He was not pleased with the prospect of leaving Nuuk, but he said later in the summer that he had come to terms with it.

Other members of the teaching staff were firm that the need for discipline required disobedience to be punished. At a further meeting the next day the staff agreed that three of the offenders should be expelled at once, and others should have their movements restricted in different ways. The harsh reaction

of the teaching staff was too much for the rural dean, who pleaded with them to consider mitigating circumstances. Consequently the final verdict was that the three students could stay if they apologised unconditionally, which they did.<sup>176</sup>

What makes this incident more than a trivial disciplinary issue in a boarding school is that the inhabitants of Nuuk were upset by the prospect of having Augo Lynge transferred to Aasiaat and began to look for other reasons besides the official one; and the reaction of the headmaster in Aasiaat, Mikael Gam, suggests that they may have good reason for doing so. When informed of the transfer Gam sent a telegram expressing his surprise and requested an explanation. He obviously never got one, because in his later report for 1942-3 he was still asking the same question.<sup>177</sup>

One of the Danish members of the board of the Youth Association, Finn Gad, later well-known as a historian of Greenland, and at the time on the staff of the teacher training college, felt that he had to explain to the Danes in Greenland what the Nunavta Qitornai stood for, since it had got a bad reputation and been misunderstood. He assured the public that the Nunavta Qitornai bore no grudge against anyone except the complacent and those who were content with their own superior knowledge – and biases.<sup>178</sup> It seems clear that his target was someone in local society.

After the war a discussion in the Permanent Greenland Committee seemed to raise the issue again. A Greenlandic participant, Hans Lynge, criticised the head of the teacher training college for having forbidden the students to be members of the Christian Youth Association. He was corrected by Schultz-Lorentzen who said that the college did not want its students to be members of certain associations in Nuuk. Another Danish teacher from Greenland, Willy Borum, further explained: *'The ban on membership of associations is aimed only at the political ones, not the Christian ones.'* It is only fair to add that the Danish parliamentarians disagreed with the ban.<sup>179</sup> If nothing else, this incident shows that some of the local authorities in Nuuk dur-

176. Minutes from meetings of the teaching staff at the college (National Archives, Nuuk, 23.02/1.1.2).

177. National Archives, Nuuk. The telegram and the report are printed as exam texts, edited by Daniel Thorleifsen, at the university of Greenland summer 2000.

178. Gad 1943: 88f.

179. Minutes 8 March 1946 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).



Fig. 16. US Coast Guard Combat Cutter Eastwind, one of two American vessels operating at the east coast of Greenland in 1944, unloading captured German supplies at Sandodden to the Danish sledge patrol. Photo US Coast Guard/Arctic Institute.

ing the war were alert to possible subversive activity by the Greenlanders.

## East Greenland

Before the war the two eastern settlements, Ammassalik and Scoresbysund, had been administered and serviced directly from Copenhagen, and when this was no longer possible, in 1940 and 1941, the task fell to schooners from the west coast. From 1942 they were served by American ships, which had to supply their own stations anyway. The statistics show no sign of falling supplies: during the five years trading-out increased by 30% despite a 35% decrease of trading-in. This can only be due to a rise in money income, for which no explanation is known.<sup>180</sup>

The most direct contact between the Americans and the Greenlanders was in the Ammassalik district.

Already in 1941 a weather station was installed in the Ammassalik settlement, and moved to the Kulusuk peninsula in 1943. An airfield was built at Ikagteq between the two principal trading posts, Kuummiut and Sermiligaaq. The base here could hold 800 men, and contact with the local people could not be prevented despite a strict curfew. The main problem was the propensity of the Greenlanders to collect food from the American waste tip. Even after seven deaths from rotten meat the activity went on until the Americans took stronger precautions to ensure that the curfew was observed.<sup>181</sup>

Otherwise the most dramatic events and the only real acts of war took place north of Scoresbysund.<sup>182</sup> The importance of this area was the presence of the weather stations from which the weather in Western Europe could be predicted. Before the war only four such stations with radio contact existed: a Danish scientific station in Mørkefjord (nearly 77° NL), a Dan-

180. Mikkelsen 1946: 155-166.

181. Mikkelsen 1946: 155-166.

182. The following is based on Ib Paulsen (1946: 168-185).



Fig. 17. The American base Blui West One at Narsarsuaq, South Greenland, 1945. Photo Jette Bang.

ish station on Eskimonæs 300 km. to the south which also functioned as a police station (nearly  $74^{\circ}$  NL), a Danish station at Ellaø 200 km. further south (nearly  $73^{\circ}$  NL), and a Norwegian station in Myggebugten ( $73^{\circ} 30'$  NL). The direct distance from Ellaø to the settlement of Ittoqqortoormiit was 300 km., but since the only means of transport was dog sledge and it had to avoid mountains and open water, the actual travelling distance was considerably longer.

After the occupation of Denmark the governors forbade the Danish stations on the East Coast to send their messages uncoded. The Norwegian government-in-exile shut down the Norwegian station in 1940, and in the process arrested the crew of another station being constructed by workers sent out from German-occupied Norway.

According to the defence agreement of April 1941 the Americans took over the surveillance of the east coast. As part of this operation Governor Eske Brun established a Greenlandic sledge patrol to cover the coast from Kap Dalton south of Ittoqqortoormiit to Franske øen (Ile de France) on  $78^{\circ}$  NL, a direct distance of 1,000 km. The patrols were manned by the private trappers, including one Norwegian, and by

Greenlanders from Scoresbysund. They started their service on 1 August 1941 and their task was to locate any attempt by the enemy to establish stations along the coast. If they found any, they were to notify the Americans who would then destroy them. In this way a German telegraph station was discovered in the winter of 1941/2 and captured by the Americans. The patrols were not supposed to engage in fighting themselves, but a fight did take place in the spring of 1943. The Germans had landed a small force on Sabine island 100 km. northeast of Eskimonæs. The Danish patrols were then reorganised as military units to be protected by the Geneva Convention in case they were captured. The Germans attacked the station at Eskimonæs, but the crew escaped to Ellaø under cover of darkness. Later in March the Germans ambushed a three-man Danish patrol, killing one of them, Eli Knudsen, and taking the other two prisoners. One of these, Peter Nielsen, was allowed to leave a few days later to give Eli Knudsen a proper burial, having done which he took the opportunity to continue to Ellaø. The other, Marius Jensen, arrived in May at Ittoqqortoormiit with the German commander from Sabine island, Lieutenant Hermann Ritter, as his prisoner. The story was



that Jensen had overpowered Ritter when the two of them were alone, and taken him the 300 km. south to Scoresbysund. For his deed he was decorated with the American Legion of Merit and the British Empire Medal. The German station was bombed and destroyed by American planes.<sup>183</sup>

Back in 1943 Marius Jensen never told how he managed to capture the German commander, but many years later gave an explanation which made the deed easier to understand. Lieutenant Ritter had been a trapper at Svalbard before the war and spoke Norwegian, which is easily understood by Danes; actually he was acquainted with the Norwegian Henry Rudi from the sledge patrol. He was drafted for the Wehrmacht, and put in charge of the operation at Sabine island in a war with which he had no sympathy. By being deliberately careless about carrying his gun when Jensen was around, Ritter more or less arranged to be captured and led by the experienced Jensen to inhabited areas. He was obviously a nice guy, and the authorities in Ittoqqortoormiit had the greatest difficulty in preventing the local people from liking him.<sup>184</sup>

In April 1944 the patrols were again involved in open conflict. They attacked a German station near Shannon island, but failed, though without any casualties on the Danish side. The Americans took care of the station itself. Several more stations were discovered and taken out by the Americans without the Danish patrols being involved. In the great theatre of war the incidents in northeast Greenland were of little significance but they clearly demonstrated the attitude of the Danish administration in Nuuk, which wanted to contribute to the best of its ability.

## Back in Denmark

The activities of the Greenland Administration in Copenhagen during the war were necessarily very modest. They had no supplies to arrange for; none of the countless issues, which the governors and provin-

cial councils usually sent to Copenhagen to be decided; no legislation to prepare. The redundant staff was allocated to other ministries, the rest was occupied in making a report describing the development in Greenland based on the archives. The result was published 1942-47 as *Sammendrag af statistiske Oplysninger om Grønland* (Summary of Statistical Information on Greenland) which has been a major source for my survey of the material development in Greenland before the Second World War.

In addition to this work the Administration tried to get all available information from Greenland. The telegraph line was closed on 9 April 1940, and not reopened till 22 April. Thereafter people were allowed to communicate family news, but any administrative messages were out of the question. Censorship existed at both ends of the line. Private letters now and then got through to Greenland, some of them were printed in *Grønlandsposten* without saying how the letter had circumvented the blockade.

A much more important source for the Greenland Administration was illegal listening to the telegraphic traffic between Nuuk and the United States. This material was the main source for a 163-page report in March 1945 made by the administration. Not much could be done except wait and see. Director Oldendow tried to reach the United States in 1940 to administer Greenland from there, but the Americans would not let him in. The Permanent Greenland Committee was told that he had intended to go on to Greenland if he had succeeded in getting to the United States.<sup>185</sup>

In Denmark the main political problem regarding Greenland was to avoid provoking the Germans to do anything which could endanger Danish sovereignty over Greenland. Until 1942 the Germans were equally eager to avoid giving the Americans reasons to take over in Greenland. This might be the reason why Copenhagen did not react to the governors when they signed the base agreement in 1941. The government was piqued by the action, but kept its regrets to itself.<sup>186</sup>

183. Brun 1946 a: 55. A full report of casualties should include the disappearance of the freighter *Hans Egede* 1942 with its crew of twenty-three men. As late as 1968 it was established that it had been sunk by the German submarine *U-587* south of Newfoundland on 4 March 1942. See Rohwer 1983: 83.

184. Odsbjerg 1990: 91-94.

185. Minutes 7 May 1940 and 22 May 1940 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

186. Løkkegaard 1968: 395.



In the Permanent Greenland Committee developments in Greenland were eagerly followed, and the minutes can give some impression of their political judgement.<sup>187</sup> Director Oldendow became a frequent guest in the committee. It seems that he shared his information with the committee. Immediately after the occupation the committee could hardly understand the actions of Kauffmann and the governors. To Danish politicians the government was still in business and running Denmark and her dependencies in spite of the German occupation. Denmark was not belligerent, and they could not understand and accept that the outside world acted as if she was controlled by Germany.

The Liberal Leftist, Vanggaard, and the Conservative, Ellinger, were especially upset by the blunt insubordination of Kauffmann and the governors. They were completely unable to understand the buying of supplies in the United States in 1940, because extra supplies had been sent from Denmark to Greenland. Oldendow showed more understanding for the need to get extra supplies when possible. As time went by, the view gained foothold that Kauffmann and the governors were acting in what they deemed the best interest for Denmark, and that they had to consider the American view. On 7 May such views were aired by the Social Democrat, Hauberg, and by the Radical Leftist, Oluf Steen on 19 June 1940. The politicians were very suspicious about the real American intentions in Greenland. From the autumn of 1941 when the base agreement became known, and the United States entered the war this sort of worry became more sporadic in the fewer and fewer meetings. But some meetings were held, also after 29 August 1943 when the Danish government resigned in protest against German actions. For the rest of the war no new government was appointed, and the Permanent Secretaries carried out normal administration holding clandestine meetings with the politicians when needed. The last meeting in the committee during the war was on 7 December 1944. As at the previous meetings its main business was a report from Oldendow about conditions in Greenland.

**Table 18.** Funds collected in Greenland during the war.

For reconstruction in Denmark	84,015
For allied war efforts (sent to the British government)	40,1
For aid to refugees (sent to Stockholm)	38,9
For Red Cross (sent to the American Red Cross)	4,8
For a memorial for those drowned in the loss of the Hans Egede in Nuuk	2,25
Total	170,065

The war resulted in great changes in Greenland. Supplies and sales moved to the United States, and the administration was centralised in Nuuk. Financially speaking there was progress during the war in respect of production as well as living standards especially for the Greenlandic providers. The American presence at the bases inevitably brought the Greenlanders into contact with foreigners, especially in the district of Qaqortoq and Ammassalik. But most things remained unchanged. As little as possible was changed in rules and regulations. The Danish administration continued unaffected, politically as well as in trade and supplies. The trading monopoly and restricted access to the country was upheld in full for the American bases. The political main aim: to maintain Greenland under Danish sovereignty and the Greenlanders' adherence to Denmark was never threatened – on the contrary. All sources testify the still unabated wish of the Greenlanders to share the future with Denmark. Money was even collected to help Denmark to overcome the devastation of war. The purposes and amounts in Dkr. Are listed in table 18.<sup>188</sup>

This was a substantial amount for the 20,000-odd Danes and Greenlanders in Greenland.

Not until the winter of 1944/5 did the very few articles written by Greenlanders in *Grønlandsposten* begin to reflect on what should be done after the war. They were concerned with equal salaries for Danes and Greenlanders, equal jurisdiction and more teaching also in Danish. The main aim was greater self-reliance for Greenlanders. There was absolutely no ill-will towards Denmark, but rather confidence that their wishes would be realised through co-operation with the Danes.<sup>189</sup>

187. Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee 1940-4.

188. *Grønlandsposten* 1945: 219.

189. Trading post manager Nicolaj Rosing in *Grønlandsposten* 16 February 1945: 38-40.

# The immediate postwar years

There was equal rejoicing in Greenland and Denmark at the news of the German capitulation. Reports from along the whole coast told of spontaneous demonstrations of joy in a shared Danish-Greenlandic celebration. The years of uncertainty were over, connections with Denmark could be resumed, and a bright new era beckoned. On 5 May the reunion telegrams flew across the Atlantic full of hope for the future. Oldendow was most specific, acknowledging that there had been changes in Greenland during the war, and saying that he would be very receptive to suggestions for change.<sup>190</sup>

There is no reason to doubt the good intentions, but people's experiences during the war had been different, the main division being between those who had served in Greenland, and those who spent the war years in Denmark. Different experiences created different ideas for the future.

## Positions in the summer of 1945

For Denmark in May 1945 the main problems were to be recognised as a partner on the winning side in the war, and to restore normal foreign trade. During the war Germany had been the sole market, and this was destroyed overnight. Greenland had always been a minor issue in Danish politics, and was run largely by the Greenland administration. It had attracted some political interest before the war, and more was to come now, but the government seems to have devoted little energy to the question. It expected to resume control on the same lines as before the war, continuing to take into account the wishes of the Greenlanders.

Oldendow had the task of restoring normal relations. He had taken over on the death of Daugaard-Jensen in 1938, and had only one normal year before

the war to prove himself. In 1939 he did what was expected of him, visiting Greenland and persuading a reluctant provincial council to accept the extension of Faroese fishing rights in Greenlandic waters. Unlike his predecessor, he had managed to establish a good working relationship with the Permanent Greenland Committee by providing it with very full information. For example, he reported Kauffmann's criticism of the governors (see above), but he also constantly emphasised the need to hear opposing views before making judgement. He willingly gave credit to Eske Brun for his management of affairs in Greenland during the war.<sup>191</sup>

For Buhl, the Prime Minister, Oldendow prepared two papers in late June on the general situation just before Brun returned to Denmark on 31 July 1945. The papers, read to the Permanent Greenland Committee on 8 August, were more suspicious of Brun than previous statements.<sup>192</sup> The first paper of 27 July commented on Brun's report of 12 May 1945. Oldendow agreed with him that many seeds for future progress had been sown during the war, but felt uneasy about *'the new desires which the administration would probably be confronted with officially, materially and personally.'* He suggested to the Prime Minister that a special committee should be set up consisting of the Permanent Greenland Committee, four representatives from the provincial councils, and himself to evaluate new principles and procedures for Greenland. He argued that this would allay any anxieties felt by the public at large.

The other paper of 28 July evaluated the criticism which Kauffmann had levelled against the governors. Oldendow pleaded for leniency for Aksel Svane who he felt had been sufficiently penalised by being somewhat isolated in the United States during the war due to the unfortunate press interview. Towards Brun

190. Telegrams in GSA 1945: 9-14.

191. Minutes 17 May and 20 June 1945 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

192. Minutes 27 and 28 July 1945, appendix (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).



Fig. 18. In the summer of 1945 most Danish civil servants in Greenland were replaced, having spent 5 years of continuous service there during World War II. The photo shows the welcoming of Governor Eske Brun to his successor C.F. Simony on 30 June 1945 in front of the American Embassy in Nuuk. Photo US Coast Guard/Arctic Institute.

Oldendow was more reserved. Brun's running of internal Greenland affairs was praised, as was the fact that he had been backed up by his officials. However, Oldendow also repeated criticism of Brun, noting that it was easy to be popular when you do not have to ask anyone for permission before spending money. Oldendow certainly did not try to get rid of Brun; he acknowledged his good services, and confirmed that, if the new Prime Minister wished, Brun would be acceptable as assistant director of the Greenland administration, a post that had been promised him in 1938. As further proof of his goodwill Oldendow did not mention that the previous Prime Minister Stauning

had cancelled this promise in July 1941.<sup>193</sup> On the other side, Oldendow did mention rumours that Brun would prefer to stay in Greenland as the sole governor with extended powers. This seems to reflect the dilemma of a high-ranking civil servant, unsure of the intentions of his government, and anxious to cover himself on all sides.

Oldendow's effort to cut Brun down to human size was perhaps needed after the enthusiastic words of the editor of *Grønlandsposten* who had written eulogistically of Brun on his departure, praising his strong will, courage, and determination. The editor looked forward to seeing the '*profound development*', begun

193. Løkkegaard 1069: 396.

by Brun continued – by Brun himself, because the future more than ever called for ‘*the actions of a strong man*’.<sup>194</sup> Brun also impressed the Danish press. The coverage of his arrival in Denmark was filled with expressions such as ‘*the giant figure of Brun towered over everyone*’, ‘*a giant with a giant’s strength*’, and ‘*the uncrowned king of Greenland*’.<sup>195</sup>

In the July papers Oldendow had boldly suggested a discussion of the future in the Permanent Greenland Committee, with which he had good relations and which endorsed the plan at its meeting on 16 August 1945. Oldendow forewarned the committee that the desire for one central authority in Greenland had strong support among the Danes in Greenland as well as among the Greenlanders. He was presumably pleased that the committee did not like this idea. In his paper of 27 July he himself had advised the Prime Minister to be constantly aware of the wishes of Greenland, and benevolently disposed towards them but at the same time alert to ‘*any attempt at division, and at fomenting separatism*.’ It was for exactly the same reason that the Conservative Ellinger was against a centralised authority in Greenland, and Vanggaard later sent the committee a letter along the same lines. The committee doubted whether North Greenland really wanted to become merely ‘*one great outpost*’, as Oldendow put it.

In Greenland as elsewhere people expected from 1943 that the war would soon come to an end. Eske Brun in that year suggested to the provincial councils that they talk about the time after the war; nothing happened for a while, but the Danes in Greenland soon began to have ideas about what life would be like there after the war. The editor of *Grønlandsposten*, Christian Vibe, started the debate in 1944 by saying that Denmark had great plans for Greenland<sup>196</sup>, but that plans were also being formed in Greenland. In May 1944 the school headmaster Mikael Gam, who later became Minister for Greenland, was more specif-

ic when he listed the most important issues to be dealt with: it was essential to continue the transit traffic system and the location of the central authority in Nuuk.<sup>197</sup> In December Vibe also endorsed the continuation of the transit traffic system although he wanted it completely mechanised in order to serve the population better. As the end of the war came nearer Villy Borum, a school head, made a list of reforms for Greenlandic schools. In particular they should be freed from the surveillance by the church, and Danish should be the obligatory language of instruction.<sup>198</sup>

Before Vibe left for Denmark in the summer of 1945 he wrote a farewell article expressing the wish that Danes now arriving in Greenland would pick up the work where it was left off in 1945 – not where it was left off in 1939. Furthermore, new fresh blood was needed in Greenland – certainly not more civil servants, but ‘*private citizens full of initiative to settle in the country*’. Greenlandic youth should be given faith in the future to avoid repercussions later. They should have better teaching in new centralised schools, and salaries and responsibility should be on an equal footing with those of Danes in Greenland.<sup>199</sup> These articles may well have planted some good ideas among the Greenlanders capable of reading Danish, and at the same time informed Danish politicians of what proposals might be expected from Greenland. A more authoritative message came from Governor Brun, whom the Prime Minister had asked to give his opinion on tasks to be faced in Greenland. This he did in a report of September 1945.<sup>200</sup>

Brun asked that his views be seen as starting-points for research, and not indicating what should be done right away. However, profound changes were signalled from the beginning. There was no way back to the old Greenland, because the stock of animals to be hunted was insufficient for the rising number of Greenlanders, and the rising level of education and the wartime experiences of the Greenlanders had

194. *Grønlandsposten* 1 July 1945: 147f.

195. The newspaper B.T. 1 August, *Jyllandsposten* 1 August, *Social-Demokraten* 2 August 1945.

196. He may be referring to an article in the Danish newspaper *Politiken* 17 November 1942 in which Oldendow said that electrification of Greenland was prepared, and that a thorough investigation of the mineral resources should be carried out. This article was reprinted in *Grønlandsposten* 16 August 1943.

197. *Grønlandsposten* 6 May 1944.

198. *Grønlandsposten* 1 May 1945.

199. *Grønlandsposten* 1 August 1945: 170-173.

200. Minutes 1946, Appendix (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

made them demand a greater say in their future. His main idea was to create an economy based on the actual conditions in Greenland, so that the Greenlanders could earn a decent living. Other costs for administration, education and the health service would be met from Denmark. The age-old aim of developing Greenland so that the Greenlanders could survive their country being opened up had to be pursued urgently. The monopoly could be eased for non-essential goods, and to centralise production and trade at fewer and larger settlements could strengthen the economy. This would facilitate mechanisation and create a basis for fair wages for the workers. As it was, wages were insufficient to sustain a decent living standard, and the workers could not be expected to tolerate this indefinitely. A rise in wages should be followed by a rise in prices so the Greenlandic price level would catch up with world prices. This was also necessary because imported, subsidised food would otherwise drive locally produced food out of the market. Brun was more hesitant about supporting the much-discussed introduction of one central authority; he thought it would come in due course, but he doubted whether people in North Greenland really wanted it. In his opinion it should await a genuine popular demand in Greenland.

Thus Brun highlighted several reforms to speed up Greenland's development, but it took five years for the system to mature enough to make the changes possible. The main elements were introduced in the great reform in 1950, and it is fair to say that Brun was the first to formulate the plans.

There were two main reasons for the delay: the negative response of Oldendow, which only public pressure in Denmark was able to overcome, and caution among the Greenlanders. Their first reactions clearly favoured modernisation of production and society. Nicolaj Rosing, a trading post manager and member of the provincial council, initiated the debate in February 1945. He said the current rate of development was too slow to make the Greenlanders self-sustaining in the foreseeable future, and to speed it up he wanted women's franchise and an increase in edu-

cation. He also wanted greater equality between Danes and Greenlanders in wages, and before the law.

This line of argument has been common to much of colonial history when a westernised élite strives to obtain equal status with the Europeans in the country. It was also typical of this stage in the growth of a native nationalism that Rosing had no grudge against the Danes, but looked on them as co-operators in the process of leading Greenland to '*a greater self-dependence*'.<sup>201</sup> This attitude is well exemplified in the words of Patrice Lumumba writing from the Belgian Congo in 1957. '*We rely with optimism on the good faith of the Belgian Government and are convinced that no effort will be neglected, either by the Belgians, or by the native élites, to facilitate and hasten the evolution of the indigenous populations towards autonomy.*' and later '*Our dearest wish – perhaps some will find it utopian – is to found in the Congo a nation in which differences of race and religion will melt away, a homogeneous society composed of Belgians and Congolese, who with a single impulse will link their hearts to the destinies of the country.*'<sup>202</sup>

Before the meeting of the provincial council in August 1945 Rosing tried to prepare the ground for an idea which, coming from Greenlanders, was quite new, though it had been suggested before in Denmark: to open up the country a little so that Faroese and Danes as private entrepreneurs could teach the Greenlanders modern fishing.<sup>203</sup> The other council members did not give their views in advance of the meeting, but two other highly regarded Greenlanders, Frederik Nielsen of the teacher training college, and his colleague Augo Lynge, published their views. Nielsen felt they were on the threshold of a new age as the connection with Denmark was re-established. He hoped for a clearer definition of the relationship between Denmark and Greenland. He asked: '*Are we a part of Denmark with full civil rights or are we a colonial population with special laws?*' His preference was for the former alternative of a close connection. His other wish was for the Greenlanders to become proficient in Danish, a necessary pre-requisite for coping with the era that was beginning. The Greenlandic language

201. *Grønlandsposten* 16 February 1945: 38-40. The article was translated from Greenlandic so the phrases used cannot be analysed in terms of a European political discourse.

202. Grimal 1978: 401. The translation from French might explain the minor flaws in the English grammar.

203. *Grønlandsposten* 1 July 1945: 149f.



would survive, but it was imperative that the Greenlanders should become fully Danish-speaking.<sup>204</sup>

Many Greenlanders did not share such radical views, but Rosing was not alone. In the 1930s Augo Lynge had expressed the same opinion, and he now restated it in a long article in *Grønlandsposten*.<sup>205</sup> This was an eloquently written essay which set some political goals, which no Greenlander – not even Lynge himself – had expressed before. His starting-point was the Greenlanders' attitude of giving up easily, which others had described as inertia, weakness, dullness, laziness, carelessness, and irresponsibility and in other uncomplimentary ways. The problem was that his countrymen were led to believe that this described their fundamental nature – an attitude he wanted to change. *'If you want to change people'*, he claimed, *'you have to start by changing their environment.'* The heaviest burden the Greenlanders had to bear was their language. It kept them spiritually isolated behind its walls which therefore had to be broken down in spite of their love of their language – otherwise all other reforms would be in vain. Lynge's wish was not to see the Greenlanders destroyed as a nation; it was to see them saved as a nation. The nationalism he advocated did not envisage separation from Denmark or any attempt to erase the Danish elements in Greenlandic culture. Rather it aimed at awakening the people and bolstering *'its self-esteem, self-confidence, self-discipline, and dignity'*. Greenland was to *'develop inside the Danish realm to social, political, economic and cultural equality. The same demands, the same duties, the same opportunities for Danes as well as for Greenlanders, or in other words: we want to make a good Danish citizen out of the Greenlander.'*

How many Greenlanders shared these views? They were expressed by people at Nuuk, the centre. What of opinion in the small isolated settlements along the coast with almost no connection to each other or to the outer world? Views expressed in the debate in the provincial council may reveal how widespread the Nuuk opinion was: the members were elected from all along the coast and should be a reliable barometer of the mood in Greenland as a whole.

The provincial councils met for a joint session in Nuuk from 28 August to 20 September 1945, an unusually long session compared with earlier ones which normally lasted one or two weeks. The air was thick with ideas for reform. Oldendow had sent a letter in advance with a warning not to make over-hasty reforms. He expressed his hope – for the benefit of Greenland and the Greenlanders, that *'a momentary mood'* would not carry the day, but that the provincial councils would be guided as ever by *'wise and responsible consideration of what would be of the lasting benefit to Greenlandic society'*.<sup>206</sup> It was only natural that Magnus Jensen, the civil servant from Denmark who was attending on behalf of the director put forward the concrete plans in the same spirit. He maintained that careful consideration and research were needed before final plans could be drawn up. There was nothing revolutionary in the plans, and both the overt and covert modernisers in Greenland must have seen it as a challenge that no reference was made to the experience gained during the war; instead an appeal was made to *'the spirit of the Copenhagen negotiations in 1939'*

Brun had already left for Denmark and in his place the chair was taken by the interim governor C.F. Simonö, who showed a greater understanding of the mood in Nuuk. Although he characterised conditions during the war as exceptional and anticipated a return to more normal conditions, he acknowledged that great progress had been made during the war – progress which should not only be maintained, but also increased.<sup>207</sup> As usual the agenda was filled with local issues from the constituencies, but this time more far-reaching questions were raised by the Greenlanders such as the influence of the provincial councils on the forthcoming revision of the law governing Greenland, the question of Greenlandic representation on the Permanent Greenland Committee, and equal jurisdiction for every inhabitant of Greenland.

Peter Nielsen, a civil servant at Qeqertarsuaq in the north, started the debate by suggesting that the final authority should be located in Greenland. It soon became clear that he wanted the existing central

204. *Grønlandsposten* 1 June 1945: 222-4.

205. *Grønlandsposten* 16 June 1945: 135-8; *Grønlandsposten* 1 November 1945: 223-5.

206. LR 1945: 440-42.

207. LR 1945: 440-45.



authority at Nuuk to continue and he also suggested that the provincial councils should be amalgamated. The transit traffic system should remain. His fellow members – including those from the North – supported this.<sup>208</sup> Therefore speculation that North Greenland was anxious about having a central Greenlandic authority in Nuuk appears to be unfounded, but even so the reform was not easily agreed during the negotiations in Copenhagen the following year.

Gerhard Egede, the pastor in Paamiut, suggested that the new law should include a clause authorising the provincial council to participate directly in the work of the Permanent Greenland Committee. Again there was general agreement. Another member, the trading post manager Nikolaj Rosing, called for equal jurisdiction to apply to everyone in Greenland. If this could not be done in full straight away, then Danish law should initially be extended to cover the Danish-speaking Greenlanders. An internal committee coordinated the suggestions into a composite resolution which was carried at the end of the session.

A summary follows:<sup>209</sup>

- The two governorships should be amalgamated into a single governorship in Nuuk. The reasons given were the need for quicker decisions and the belief that *'a people should be administered from the country in which they live.'*
- The new governor should have more authority than the governors had before the war, especially over finance. He should also have a larger staff.
- One provincial council should be established. The experience of joint meetings during the war had shown that common interests outweighed local ones.
- The transit traffic system introduced during the war should continue. This was for a purely political reason. The provincial council was willing to let economic and practical considerations be decisive in the administration of Greenland, but it expressed the view that the transit harbours could encourage the development of an independent Greenlandic merchant class, and that the system would also facilitate a coastal route, which *'would be of paramount importance in devel-*

*oping a feeling among the Greenlanders of belonging together'*, and allow an un-monopolised trade to grow between them.

- There should be equality between Danes and Greenlanders in Greenland. This point was formulated in a sophisticated way – there should be no differences between Danes and Greenlanders when their conditions were the same. This had to mean that the Greenlanders who were to obtain equality were those who had the same kind of jobs as the Danish officials, a group over-represented in the provincial council.
- The provincial council's authority *'to implement certain laws affecting the Greenlandic people'* should be extended.
- Greenlandic members should be added to the Danish Permanent Greenlandic Committee in Parliament.

Finally, the resolution authorised a delegation to initiate negotiations in Copenhagen, and requested that the provincial councils should be consulted again before any legislation was carried through.

This resolution was the Greenlandic model for obtaining more political influence as a colonial people. On the one hand they wanted more political power to be located in their country, and on the other they wanted a greater say in the formulation of Greenlandic policy in Denmark. Seen in the perspective of European colonial policy, the increased local power could be termed the British model leading to autonomy and independence, while greater influence on metropolitan policy was the French model leading to integration and assimilation. As it turned out, the Danes were keener on the French model, and only turned to the British model a generation later with the introduction of Home Rule in 1979.

Besides the issues covered in the composite resolution other matters affecting further developments within Greenland and her further relationship with Denmark were discussed. In some of these issues the political content was most important, the aim being greater equality with the Danes. Thus the council wanted the Greenlandic trading post managers to be ex officio members of the district councils as were

208. LR 1945: 450-57.

209. LR 1945: 560-62.

some of the Danish managers. In the same way the council wanted to give Greenlanders the possibility of being employed at the cryolite mine and as seamen on ships going to Denmark – activities previously barred to the Greenlanders. However, during the war Greenlanders had been employed on ships to America, and they also had cleaning and cooking jobs at the cryolite mine. The wartime shortage of manpower seems to have been a potent equaliser.

A more internal Greenlandic affair was the franchise and eligibility for election of women. The council agreed on the franchise, but not on eligibility, since elected members of the municipal councils had some policing functions which, it was argued, could not be performed by women. Nikolaj Rosing failed to persuade the council to agree to open up Greenland a little to Danish and Faroese pioneers: much of this debate centred round the competition that this would inflict on the Greenlanders, and the majority did not wish to remove the protection that isolating it from foreigners brought to Greenland.<sup>210</sup> Another trading post manager, Ferdinand Knudsen, suggested lifting the monopoly a little by letting Greenlanders import goods to sell on the market independently, but the council rejected this also.

There had long been a wish for improved education. Now the council wanted instruction in Danish in at least two other subjects besides the Danish language, and the establishment of Danish boarding schools; the intention was to make education in Greenland equivalent to that in Denmark so that Greenlanders might have the opportunity to qualify for all positions in the country.

Thus there was a clear wish for a central administration in Greenland with greater powers, a permanent connection to the Danish political system, and greater equality in many areas. However, what was not demanded should also be noted. The monopoly system and the isolation of Greenland should not be

touched – so much for the suggestions from Christian Vibe and Nikolaj Rosing to move in that direction – and the proposals of Frederik Nielsen and Augo Lynge for radical danification also had no chance in the provincial council. A slight increase in the possibility of learning Danish was all the danification the provincial council asked for. After the end of the session of the provincial council further negotiations were to take place in Copenhagen. The provincial council had appointed Gerhard Egede, Jørgen Chemnitz, Hans Lynge, and Peter Nielsen from its members to represent it in Copenhagen as well as the former members Augo Lynge and Frederik Lynge who had both participated in 1939.<sup>211</sup>

The public mood in Denmark, as reflected in the press, was sympathetic to the Greenlanders. Understanding was shown of the desire for a central authority in Nuuk, and the newspapers were clearly flattered by the Greenlanders' devotion to Denmark which was a pleasant contrast to Iceland's declaration of independence in 1944, and the movement for independence in the Faroes.<sup>212</sup> When the delegation arrived on 21 December it gave a press conference with received wide coverage. Besides the issues already aired, others had arisen, which the delegation must have discussed during the long sea voyage.<sup>213</sup> The wish for larger and more efficient fishing vessels and for modern fish processing factories was mentioned in the newspapers but not in the provincial councils' discussions. Improvements in health care also received more attention in the press than they had been in the councils.<sup>214</sup>

## The negotiations in 1946<sup>215</sup>

The Greenland administration and the Permanent Greenland Committee were still very reluctant to grant the Greenlanders' principal wish, which was a central administration in Nuuk. Before the Green-

210. LR 1945: 460-63.

211. The invitation to negotiations was brought to the attention of the members on 31 August, three days after the opening of the session (LR-45: 452).

212. The newspapers *Ekstrabladet* 25 September 1945; *Langelands Tidende*, *Lolland-Falsters Social-Demokrat* and *B.T.* 17 November 1945; *Land og Folk* 1 December 1945.

213. Meetings were held during the crossing according to delegate Hans Lynge. *Information* 10 January 1946.

214. The most comprehensive articles were in *Politiken*, *Børsen*, *Social-Demokraten*, *Berlingske Tidende*, and *Kristelig Dagblad* 21 December 1945.

215. Report 1946; *Grønlandsposten*; Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee.

landic delegation arrived in Copenhagen Oldendow briefed the Committee on the new situation, and warned against having the central administration in Nuuk for political reasons, arguing that it might lead to Greenlandic separatism. This fear, he maintained, was the main reason why the provincial councils had never been summoned to a joint meeting before the war although it had been possible under the existing law. But he had diametrically changed his opinion over introducing Danish in the Greenlandic schools, having been sceptical before the war; he admitted that it had been an error not to be more receptive to the Greenlanders' wish for this merely for '*national-political reasons*'. It is not possible to say whether this was a genuine change of view or whether he was merely following the more nationalistic mood in Denmark just after the war, which for example caused right-wing politicians to urge reunification with the southern part of the Duchy of Slesvig (the northern part had been regained in 1920). The Faroese self-government movement had also stirred up nationalistic feelings.

Negotiations in the Committee began on 16 January 1946. From the very beginning the question of setting up a proper commission to propose changes in the law governing Greenlandic matters was set aside. Earlier (16 August 1945) the inspector for East Greenland, Ejnar Mikkelsen, had suggested such a commission to the Committee, and in Parliament a new party, Dansk Samling, had made the same proposal: such a commission would be '*to consider the nascent tendencies among the Greenlandic population towards self-government*'.<sup>216</sup> Now the Greenlandic delegates Frederik Lynge and Gerhard Egede put forward the same ideas, saying that it was the opinion of both the Greenlanders and the Danish officials in Greenland that a commission of experts, like that of 1921, was necessary. But the chairman, the former Prime Minister Buhl, promised that all issues including the issue about governance could be discussed in the Committee, and that its proposals would be forwarded to the Prime Minister. This seemed to pacify the Greenlanders who did not press for a commission. The

Greenlandic delegate, Hans Lynge, even saw advantage in having issues discussed in a political committee rather than in a commission run by the officials from the Greenland administration.<sup>217</sup>

In contrast to 1939 the agenda in 1946 was the list of requests from the Greenlanders. First and foremost was the wish to unite the two provinces of Greenland under one central administration and one provincial council. The fifteen points on the list included several that had not been discussed in the provincial council in 1945. For a delegation to expand the agenda beyond what it had been asked to address was unorthodox and can only be explained by the stage that political culture in Greenland had reached at the time: the delegates obviously felt free to raise any question they liked, not only these emanating from the provincial council.

The argument in favour of centralization in Greenland was purely political: '*We wish Greenland to be one country, and the population to feel like one people instead of two*'.<sup>218</sup> But for the Danes that was exactly the problem, they defended twin administration from criticism, and even questioned whether the resolution from the provincial council truly represented the view in Greenland. They did not comment on their main worry – the possible political consequences of centralisation.

The Greenlanders' response to this frontal attack on their main proposals was not united. Frederik Lynge, from North Greenland, was against the idea of one governor, since the distance from the centre to the most remote corners of Greenlandic society would be so great – as had been the case during the war, he argued.<sup>219</sup> Defeat could be seen looming on the horizon when Eske Brun also expressed doubts that this was the right time to introduce a central administration. The Greenlanders had put their trust in Brun supporting them on this issue. At five meetings and additional subcommittee meetings the debate continued, and the Greenlanders except Frederik Lynge fought hard to get the single central administration accepted by the Danes. They fought a losing battle. The final

216. *Dansk Samling* (Danish togetherness) was a short-lived bourgeois party which emerged in the turmoil of the 1930s and the war. MP Stærmosé in Parliament 30 November 1945 (RTFF 1945/46: 607).

217. Minutes 1946: 2f (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

218. Jørgen Chemnitz (Minutes 1946: 5, Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

219. Minutes 1946: 7, Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee.

report noted agreement on retaining two governors at least for the next five years, and a joint session of the two provincial councils every second year. The majority of the Greenlandic delegation had their desire for a central administration noted in principle, and the Danish members in the committee paid tribute to the political wish of strengthening the fellow feeling between the Greenlanders. When this main battle was lost, nobody seemed to have the strength to press the other part of the resolution from the provincial councils: greater influence for themselves. The final report did not even bother to mention that this was not obtained.<sup>220</sup>

The provincial council resolution also proposed the transit traffic system should continue. But the Greenlandic delegation was a bit worried about the isolation which certain settlements would suffer in this system, and the Danes were not too keen either. The Greenland Administration was firmly against for economic reasons. Continuation of the transit traffic system was not recommended. On the other side the Danes did agree to the proposal for a coastal trading route thereby acknowledging the wish for strengthening internal communications in Greenland. The Greenland administration would apply to the financial authorities for permission to build a coastal vessel. Everybody was pleased.<sup>221</sup>

The discussion of greater equality between Greenlanders and Danes in Greenland can only be seen in the final report<sup>222</sup> which states that the Greenlanders did not wish to have Danish laws introduced as a whole. They only wanted to have some of the privileges which the Danes in Greenland had, such as the right to import goods from Denmark for their own consumption, including liquor. The committee was in favour, and the administration promised to co-operate with the provincial councils on revising the rules.<sup>223</sup>

In the Nuuk resolution the Greenlanders had sought a direct path to the Danish politicians circum-

venting the Greenland Administration with the wish to be represented in the Permanent Greenland Committee. This proposal met a very reluctant response in Denmark. Numerous practical objections were raised. A Greenlandic member could not travel from his home to the meetings, which were often held weekly, and if he stayed permanently in Copenhagen this would cut him off from involvement in political discussion in Greenland. Furthermore, the committee was a subcommittee of Parliament, and only members of Parliament could be members. The committee was willing to discuss matters with a Greenlandic delegation when needed, but actual membership of the committee was not possible.<sup>224</sup> Thus the Danes accepted very little of the 1945 resolution, and none of the changes that were accepted needed new legislation.

Some of the provincial councils' other requests met the same fate. The idea of having Greenlandic trading post managers as *ex officio* members of the district councils was postponed for discussion with the provincial councils because a majority of the Greenlandic delegation was against it.<sup>225</sup> The reason for accepting the idea of women's franchise but rejecting women's eligibility was very different. Neither the delegation nor the Danes were keen to introduce such a half-measure, but they resolved to ask the provincial councils to consider the matter again, and promised that full women's rights would be welcomed.<sup>226</sup>

The improvement of the broadcasting station in Nuuk was also postponed because of its expense, and because of the committee's belief that the new short-wave station in Denmark could reach all of Greenland.<sup>227</sup>

Up to this point we have focussed on the Greenlandic requests which were not accepted. Those requests seemed to aim at strengthening Greenlandic national feeling, and it is tempting to interpret the rejection as a Danish move to counteract the first step on the road to independence. However, analysis has

220. Minutes 1946: 1-25, Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee; Report 1946: 12f.

221. Minutes 1946: 72-4, Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee; Report 1946: 25.

222. The issue was not discussed in the main committee, and from the subcommittee only stenographic notes are available.

223. Report 1946: 19f.

224. Report 1946: 18.

225. Report 1946: 17.

226. Report 1946: 15.

227. Report 1946: 34.

shown that this was only certain in the case of the rejection of a central authority in Nuuk. The official report did not reveal the real reason, fear of separation, but covered it up in technical impracticalities.

However important the requests that were rejected, they were far fewer than those that were accommodated. There was no trouble in agreeing on the introduction of direct election to the provincial councils,<sup>228</sup> an issue raised by the delegation without prior discussion in the provincial councils. It is safe to assume that Augo Lynge took the initiative over this, since he had already proposed direct election in his magazine, *Tarqigssût* in 1944, because he argued that indirect election via the municipal councils for the more populous settlements was disadvantageous. And Augo Lynge was the person who presented the Greenlandic requests on behalf of the delegation<sup>229</sup> Many improvements in the economic area were also accepted, more indeed than the provincial councils had requested. The same was true of plans for developing education and health care. The report upheld the monopoly and the closing of Greenland to outsiders. This reflected the unanimous wish of the delegation and, as we have seen, the wish of the provincial councils. Giving the provincial councils the opportunity to suggest that Danes with personal connections to Greenland could be allowed to settle there created a small opening. And the committee wanted to see restricted tourism in Greenland on guided tours.<sup>230</sup>

These improvements were all minor, but together they constituted a new pattern in the overall economic policy. The suggestions from the committee would result in a yearly deficit on the Greenland budget of Dkr. 2 million, and if investments were spread over five years the result would be an additional yearly deficit of Dkr. 1.6 million. This amount of Dkr. 3.6 million per year must be seen against an annual deficit of Dkr. 200,000 in normal years before the war. The committee was not keen to admit that the changes amounted to the introduction of a new economic policy towards

Greenland. It recognised that the decision lay with the financial authorities, but it found the expenses justifiable, and assumed that the investments would pay off in a larger income for Greenlandic society.<sup>231</sup>

The change in attitude towards balanced budgets appeared late in the negotiations. On 20 March 1946 Oldendow argued against tourism in Greenland on the ground that it would result in an increased deficit. Halfdan Hendriksen, a Conservative, answered that the main consideration was whether it was of benefit to Greenland, and that the question of surplus or deficit in the budget was of secondary importance. Oldendow was quick to grasp the outstretched hand and asked: *'Are we in the administration allowed to consider this statement as the general attitude?'* Hendriksen confirmed that the Conservative Party would sanction all necessary and reasonable expenses to create a better Greenland, and the Liberal Left, the Radical Left, and the only Communist in the committee joined him. P.P. Sveistrup, the office head in the administration, attempted a further squeeze by asking if the administration would be allowed to use these statements in their discussion with the Ministry of Finance about salaries in Greenland, in which they had hitherto been bound by the overall policy of balanced budgets. The politicians jammed on the brakes; they were in favour of risking a deficit by modernising Greenland, but not by raising the Greenlanders' salaries.<sup>232</sup>

The salaries of Greenlanders rested on a regulation of 1920 which was subject to increases of 15% in 1938 and 40% in 1945. In 1945 the provincial councils had suggested a rise of 75% over the 1920 figures.<sup>233</sup> Oldendow had told the committee earlier that accommodating this was totally unthinkable.<sup>234</sup> But negotiations on salaries had taken place separately in the administration, and some revision of views must have taken place because the resulting figures were far higher than anyone had demanded. For the tenured Greenlanders the rise was equivalent not to 175% of the 1920 regulation but to 237% while the untenured

228. Report 1946: 13.

229. *Tarqigssût* in translation in *Grønlandsposten* 1 March 1945; Minutes 1946: 80, Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee.

230. Report 1946: 11.

231. Report 1946: 11.

232. Minutes 1946: 83-86, Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee.

233. LR 1945: 497.

234. Minutes 17 December 1945, Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee.



staff reached the 175% level. The calculated extra cost was Dkr. 1.3 million; hence the total cost of the negotiations was Dkr. 4.9 million a year. No wonder the Greenlanders so easily accepted their defeat over having the central administration in Nuuk; they were well paid off. The Danish newspapers were positive about the Five-year Plan, as the report was called, and saw it as a good starting point for the future development of Danish-Greenlandic relations.<sup>235</sup>

The Greenlandic delegation was probably well satisfied when it returned to Nuuk and presented the report to the provincial council which was in session from 2 to 22 June 1946. Oldendow presented the report as information, not as a matter for approval or objection either in its entirety or in detail. He said that the various proposals would be presented in due time on the agenda for approval.<sup>236</sup> Thus the mandate given to the delegation in 1945 by the provincial council was formally upheld, but the provincial council was prevented from expressing a judgment on the overall outcome. Still, Isak Lund, a member speaking on behalf of all, said that there was *'satisfaction with the report, even if the provincial council would have preferred to have joint meetings in all the coming five years.'*<sup>237</sup> Thus there was virtually no protest at the failure to achieve a single central authority in Nuuk although it had been the main point the year before.

Considering the turmoil in the British and French empires at the time, it is astonishing how easily the Danes had their way with the Greenlanders. However, in the United Nations mobilisation of opinion against colonialism had barely begun. Being a colonial power was not the dishonourable status it was to become in world politics a few years later, and being a colonial people was not yet an honourable status. Colonial peoples, first and foremost had to come to terms with their colonisers. It is possible that the lame reaction of the Greenlanders to the rejection of their wishes was also due to their trust in the Danes, and that they acquiesced in having their political aspirations curtailed in 1946 mainly because a development pro-

gramme had been proposed that included a substantial rise in their salaries.

However the report transferred some cases for deliberation to the provincial council. A large majority voted to stop the age-old repartition of the municipal funds. And the possibility of letting Danes with personal connections to Greenland settle there was seen more positively than the year before, but with a twist that pointed to the next great reform in 1950: Greenland should not yet be open to everyone, but a restricted number of Danes with special knowledge of fishing and sheep farming could be allowed to settle in order to assist the Greenlanders in these trades, provided that they would be on equal footing with the Greenlanders. It helped if these Danes were born in Greenland, but this was not essential.<sup>238</sup> Thus the provincial council accepted what it had rejected the year before when Nikolaj Rosing had suggested the same thing. In another matter the provincial council stuck to its 1945-opinion. The Greenlandic trading post managers should be ex officio members of the district councils, and the delegation was criticised for acting in Copenhagen contrary to the 1945 resolution.<sup>239</sup> Over the delicate matters of women's franchise, which had been agreed on in 1945, and women's eligibility which had not, the provincial council now accepted both.<sup>240</sup>

Thus some of the propositions of the report were accepted by the provincial council while there were objections to others. In general reaction was moderate. But other circles were less moderate, and attacked what they considered a far too limited reform, which led on to their demanding a more radical reform of Greenland policy than had ever been seen before.

## Criticism and tensions, 1946-1948

While the Danish press response to the plan for reform published in June 1946 was almost uniformly favourable, some dissatisfaction appeared in the newspaper Information. Already on 31 May before the report was

235. For example *Aalborg Stiftstidende*, and *Fyns Venstreblad* 16 June 1946.

236. LR 1946: 613.

237. LR 1946: 623.

238. LR 1946: 697.

239. LR 1946: 702-704.

240. LR 1946: 712.

published it criticised the prospect of continued isolation and an unchanged economic policy. After publication of the report Information doubted the ability and willingness of the Greenland administration to carry through the proposed reforms. It approved the reforms as such, but called on Danish business interests to end what it called *'the reservation policy'* towards Greenland.<sup>241</sup> The business interests did come forward, but not till later.

Criticism of the report came primarily from what could be called the opposition within the Greenland administration and Danish officials concerned with Greenland. There was no formal opposition group or party. People spoke their minds, especially the officials who had served in Greenland during the war for whom the report did not go far enough and showed unawareness of Greenland's war-time experiences. In August 1946 the editor of Grønlandsposten, Christian Vibe, expressed dissatisfaction with the composition of the committee, which should have been a commission of experts from Denmark and Greenland; he could not understand why Danish business was not allowed to compete on equal terms with Greenlanders. He set himself the task of creating an alert public opinion, so that the Greenland administration could be prevented from frustrating the reforms. This shows open distrust of the Greenland administration.

In the same issue of Grønlandsposten Finn Gad criticised the plans for the Greenlandic schools. These were like a cup of lukewarm tea, he wrote, and the main problem was that none of the real experts had been invited to the negotiations. The 'real experts', according to Gad, were the rural dean Aage Bugge and the headmaster of the teacher training college in Nuuk, Fuglsang-Damgaard, who had been in charge of education in Greenland during the war. Therefore, no radical change had been suggested such as separating the schools from the church and entrusting supervision in Greenland to the Danish Ministry of Education.

In October Gad set out the flaws in the report for a Danish audience in Information.<sup>242</sup> His main criticism

was the lack of radicalism. He asked: *'Why could the central administration in Nuuk not be continued, and why did we not have a commission of experts?'* In the economic field he looked in vain for evidence that the centralisation of the fishing industry and the mechanisation of the harbours had been dealt with. Reluctantly he acknowledged that the Greenlanders still favoured the closing of the country. He wanted to see a *'restricted, very closely supervised private initiative'* to bring Greenland forward to a healthier condition. This should be allowed although only a few Greenlanders wanted it, because the average Greenlander lacked the background knowledge to judge the issue. *'On issues where the Greenlander from lack of experience and knowledge does not dare to go forward, the mother country has the obligation to intervene.'* Gad was of course fully aware that Danish officialdom did not base its actions on this view, which was why he wrote it. He wrote the article *'to awaken the interest in Greenlandic matters among the Danish people'*, because a situation might develop in Greenland with similar results to what had happened in Iceland and the Faroes.

The themes touched on such as the demand for an expert commission, for central authority in Nuuk, and for independent businesses to be free to operate were the core issues for the Danish-Greenlandic opposition. Also it was hinted that Greenland could be lost by default if the system did not adopt such ideas. In the beginning, Vibe and Gad were the only open opponents. Having left the service and no longer having a Greenland career to consider they could afford to be critical – the great majority of officials returning from Greenland expressed no criticism or ideas for Greenland's future.<sup>243</sup>

Eske Brun could probably, if he had wished, have been the leading figure in the opposition, but he was thinking of leaving the Greenland service, as Oldenow with regret told the provincial council in July.<sup>244</sup> Brun's speeches on various occasions in Denmark on Greenland during the war were very general about the future: the Greenlanders should have improved living

241. *Information* 13 June 1946. This newspaper was a continuation of an underground resistance news agency during the war years. It was not bound by links with established groups in Denmark and felt absolutely free to judge politics by high standards of freedom, equality and justice. It was well aware of the international world.

242. *Information* 15 October 1946.

243. The newspapers published in the summer of 1945 contained about 50 interviews and articles by returning officials.

244. LR 1946: 601.

standards, the monopoly could be partly lifted, and the state could easily pay for public service in Greenland provided production was economic. Thus he repeated publicly what he had written internally in 1945 in his report.<sup>245</sup>

The modernisers got some support from the journalist Ole Vinding who had travelled in Greenland in 1945. He published his observations in a book<sup>246</sup> in 1946, which strongly attacked what he saw as problems in Greenland. He supported all the demands for reform made by Nikolaj Rosing, Kr. Lynge, Chr. Vibe, and others whom he had met. The root of the evil was in the over-protective policy of the Greenland Administration, and lack of foresight. This was to blame for the Greenlanders' poverty and lack of initiative and progress. The monopoly had to be abolished in ten years time, and until then there should be heavy investment in the fishing industries. The governor, Simonö, had written the foreword, and statements in praise of the book by a colony manager and two Greenlanders were included. Even Eske Brun agreed with the main criticism of the Administration for its conservatism when he reviewed the book in *Politiken* on 5 October 1946. Nobody in Denmark seemed to take any notice of this criticism, but then the modernisers got help from another source.

In the autumn of 1946 a large press delegation had been given permission to visit Greenland, and the resulting articles echoed round Denmark. They contrasted the myth of Greenland as the land of happy smiles with the reality of everyday Greenlandic poverty, illness, the outdated economy, and the general bleakness. The articles and accompanying editorials all accused the Greenland Administration of negligence. Now something had to be done. '*We lose our right on the northern latitudes if we don't cope with this task*', Børge Outze wrote in *Information*. Experts such as Finn Gad modified the information and put it in perspective, but he did agree with their main demand.<sup>247</sup> The press campaign ran in October-November 1946,

and caused worried questions to be answered in Parliament. The Prime Minister Knud Kristensen, promised to carry out the reform programme to the extent that money and materials were available, and would await the response from Oldendow to the severe criticism.<sup>248</sup>

The press campaign seems to have encouraged Danish-Greenlandic critics. The Greenlandic Society held discussions on 12 December and 1 January<sup>249</sup> at which the Greenlanders, the editor Kr. Lynge and teacher Frederik Nielsen, together with the Danes, rural dean Aage Bugge, the teacher Mikael Gam, and Eske Brun, newly-appointed as vice-director of the Greenland administration, launched the familiar objections to the report for its insufficiency and lack of radicalism and unanimously demanded an expert commission to investigate the situation in Greenland. They felt, as Bugge put it, that they had been sidelined in the general debate on Greenland.

This was an additional cause of their anger. In 1920 a committee of Greenlandic officials had formulated proposals for the politicians to act upon, but this time in 1946 the roles were inverted: the Greenlandic and Danish politicians had set the agenda, and the officials were given the task of carrying out the proposals. When, as in this case, officials protest at this quite normal procedure, it is surely a sign of their deep frustration over the fact that the more radical suggestions were not properly presented and defended in the committee. It also shows their lack of faith in the Greenlanders' ability to understand what was best for them, and their distrust of the Greenland administration. At the December meeting Oldendow alone defended the 1946 report, and the policy behind it. For him the objections were well known and had already been carefully considered. What was needed now was a period of peace to carry out the work – an attitude to be expected from a loyal official servant.

The speech by Eske Brun was a direct contrast. He said that accustomed ways of thinking had to be abandoned in order to find principles for building a new

245. *Fremtiden* May 1946: 26-29; Speech to the Youth Section of the Liberal Left September 1946 (*Grønlandsposten* 1 October 1946: 178-81).

246. Vinding 1946.

247. *Information* 25 October, 26 November 1946.

248. RTFF 1946-47: 164, 234, 339, 1402, 1448.

249. GSA 1946 is entirely about these two meetings.

Greenland. The report, he said, was a working programme for the old Greenland.<sup>250</sup> Thus Brun brought the strife out into the open. He certainly was not about to resign from the Greenland administration; he had just accepted the position of vice-director – this was announced at the meeting to loud applause from the audience.<sup>251</sup> The discrepancy between director and vice-director was noted in the press. Brun's promotion was interpreted as a victory for the modernisers,<sup>252</sup> who now looked to him as the man to get things moving. But for the time being a plan for the next five years with quite big tasks had to be carried out. At intervals throughout 1947 demands for a more radical revision were heard, but before this can be elaborated, we must consider two other issues which had a bearing on the re-evaluation of Greenland policy as a whole. These issues were the international context, especially the American bases in Greenland, and Danish business interests, notably in the fishing industry.

### The Americans in Greenland<sup>253</sup>

As already mentioned, the Danish Parliament approved the Kauffmann base agreement of 1941 with the Americans as one of its first items of business after the liberation in May 1945. The Danish politicians wanted to terminate the agreement because it was considered a barrier to full Danish sovereignty over Greenland, and could be taken as an excuse for the Soviets to remain in the Danish Baltic island Bornholm which they had liberated from the Germans in 1945. On the other hand, Denmark needed to be on good terms with the United States as the only power capable of preventing further Soviet advance in Europe. So for the time being the question of the US bases in Greenland was not raised. However, the Americans were determined to keep the bases, as well as those in Ice-

land and other places round the world. The Danish government was aware of the American wish but managed to prevent the issue from flaring up in order not to worsen its precarious security position.

The policy of laying low and not taking Greenland into an international context led the Foreign Ministry to oppose any idea that Greenland should be reported to the UN as a 'non-self-governing territory' when member states were called upon to report on such territories. Even well-prepared material about Greenland from the Greenland administration was recalled from a meeting of the International Labour Organisation in Montreal in September 1946 about the 'non metropolitan territories'. However, at the UN Plenary Assembly in the autumn the Danish delegation asked that Greenland be reported as a 'non self-governing territory' according to article 73e of the Charter, and the Foreign Ministry gave in.<sup>254</sup>

The internal pressure in Denmark grew throughout 1946 to terminate the base agreement with the Americans, and in the autumn the government asked the United States for consultations. During the talks the Danes learned of the determination of the Americans not only to keep the bases but also to build more. The worsening of the Cold War in Europe in the spring of 1948, especially the Czech coup, made the Danes back off, and they told the Americans in April 1948 that they were postponing the issue. In 1949 Denmark became a member of NATO, and within this framework the continuation of the US base rights in Greenland was safeguarded in a new treaty of 1951. The American interest in having Denmark, Portugal and Iceland as full members of NATO was largely determined by the possibility of solving the base problem in this context<sup>255</sup> because it was politically more convenient for those small, normally neutral, countries to participate in a multilateral arrangement than for each to have a bilateral agreement with the United States.

250. Oldendow 1947; Brun 1947.

251. *Grønlandsposten* 31 December 1945: 263.

252. *Viborg Stifts Folkeblad* 17 December 1946; *Holstebro Social-Demokrat* 31 December 1946.

253. The issue is analysed by Amstrup 1978, DUPI 1997, and Lidegaard 1996.

254. Amstrup 1978: 168 f. What persuaded the Danish delegation is not fully clear. It might have been the impressive list of 74 such territories reported by 7 other colonial powers encompassing 73 areas normally conceived as colonies, the Spanish and Portuguese alone refusing. Or it might have been the vain hope of being able to present an ideal colonial policy as later asserted by the leading Danish politician, Hermod Lannung. See Petersen 1975: 93.

255. DUPI 1997: 92.

Moreover, in Denmark at least there was a genuine fear of Soviet aggression. To let the Americans have peacetime bases in Greenland in exchange for security guarantees for mainland Denmark must have seemed a fair deal. That was how it was seen from Copenhagen; how it seemed from Nuuk is hard to evaluate. Foreign policy was a central government prerogative, which was not discussed with the Greenlanders.

While the Greenland administration did not participate in discussion on the bases, it had a role in taking over the weather stations, some of which were operated by Americans whom the US government wanted to withdraw after the war. The Danish Foreign Ministry was eager to take over, but had trouble in finding qualified personnel for the task. The Greenland administration was not too keen on the project, which would be expensive – Oldendow was afraid that he would have to finance it within the normal budget while the weather reports produced at the stations were mainly for use outside Greenland.<sup>256</sup> Nevertheless, the foreign policy approach won the day. The Foreign Minister, Gustav Rasmussen, distrusted the ability of the Greenland administration to handle the case. In January 1947 a committee was formed to ‘*coordinate different tasks in Greenland especially those which were administered by the American military during the war*’. The Greenland administration was represented on the committee, but so were the Foreign Ministry, the Marine Ministry, the War Ministry, the Ministry for Traffic, and the Ministry of Finance. The chairman was Vice-Admiral Vedel.<sup>257</sup>

This was a clear demonstration that the good old times when the Greenland administration was in charge of everything going on in Greenland had ended. Although it cannot be documented, it is fair to assume that the prospect of having Greenland drawn into the international sphere made the Danish politicians re-evaluate Denmark’s relations with Greenland. The willingness to spend more money manifested in the 1946 report was a new policy, and during 1946

numerous scientific expeditions to Greenland functioned as an assertion of sovereignty.

## The fishermen in Esbjerg

Another attack on the traditional Greenland policy came from Danish fishing interests. It was probably provoked by the press campaign in October 1946 reporting on the huge amount of fish which the Greenlanders had no equipment to catch. Danish fishing had expanded enormously during the war due to the almost insatiable German market; the German collapse in May 1945 brought this market to an end, and much of the fishing fleet was out of work during that summer. Even in 1946 the problem was finding markets for fish, not lack of fish. However, the other fishing countries around the North Sea were gradually regaining their fishing capacity and brought pressure on Denmark to reduce its ‘unnatural’ large fishing fleet. This situation made the fishing fleet in Esbjerg look to other fields, and one of the fishing pioneers, Christian Venø, told a local newspaper that he would like to go to Greenland once the isolation was broken. There were plenty of fish in Greenland, he said, and pressure on the North Sea would be lessened if the largest cutters went there.<sup>258</sup> He expanded the idea in March by suggesting that some Danes be sent to Greenland as settlers to get things started.<sup>259</sup> Already in January 1947 another fishing pioneer from Esbjerg, Claus Sørensen, had said that Greenland could relieve North Sea fisheries and he went further and suggested five or six privately owned industrial fishing stations along the coast.<sup>260</sup>

The two most important Danish fishing associations, ‘Vestjysk Fiskeriforening’ and ‘Dansk Fiskeriforening’ supported these views at their general assemblies in the summer of 1947.<sup>261</sup> There was seen to be a substantial difference between what the reformers in the Greenland administration wanted from

256. Amstrup 1978: 170.

257. Amstrup 1978: 174.

258. *Vestkysten* 4 December 1946.

259. *Dansk Fiskeritidende* 7 March 1947, pp. 93f.

260. *Vestjysk Fiskeritidende* 31 January 1947, p. 39.

261. *Vestjysk Fiskeritidende* 24 June 1947; *Holbæk Amts Vestreblad* 3 July 1947.



Danish fishermen – to act as tutors to the Greenlanders – and what those fishermen wanted themselves: which was access to Greenland to earn money in normal free market conditions, and not to help the Greenlanders in Greenlandic conditions as the provincial councils had advocated in 1946. The continued campaign in the two fishing journals and the local newspaper *Esbjergbladet* paid little attention to the Greenlanders. At most there were calming remarks about the great quantity of fish, and about Danish fishing in Greenlandic waters probably benefiting Greenland as well. The heat of the debate was directed against the Greenland administration which was criticised for its neglect of evident Danish business interests.<sup>262</sup> In August 1947 a pamphlet<sup>263</sup> by Oldendow was published as an answer to the criticism in October 1946.<sup>264</sup> It was a passionate defence of existing Greenland policy that only considered the Greenlandic angle, and only made the press repeat its criticism of that policy.

Meanwhile, in May 1947 Chr. Venø and his partner Knud Schrøder applied to the Greenland administration for a permit to fish in inner Greenlandic waters, and Eske Brun refused it as being against the law. Presumably Brun informed the two fishermen of the laws governing Greenland, because later the same year they applied again with the stated aim of ‘co-operation with the Greenlandic fishermen’.<sup>265</sup>

On 13 November 1947, following an election, a new Social Democratic minority government took office. Several problems concerning Greenland required attention: talks with the Americans about the bases,

the take-over of the weather stations, the fierce criticism of the Greenland administration which also covered previous Greenland policy, and on top of that, the Esbjerg fishermen wanting access to Greenland. The fishermen had a new ally in the Minister of Fisheries, a newly-established ministry which the business had wanted for several years. The minister, Christian Christiansen, took the initiative in finding a solution. In the press Eske Brun was more accommodating to the wishes of the Esbjerg fishermen and said that it would be beneficial for Danish fishery to obtain the necessary experience from operating in Greenland on as liberal terms as possible.<sup>266</sup>

The attentive listener would have realised that reconsideration was under way when he heard Prime Minister Hedtoft state in a broadcast on 30 January 1948: ‘*I agree that Danish initiative and vigour should have as much access to Greenland as possible, and I anticipate a rich development in the near future.*’ Around the New Year the reformers aired their views again. Eske Brun, Axel Malmqvist, M. Gam, Finn Gad and Kr. Lyngø had advocated a thorough public discussion of the whole problem, and *Grønlandsposten* questioned officials and politicians in Greenland as follows: ‘*Do you see a Greenland Commission as a necessity or not?*’ An overwhelming majority of the 102 persons asked<sup>267</sup> were in favour of it.

These signals mark the end of the striving for a new policy during the first two years after the war. The government had made a significant decision. There had to be a change of course.

262. *Vestkysten* 20 August 1947.

263. Oldendow 1947.

264. The delay in its appearance was due to a lengthy strike of print workers.

265. *Vestkysten* 28 October 1947; *Frederikhavns Avis* 25 November 1947.

266. *Aarhus Stiftstidende* 12 January 1948; *København* 11 February 1948.

267. *Grønlandsposten* 16 January and 1 February 1948.

# The reform of 1950

The clear indications from the government early in 1948 that a reformed Greenland policy was in the making were followed by attempts to get support from the assemblies that had to approve a new policy: the Danish Parliament and the provincial councils. The process began in Parliament.

## The start in the Permanent Greenland Committee

On 27 February 1948 the Danish Prime Minister, Hans Hedtoft, and the vice-director of the Greenland administration, Eske Brun, came to the Permanent Greenland Committee with two cases: Det grønlandske Fiskekompagni A/S (the Greenland Fishery Company Ltd), owned by Claus Sørensen of Esbjerg, wanted access to Greenland to establish a deep freezing factory, a salting house, and a station for boiling blubber. The other application was from Grønlands Havfiskeri A/S (Greenland Deep Sea Fishery Ltd), owned by Chr. Venø, Knud Schrøder and Kaspar Myrup, which wanted to conduct fishery research in parts of the closed territory. They also wanted to employ Greenlandic crew so that they could 'gain experience'.

Thus the Venø fishery was defined as experimental fishing in cooperation with the Greenland administration, comparable to that which the administration had carried out since 1906. It could thus allow this fishery without breaking either the law or established practice. The fact that Hedtoft and Brun took the case to the Greenland Committee shows however that it was meant to pave the way for a more important change in policy. The formal problems concerning the application from Claus Sørensen were more serious. It was not for fishing in closed waters but for a station outside the four harbours allowed in the 1930s. At the time these harbours were precisely defined, and the legislation was carried through in spite of protests from the Greenlanders. Permission to Claus Sørensen

would need new legislation, and consultation with the provincial councils.

The Greenland administration recommended both applications '*in the light of the new perspectives in the policy*'; it would monitor the projects very closely. Permission for them to go ahead was not to be taken to confer any advantages or monopolies in relation to '*the rules, which we might politically introduce in the future*'. And the Greenlanders should be informed of the projects. This shows clearly that something new was in preparation. In his speech Eske Brun said it was necessary to persuade the Greenlanders to use new methods. He said: '*the Greenlanders could learn much by working with Danish fishermen*'.

The Committee had asked the Prime Minister to appear before it to discuss Danish fishing in Greenlandic waters. It got much more. The speech of Hans Hedtoft in fact represented the '*new perspectives*' at which Brun had hinted.

*'Because of the recent development in Greenland I think that the Danish Greenland policy, at least in the field of business, has to be carried out from a new perspective instead of the 'reservation' point of view employed so far. Personally I think that the state should not do this alone, but we must find a way to make Danish business aware of the huge national task that has to be done to preserve Greenland for Denmark. Danish labour and Danish capital have to cooperate to accomplish the task in Greenland, e.g. in the form of a Danish-Greenlandic joint venture. Yet the state has to be involved also to guarantee that the enterprise will not be an exploitative campaign against Greenland. We must win the Greenlanders' support for an effort along these lines. If we establish an economic policy between Denmark and Greenland with the purpose of making all Greenlandic primary products useful for Danish business, we would build a base for a lasting relationship between Denmark and Greenland, which will be much stronger than sentimental figures of speech about common national feelings.'*

This was a skilful speech. It supported the modernisers' demand for radical changes; it accommodated the '*closely surveyed private enterprise*' which Finn Gad had asked for; took the traditional view into account by emphasising the protection of the Greenlanders; it respected the wishes of the Danish fishing industry; and it mentioned the often-aired fear of losing Greenland. The speech also suggested a bigger framework than anybody had done before. Danish capital and labour should be involved, as should '*all Greenlandic raw materials*'.

Danish private business was clearly being called on for nationalistic reasons for the Danish state treasury was quite capable of financing anything that Greenland needed out of its budget. And the mention of '*a huge national task*' did not imply easy profits.

This interpretation makes the Danish initiative different from similar initiatives in Britain and France. Britain also financed development projects in its colonies to make them better suited to earn dollars for the sterling area so that Britain could pay for its imports. The French too wanted to make their empire self-sufficient in relation to the dollar and sterling areas. This European policy was abandoned in the 1950s when the EEC became more promising and the costs in the colonies continued to exceed the income.<sup>268</sup> The background and reasons might differ, but the Danish project in Greenland was on the same lines as were followed in London and Paris. In one aspect the aim was the same: to preserve the loyalty of the colonial peoples in the ongoing cold war.

Prime Minister, Hans Hedtoft, was aware that the initiative was Danish. The Greenlanders' support had to be won. But first the Greenland Committee must be persuaded to support the new policy as well as the two applications. All its members were in favour of the new policy. Support ranged from the Communists to the Conservatives, only the Liberal Left Knud Kristensen (a former Prime Minister) was reluctant to adopt a new policy when the possibilities in Greenland had not been thoroughly researched by experts. Hedtoft promised that '*key Danish business interests as well as Greenlandic expertise*' should discuss the project before it became public. Greenlandic expertise meant the Greenland administration.

The committee supported the application from Venø even though they felt the Greenlanders should have been consulted in advance. Political anxiety played a decisive part in the refusal of the application from Claus Sørensen. The committee was certain that it would meet with Greenlandic opposition. Sørensen stated his case later before the committee, but the committee and the Prime Minister stood firm in order not '*to disturb the good relations between Denmark and Greenland*.' At that time, 1 April 1948, the decisions had already been announced in Greenland. After launching the new policy in the Greenland Committee Hans Hedtoft could safely continue to win support for it. He was aware that opposition could easily be aroused in Greenland. On 1 April 1948 he told the committee that the administration had made great efforts to win the understanding of the Greenlanders for the Venø project. They were afraid that a Danish business initiative would endanger their interests, but their reaction to the project had been '*rather benevolent*'.

The obvious political anxiety not to arouse Greenlandic opposition shows the new mood after the Second World War; as late as 1939 the Danish politicians had not hesitated to enforce an expansion of Faroese fishing in Greenlandic waters despite clear opposition from the Greenlanders. Now the Danish politicians would not introduce anything which might arouse opposition, and they preferred the Greenlanders to give their explicit consent. The turbulent years after the war saw a growing hostility between East and West, with both sides criticising colonialism and decolonisation beginning in Asia. In this context winning support for the new Greenland policy in Denmark was not difficult. Hedtoft went public with it at a meeting on 15 April 1948 with very much the same form of words as was used in the Greenland Committee. The response in the press was favourable.<sup>269</sup>

A new topic was brought into the debate from the Radical Left. Their member in the UN delegation, Hermod Lannung, had already suggested in December 1947 that the colonial status of Greenland should be removed by giving the Greenlanders direct representation in the Danish Parliament. His problem was the increased anti-colonial tone at the UN, where he was the Danish representative in the Colonial Committee.

268. Fieldhouse 1986: 1-65.

269. Hedtoft 1948: box 30; *Berlingske Tidende*, *Kristeligt Dagblad* and *Politiken* 16 April 1948.

Denmark was never criticised in this connection, but it was becoming increasingly uncomfortable to be a colonial power. If Greenland were put on equal political footing with Denmark, it would cease to be a colony and Denmark could withdraw as a colonial power. Again the 'French model' was used: integration of the colony to be an integral part of the realm. During the winter of 1948 Lannung won his party over to his point of view,<sup>270</sup> and the Social Democratic government also found it a good idea. It was part of the package which Hedtoft presented to the press on 10 July 1948 before leaving for Greenland to win the provincial councils round to his point of view. The project, which had become much more detailed since April 1948 when it was presented to the Greenland Committee, can be summarised as follows:

- The state-owned Royal Greenland Trading Company to be replaced by a concessionary Danish-Greenlandic trading company, financed and led by private business but with representatives of the state and the provincial councils in the management.
- Danish fishing companies and other Danish private businesses to have access to Greenland, these companies to be supervised by the state to protect the Greenlanders against exploitation. Permission to operate in Greenland would be conditional on having Greenlanders participate in providing capital and management on an equal footing with Danish participants.
- The Danish scientific expeditions carrying out research in Greenland to look in future especially for possibilities of exploitation of the underground resources and water power, and for a more rational management of farming, forestry, fishing, breeding animals for their fur, hunting, and fighting pests.
- Direct contacts between the Greenlandic and the Danish population to be strengthened and expanded. The possibility of having Greenlandic representation in Parliament or in the Permanent Greenland Committee, and in the Greenland administration in Denmark to be investigated. The establishment of Danish schools in Green-

land to be expanded. The teaching of Danish to be increased, with teaching in Danish as the final goal. A school giving exams in the Danish language to be established. The library system to be developed, and Greenlandic broadcasting to be supplied with short-wave transmissions from Denmark for one and a half hours a day with news, talks, and music especially for Greenlandic audiences. These broadcasts were to begin in the coming autumn.

- Danish medical and legal experts to be sent to explore the possibilities of reforming the Greenlandic health care system and the local administration, including the introduction of modern civil and criminal law.
- The Greenlandic population to be educated by means of lectures, films and pamphlets to a higher level of production, culture and morality.

It was expected that the provincial councils would approve the project. The UN was informed that Denmark was planning to integrate Greenland as an equal part of its realm.<sup>271</sup>

From what had been envisaged in the spring the project had expanded considerably. It seems that every demand for reform had been collected together. A new era was clearly at hand. Now the support of the Greenlanders had to be won.

## Meeting the provincial council

Hedtoft's visit to Greenland was a triumphant success. Visits of prime ministers were extremely rare; only Stauning had been there in the past – in 1930. This time Hedtoft came with a programme that contained what leading circles among the Greenlanders had long been asking for – promises of greater political equality and of huge investment financed by Denmark. His objective was to gain the Greenlanders' authorisation to launch the programme.

Before the meeting with Hedtoft the provincial councils had been informed about the good progress of the former five-year programme of 1946. Reform of the church and school system was planned and about

270. The issue is analysed by Petersen 1975 and Sørensen 1977.

271. *Berlingske Tidende* 10 July 1948.

to be implemented. The expansion of the health care system followed the plan, and the planned delivery of boats and boat motors to the Greenlanders had already occurred. The hiring of staff and acquisition of ships was ahead of schedule: the plan had envisaged one coastal ship and eight motorboats for medical use, but by 1948 it had grown to five ships and thirteen boats. On top of that the American weather stations had been taken over, and new equipment was about to be installed.<sup>272</sup> The smooth implementation of the 1946 programme shows that the new programme was not a result of poor performance of the former programme; the change was due to the difference in the national and international political environment in 1948 compared to 1946.

Hans Hedtoft's speech to the provincial councils had a long introduction before he came to the programme. He said that Denmark wished to maintain and strengthen its relationship with Greenland, to retain sovereignty, and to aim exclusively at the improvement of living standards for the Greenlanders by means of the proposed programme. He justified lifting the trade monopoly by wartime experiences. He thus erased the parenthesis that Oldendow had so successfully put around the war and put it around the 1946 programme instead.

He was careful to present the ideas in the programme as suggestions and not as decisions. Concerning business he said: *'I dare not say yet in what way private capital and initiative will be brought to Greenland, whether it should be in the form of a Danish-Greenlandic company under state supervision or whether the Greenlanders and the administration should establish co-operative companies, or whether it should be a combination of Danish and Greenlandic limited companies.'* He ignored the existing system of a state-owned company. As for political equalisation, Hedtoft raised the *'possibility of giving Greenland representation in the Danish Parliament,'* and he finally offered to establish a commission which he promised would work fast to examine suggestions, *'if you want that'*.

It is hard to say how the members of the provincial councils saw the situation. On the one hand, Hedtoft had presented the programme as open for alterations.

On the other hand, the Greenlanders were familiar with the Danish interests through newspaper reports, and now the Prime Minister was there, obviously in favour of a reform. Did they think they had any option? Could they dare to turn the Prime Minister down? Would they? A later sharp exchange between two of the participants sheds some light on the question, even if it does not answer it. Frederik Lynge of Qullissat called Hedtoft's proposal an ultimatum that had been accepted too quickly by the provincial council.<sup>273</sup> Pastor Gerhard Egede of Paamiut preferred to call Hedtoft's suggestion an outstretched hand, and his opinion was that the population would have been dissatisfied and *'the progressive youth'* would think their endeavours had been thwarted, if the provincial council had declined the offer.<sup>274</sup> Lynge was worried about competition from Danish fishermen while Egede looked at them as an opportunity for rapid development in Greenland. One could say that Lynge's voice came from the old Greenland and Egede's from the new.

On the next day, 5 August, Gerhard Egede presented the resolution from the provincial council. Regarding the trade monopoly it was for *'substantial changes'* – the popular wish to reach the level of other countries in terms of economy and culture having now grown so much compared to 1946 that the provincial council could not ignore it. This statement was very clear, but it continued in a way that makes me question how free to choose the provincial council actually believed itself to be: *'the advent of Danish private enterprise makes it more compelling than ever to teach the Greenlanders modern fishing techniques.'* Formally this way of reasoning is to regard the matters at issue as facts.

The resolution was as vague as Hedtoft had been in specifying how to implement *'the substantial changes'*. The words were: *'The Prime Minister wants to hear the opinion of the provincial council regarding the three ways of changing the trade monopoly system. The provincial council would not have a definite opinion about any of them but would say that it gives its full support to the introduction of private Danish enterprise in Greenland under state surveillance. To resolve the matter*

272. Oldendow 1948.

273. *Avangnâmioq* November 1948.

274. *Atuagagdliutit*. Both articles were printed in Danish in *Grønlandsposten*.



*it is paramount that the Greenlandic and Danish authorities and the Danish Parliament co-operate to find the best solution.*<sup>275</sup>

As for political equalisation, the resolution acknowledged that not all of the Danish legal system would be suitable for Greenland. Nevertheless, the council wished to find a way to bring about greater equality in civil rights. The answer to the offer of representation in Parliament revealed a possible misunderstanding of the situation. It was: *'Because of the dispersed habitation of the country, the provincial council does not find the time ripe for representation by a single member in the Danish Parliament.'* It is hard to believe that Hedtoft had offered one and only one representative. If any number had been offered, two would have been more appropriate, because this was what the Faroes had from a population of the same size as Greenland's. Hedtoft's manuscript for the speech has the words 'representatives' without specifying any number, but the official minutes had the word in the singular.<sup>276</sup> It is perhaps evidence of the hectic atmosphere at that time that nobody rectified the misunderstanding. Having rejected representation in Parliament, the council asked for seats on Parliament's Permanent Greenland Committee, as it had wished in 1945, and asked finally for the commission to assemble as soon as possible to discuss the new arrangement.

Even if some of the provincial council's answers might suggest that they did not understand the issue, the main point was crystal clear to the Danes. The provincial council had accepted the introduction of Danish private enterprise into Greenland and the setting up of a commission to investigate the matter. It had rejected representation in Parliament but wished to participate in the work of the Permanent Greenland Committee.

Hedtoft and Brun were so certain of the answer that they ventured to push the door at least some way open to the Promised Land. They had spoken in Nuuk with Claus Sørensen of Esbjerg, who had gone to Nuuk to persuade the provincial council to open a harbour

for his business. Both men were sympathetic to the wishes of Claus Sørensen but would await the approval of the Permanent Greenland Committee before finally giving permission. Brun's memo to Sørensen ended: *'if you are prepared to make the venture start on this basis, you should be allowed to do so. I expect that the Greenland Committee will deal with the matter so soon that there would be no time to begin arrangements in Greenland.'*<sup>277</sup> But Claus Sørensen acted fast. At the beginning of September he asked the authorities in Greenland to assist him in building the factory for processing and freezing fish. The machinery was ready to be loaded in Esbjerg. This provoked a storm of protests in Greenland. The provincial council's members insisted that the commission should complete its work before any permission was given, and the two governors, C.F. Simonj and N.O. Christensen, supported them in this interpretation of the summer meeting. Copenhagen tried hard to persuade the Greenlanders to abandon their protest, and the Prime Minister Hans Hedtoft even told them that they would be held responsible if they made private enterprise lose interest by stopping Claus Sørensen now. Oldendow, who was on an inspection tour in Greenland, was told that if he did not change the mood of the Greenlanders all Sørensen's preparations would be stopped, and *'a good initiative would be delayed for at least a year which might prevent the right people from being interested in the project.'* Of course, Oldendow did what his prime minister wanted him to do, but at the meeting in Sisimiut in September he could barely conceal scepticism. When asked if he thought the initiative of Claus Sørensen would benefit the Greenlanders, he answered that if: *'the Prime Minister found private enterprise beneficial to the Greenlanders, he as director could only believe the same. As a civil servant he could not speak against his minister.'* After the meeting Oldendow had to telegraph to the Prime Minister that the Greenlanders were immovable, and that the governors had to support the members if they were not to risk losing the confidence of the provincial councils.

275. LR 1948: 78f.

276. Hedtoft 1948: box 31: 'give Grønland repræsentanter på den danske rigsdag', (representatives in the plural). LR 1948: 76: 'give Grønland Repræsentant på den danske Rigsdag, (representative in the singular). But this is poor Danish. A native Dane would have said *a representative*)

277. Memo of 5 August 1948, in copy in the minutes from Claus Sørensen's company 23 August 1948, Archives in Esbjerg. Nr. 4845.

Hedtoft acted promptly and announced in a Greenlandic broadcast that Claus Sørensen would not be allowed to begin his business in Greenland that year because the Greenlanders were against it.<sup>278</sup> The Greenland Committee was never asked for its opinion.

This episode shows clearly that the political strength of the Greenlanders had grown after the war. Their benevolent cooperation was now essential if the Danish claim to act in the Greenlanders' interests was to be credible. Hedtoft could not afford to act against them in full view of the Danish public and the international community. As late as 1939 the Danish government had allowed the Faroese fishing fleet to enter Greenlandic waters directly against the Greenlanders' wishes. In contrast after the war the provincial council could effectively block any unwanted initiative.

Whether Hedtoft ever blamed anyone other than himself for the political blunder of trying to force Claus Sørensen's business through, cannot be determined here. Oldendow resigned as director at the end of the year. The official reason was ill health, but he later asserted the real cause was his fundamental disagreement with the new policy.<sup>279</sup> Eske Brun was appointed director in his place and no one was appointed to follow him as vice-director. This change was a complete victory for the modernisers.

## The Great Greenland Commission

The commission was appointed on 29 November 1948, and its mandate took its point of departure from the resolution of the provincial council the same summer: to '*address the problems of social, political, cultural and administrative development in Greenland and make proposals for future arrangement in these areas.*'

The work was immense and resulted in a six-volume report with a total of 1,100 pages. The great length was due to its painstaking report on the previous conditions and its very detailed suggestions for the future. Thus the report came close to being a total analysis of Greenlandic society. The commission

started work in January 1949 and the report was ready for publication in February 1950.

The work was organised in a main commission with sixteen members: four Danish politicians, four Greenlandic provincial council members, Katrine Chemnitz of the Greenlandic Housewives' Organisation – a prominent figure, and officials from the ministries, among whom were the chairman H.H. Koch and director Eske Brun. Those two were members of all nine sub-commissions, as were the four Greenlandic provincial council members.<sup>280</sup> The working arrangements of the commission were designed to promote efficiency. The treatment of economic issues in sub-commission 4 was typical. The secretariat of the main commission delivered a report on the historical background and the present problems, which was discussed at one or more meetings. Then the secretariat wrote a draft report that was further discussed and amended in the sub-commission. This done, the main commission approved the report, and the work was done. This centralisation of suggestions and reporting gave the huge report a homogeneous character, and it was carried without any minority statement. Only careful examination of the commission archives reveals who had to concede most.

The Greenlanders did indeed participate in the work, but not on a basis of parity. Five of the sixteen members of the main commission were Greenlanders, and in the sub-commissions the provincial council had appointed a further five Greenlanders and five Danes who were officials in Greenland. Thus only fifteen members of the 105-strong commission represented the Greenlandic point of view directly. One could argue that the twenty-five officials from the Greenland administration and thirty-six more from other ministries were committed to look after Greenlandic interests even if indirectly. One must assume that the twenty-two individuals from private business and organisations were the least inclined to give primary consideration to the Greenlanders' interests, but this is not evident in the report. The representatives of private business, like all Danish participants in the commission, were called upon because of their expertise

278. National Archives, the Administration of Greenland, Journal no. 10,520/48 contains the telegraph correspondence. Hedtoft 1948: box 30.

279. Interview with Oldendow February 1971 by Niels Højlund (Højlund 1972: 42).

280. G-50 1,I: 6-14. However, the Greenlander Søren Kaspersen did not sit in sub-commissions 2 and 7.

and not their views on the Greenland policy. The only arguments allowed in the report were those tending to develop Greenland socially, culturally and economically for the benefit of the Greenlanders. This point was not a matter for debate.

With this policy Denmark was no different from other European colonial powers. They too started development programmes in their colonies. One reason for this was the need to boost the colonial economies to earn dollars for the reconstruction of Europe after the war. Another was to win the loyalty of the colonial peoples so they would stay in the imperial system, or at least in the Western orbit, in face of the competition from the Soviet Union in the ever-growing Cold War.<sup>281</sup> The economic aspects were nearly missing from the official Danish reasons – but not in private Danish expectations. The Danish endeavours arose largely from the necessity of a small country behaving progressively to avoid criticism by the world at large. The decision of the United States to maintain its bases in Greenland after the war reinforced the desire to maintain and strengthen Greenlandic loyalty to Denmark.

Compared to Britain and France, Denmark contributed proportionately less, but due to the much smaller population in Greenland, it received much more than other colonial peoples. In the first ten years after the war the 48 million people in Britain provided £ 12.5 million (=US\$ 35 million) annually to the 65 million people in the remaining colonies, i.e. 73 cents per inhabitant and 54 cents for each inhabitant of the colonies.

The corresponding French figures were 43 million French providing US\$ 62 million to 20 million inhabitants in the colonies outside Indochina, per inhabitant they gave US\$ 1.45 and the colonies received \$ 3.11. The 4.5 million Danes had a minor task regarding Greenland's 25,000 inhabitants. The yearly amount of only 13 cents per inhabitant of Denmark became US\$ 23.12 for each inhabitant in Greenland.<sup>282</sup>

Compared to the running five-year plan of 1946 with a yearly transfer of Dkr. 5 million (\$ 720,000), the new programme of 1950 would cost Dkr. 10 million a year. This did not deter the commission. It stated: *'The*

*proposed programme in the cultural, social, and economic areas of Greenlandic society must be considered imperative in order to bring the society to a reasonable level. It is furthermore an absolute condition for the Greenlanders' growth into a greater cultural and economic maturity, so that they can benefit from the opportunities in the country more efficiently and intensively than now, and thus create the financial basis for its existence. To postpone solving the problems will only make the task more difficult and hence more expensive.'*<sup>283</sup>

## Settlements and investments

The first volume of the report considered the allocation of settlements and investment. It was a leading idea that the population should move to places where an industrialised fishery could be established. The benefit would be better utilisation of investment, a better education and health service, increased cultural input and better use of the work force. Such places could be Narsaq in the south, Aasiaat in the north, and a place in the vicinity of the capital Nuuk. On the other hand, districts such as Upernavik, Uummannaq and Cape Farewell were fated to suffer if not depopulation, then considerable thinning out. There was to be no coercion but encouragement through propaganda – and by only investing in places with a future!

## Political and administrative reform

The second volume dealt with the political/administrative area as well as scientific exploration, fishery inspection, the coastguard, and the legal system. The long-standing wish to have only one provincial council and one governor was accepted. The governor, now with title of landshøvding could also have a greater say over the financial means at Greenland's disposal. He was to have an enlarged staff of experts to assist in various areas under his supervision. Having the final decision over administration of the law in Greenland should expand the authority of the provincial council, which could have full and unquestioned disposal of

281. This seems to be the essence of the huge amount of literature on decolonisation. For a qualified discussion, see Darwin 1991.

282. The British and French figures from Albertini 1982: 174, 430. The Danish figures from my own calculation.

283. G-50. 1,1: 60.

the Greenlandic public funds, while the governor would ensure that the rules were followed. Thus the provincial council was placed on an equal footing with local authorities in Denmark, which were responsible to the Ministry of the Interior.

Since the provincial council had refused representation in Parliament in 1948 the commission could not suggest this. Instead it recommended that the constitutional commission then in session<sup>284</sup> should address the issue '*since the opinion on this question might change later.*' The commission also recommended accommodating the Greenlandic wish to be represented in the Permanent Greenland Committee in Parliament.<sup>285</sup>

The level below provincial council and governor was also looked into. The commission recommended abolishing the district councils and reducing the number of municipalities, subject to discussion in the provincial council. The commission also recommended that the new larger municipalities took over some of the administration formerly belonging to the colony manager, such as roads, bridges, refuse-collection and fire fighting. A new agency, the Greenland Technical Organization, should be established to deal with the technical aspects of investment in the infrastructure. Another new agency, the Greenland Geological Research, would coordinate the search for minerals '*which could have a bearing on economic development.*'<sup>286</sup>

The legal system was about to undergo a major change. A single system would now cover Europeans (Danes) and Greenlanders, who hitherto had been subject to separate rules. The courts would be separated from the administration by having a court of appeal headed by a judge, and a court of lay judges in each municipality. A police force of five men should be established under the governor. Finally, Greenland should have its own legal code applying to everyone resident in Greenland. This change fully complied with the long-standing wish of the Greenlanders for the difference before the law between themselves and the Danes to be abolished. In fact it went further by separating the prosecutors and judges.

## Education and cultural issues

The third volume looked into education, the church and other cultural issues. The time had come to separate education from the church – almost. An educational board should be formed, consisting of the governor, the rural dean and a director of education, who would be selected from among the most able teachers in Greenland. Each district should have an inspector, educated to the same level as students at the Danish teacher training colleges, as head of education.

The aim of these reforms was simply to make education in Greenland as good as education in Denmark. The teaching staff would be better trained by dividing the students at the Greenlandic teacher training college in Nuuk into sections, one for students training for teaching and the church, and the other for those who would be teacher only. The commission also pleaded that the Greenlandic teacher trainees should be given some courses in Denmark if not the whole of their education. It was estimated that about fifty teachers were needed with a Danish teacher education, but only twenty were available, and so the gap was to be filled by Danish teachers from Denmark.

There appeared to be no hesitation about the prospect of educating Greenlandic teachers in Denmark, but some thought was given to the possible problems of transplanting Danish teachers into the totally different cultural and linguistic environment of Greenland. Nevertheless, the presence of Danish teachers in Greenland was deemed necessary to ensure proper training in the Danish language, and to give inspiration to their Greenlandic colleagues and boost Greenlandic cultural life. This paternalistic role for the Danish teachers was probably an echo of the cultural role teachers have had in rural Denmark since the nineteenth century. This looked like solid cultural imperialism, and the Danes were confident that they were sharing their 'higher' culture with the Greenlanders. But it was not forced on the Greenlanders. The upgrading of the teaching of Danish in Greenland had been demanded by the Greenlanders constantly ever since the 1920s.

284. At the same time a commission was working out amendments to the Danish constitution.

285. G-50, 2: 33-6.

286. G-50, 2: 67-8, 71.

Table 19. Type of family houses in the building programme of 1950.

Type	No. of rooms	Dwelling area m <sup>2</sup>	No. of persons	Cost 1000Dkr.
1	1	19.7	1	9
2	1	29.5	2	12
3	1.5	36.1	3-4	13
4	2	42.7	3-4	16
5	3	50.9	5-6	17
6	3	64.1	Over 6	18
7	4	79.1	Over 6	22
8	4.5	90.6	Over 6	25

The reform of education generally went further than teacher education. In order to make a serious effort to improve the teaching in Danish, the commission suggested the establishment of bilingual schools, with a division in the third grade into a pure Greenlandic-language section and a section with more and more subjects taught in Danish, except for religion and the Greenlandic language. If this ambitious programme were implemented it would result in a strong danification of first education and then of Greenlandic society as a whole. A later generation has wondered at the lack of foresight in the plan – unawareness of the problems that would arise from asking a huge part of the population to acquire a strange language and a strange culture to the extent that they could function in that culture just as well as people born into it. But the consequences were inescapable: Greenland should be transformed into a modern society on the West European model – as far as possible. To achieve that, education was needed and education was only available in Danish. This was a real dilemma. The Danish specialists in the different fields of modern education were not able to translate their knowledge into Greenlandic, and there were no Greenlandic specialists who could translate knowledge from foreign languages. They had to be educated first – and the costs of such an enterprise would be astronomic and very time-consuming.

The Greenlandic church was left almost unchanged. But this part of Danish, if not West European culture had already been fully integrated into Greenlandic society for half a century.

## Health care

The fourth volume was devoted to health care, housing and social security. Action in this area was urgently needed, as the Danish press delegation of 1946 had already noted. The problem of tuberculosis was so serious that it could not await the work of the commission; one-third of all deaths in Greenland were caused by it, an appallingly high percentage compared to the Danish level of 25 out of 100,000 deaths. During 1949 the whole Greenlandic population were screened for the disease and inoculated against it.

The commission proposed a substantial expansion of the primary health service. Six of the existing sixteen hospitals were found to be unsuitable, and six new ones were to be established along with two nursing homes, a new hospital by the coast for tuberculosis patients and a central sanatorium and local tuberculosis section in Nuuk. In total this meant an expansion of hospital beds from 342 to 762, and an increase in the number of physicians from fourteen to twenty-six and of nurses from twenty-two to thirty-seven.

Action to improve health did not stop with the primary health service. The quality of Greenlandic houses, which by Danish standards was extremely low, was crucial. A typical one-room house of 10-20 square meters, often leaky and cold, would hold about six persons. The Danish standard at the time was for at most two persons per room, not counting auxiliary rooms such as kitchen, bathroom and entrance hall. Almost all the dwellings in Greenland were unfit for habitation, and a plan was accordingly made to re-house the whole population: 6,000 houses would be built over the next twenty years. The building programme offered eight different types of family houses as shown in table 19.

The houses were to have kitchen, entrance hall, storerooms for food and solid fuel, a laundry room and a toilet – a tremendous improvement of housing standards, with every person having tripled indoor space. The predominating one-room house would be a thing of the past, and quite deliberately so, in order to improve the people's health conditions and social and cultural level. The children should have space and quiet for their homework and all should have their own bed. Abandoning the traditional common sleeping place would reduce the danger of infection, not to



mention *'the very early sexual activity and the widespread promiscuity'* together with venereal disease.<sup>287</sup>

It is hard to understand why the terrible conditions prevailing hitherto had not been taken care of long before. The Greenland administration was undoubtedly familiar with the situation, but it was probably tolerated because Greenland was a very different kind of community from Denmark and the administration had a very tight budget. The welfare state in Denmark had started in the late nineteenth century and taken off in the 1930s. After the war it increasingly became the common goal of most political parties, with the Social Democrats and the Radical Left Party as its strongest advocates. With greater public knowledge of conditions in Greenland it became intolerable, and a matter of shame, that a people for whom the Danish state was responsible should live so far below Danish standards. This was in accord with the new mood after the war, with colonialism now under heavy attack in international forums like the United Nations.

The financing of the building programme became a heavy burden. Hitherto the Greenlanders had built their own houses at a cost of Dkr. 1,500-2,000. The prices of the new houses would be eight or nine times higher, which was beyond the Greenlanders' means. It was proposed that half the cost should be an outright grant from the state and the balance a loan from the state. It was envisaged that 24% of total state investment would be for housing.

## Economy and business

Sub-committee 4 – the largest sub-committee with fifty-three members, of whom sixteen were from the private sector – examined the economy and the arrangement of business, and reported in vol. 5.

The main idea in this report was that private enterprise should be given a free hand in Greenland. This should be mainly in the hands of the Greenlanders, but since they were considered to lack the knowledge and skills as well as the capital to work in this system, the idea was that Danish private enterprise should be allowed to operate, partly to deliver the cap-

ital but mostly to enable the Greenlanders to learn how private enterprise worked. But access to Greenland would be at a price. It was feared that allowing Danish private capital a free hand in Greenland would grind the Greenlanders down before they were able to compete on equal terms. Therefore, liberal economic philosophy was restrained and essential parts of the old policy remained in force. In this there were political choices as well as the unavoidable reality of conditions in Greenland.

The political aim was to create preconditions for primary production, which would eventually pay its own way. But business cycles had to be smoothed out through the prices paid to the producers in Greenland. If world prices were to be fully operative *'it would result in devastating consequences for the Greenlandic population – or face the Danish society with an obligation to transfer substantial support.'*<sup>288</sup> The funding for evening out world market fluctuations should come from the production in Greenland. Eske Brun was firm that otherwise Greenland would never come any closer to being an open economy.

The Royal Greenland Trade Department should be the central export sales organisation and administer this fund. This was in order to ensure a high product quality, and level out prices from the different foreign markets. The basic condition remained: the products had to be gathered from a number of small places where they were produced, and shipped to very distant markets. Unless this was done by a central organisation, it would not be competitive. Therefore the actual monopoly over the purchase of Greenlandic production was maintained. But despite similarities between the old and the new system there were substantial differences. Greenlandic production no longer had to bear the expenses of social services, or even finance its own investments. Financing was the task of the state and Danish private capital.

As already mentioned, the whole operation was aimed at raising the Greenlanders' standard of living, and the method was to open the economy and teach the Greenlanders how to function in a competitive economy. The first of these objectives was the essential one. If a freer economy were to cause a fall in the Greenlanders' income, welfare should have a higher

287. G-50, 4.I: 46f.

288. G-50, 5.I: 39.

priority than their introduction to private enterprise, the blessings of which could be taught in evening classes and on the radio while waiting for better times to practise it.<sup>289</sup> The same attitude applied to Greenlandic wage-earners. Their income was not to be allowed to decrease, and they should be guaranteed a share of the expected increase in productivity. Moreover, a wage rise should not wait for a rise in productivity; a substantial one should come into force by 1 April 1950, and then a price and salary committee should monitor future development. It was considered necessary that the salaries of public servants in Greenland should develop in parallel with earnings in private business, i.e. for fishermen and hunters. How then should the often-heard demand for equal salaries between Danes and Greenlanders in public service in Greenland be resolved? It remained unresolved. If qualified Danes were to be attracted to Greenland, their salaries had to equal the salaries in Denmark and have a bonus in addition. The continuation of the century-old system of differences between the salaries of Danes and Greenlanders in Greenland was the inexorable logic of making Greenlandic production self-sustaining, so that any increase in living standards was the fruit of their own efforts and not a gift from Denmark. This issue became a burning question in the years to come, when Greenlandic civil servants were not inclined to accept arguments based on the national economy when they compared their wage cheques with those of their Danish colleagues.

This economic policy holds the key to understanding how the relationship with Greenland was actually seen from the Danish side. In spite of all attempts to transform Greenlandic society in a Danish mould and make Greenland 'a part of Denmark', as the constitutional change of 1953 did, it was not an attempt to assimilate Greenland into Denmark. Greenland was Greenland, the land of the Greenlanders who should be able to live there at a standard appropriate for a welfare state. Perhaps there were those in Denmark who cherished the idea that in due time transformation into a modern society would minimise the differences, so that a genuine melting together of the economy, culture, language and population would take place, but nobody aired that view, and the 1950

reform certainly stopped short of it. It is probable that the Greenland administration's solid knowledge of the Greenlanders and their society prevented the reformers from crushing Greenland in their benevolent embrace.

It was proposed that the existing monopoly for the purchase of Greenlandic products by the Royal Greenland Trade Department should also apply to Faroese and Danish boats fishing in internal Greenlandic waters. Claus Sørensen, a member of sub-committee 4, had tried to get easier terms, but Eske Brun, Victor Gram (Social Democrat) and Oluf Steen (Radical Left) were very firm on that point; if Danish and Faroese fishermen wanted to operate in Greenlandic waters they had to contribute to the Market Fluctuation Fund as the price for participation,<sup>290</sup> and in order that the Greenlanders could learn occupational skills from the admission of Danish fishing boats, the commission suggested that a permit would only be issued if up to half of the crews were Greenlanders. So much for the access of private enterprise to Greenland by means of Danish capital. In political terms its role should be that of a teacher to the Greenlanders. Greenland should not be a convenient self-service table. The politicians and the officials knew of course that the main reason why private Danish capital wanted to operate in Greenland was to make money, and this was acceptable provided it was on an equal footing with the Greenlanders. To finance existing and future private businesses in Greenland, a new Business Lending Fund was proposed to fund up to half of an investment. For financing of the Greenlandic fishing fleet, the subsidies were even bigger.

Besides the rearrangement of production and sales there was also a monopoly to break in imports. Also here essential elements of the old system lingered on, because the state wanted to guarantee supplies to Greenland and to maintain the system of equal retail prices all over the country irrespective of the delivery costs. There was no inclination to let private trade take over the lucrative deliveries to the larger settlements, thus leaving the Trade Department with the loss-making parts. The monopoly of supplies to Greenland should be maintained. Shopkeeping could be taken over by Greenlanders as private enterprise, and those

289. G-50, 5, I: 29.

290. *Grønlandsposten* 16 December 1949: 240-2.

who did so should be allowed to import some goods outside the Royal Greenland Trade Department, but not essentials such as flour and sugar. The retail trade should be separated from the administration and should bear its own costs without subsidies.

## **Qaanaaq and the East Coast**

The 6th volume dealt with the more backward societies in the far north, Thule, and the settlements at Ammassalik and Ittoqqortoormiit on the east coast. They were far from being ready to plunge into modernity, and the commission limited itself to suggesting improvements in health care and education.

We have now reviewed the main suggestions from the commission. There is much detail, for the report provides a more thorough examination of ideas and proposals than any of the debate in public or in Parliament. Thus it is the best source to analyse for intentions and attitudes. Furthermore, it can be seen as the official Danish view, unanimously carried as it was, and it was the basis for the legislation on Greenland policy that followed. It almost became the holy writ for those who had to implement the reforms in Greenland. Whether it contained what the Greenlanders really wanted is harder to say. Formally there were no problems. The provincial council had approved the guidelines in 1949. The Greenlandic members of the commission had signed the report. They had certainly been won over as Hedtoft had intended them to be.

## **Making the proposals into laws**

The route from report to legislation was very short. On 28 March 1950 the report was printed, on 27 April the eight bills were presented to the lower house of Parliament, on 3 May they had their first reading, and on 23 May they were carried. The upper house considered the bills on 24 and 25 May, and on 27 May the King signed the laws. They laid out the organisation and framework for the eight areas in question, and they were completely in harmony with the suggestions from the commission. The subjects of the laws were: provincial council and municipal councils, education,

Greenlandic church, the Royal Greenland Trade Department, economic activities, a Greenlandic Business Lending Fund and public Greenlandic funds.

The major parties supported the bills in Parliament: the Social Democrats, the Conservatives, the Radical Left, and the Liberal Left except for a few members. The reasons for carrying the laws were given in the commission's report, so only the few dissenting voices need to be noted here. The Communists rode their theoretical horse; they were worried about abandoning the Greenlanders to the mercy of '*capitalistic exploitation*'. The Single-Tax Party, Retsforbundet, advocated an even more liberal economic policy but was strongly opposed to the idea of transforming the Greenlander into a Dane, as they put it. It agreed with assisting the Greenlanders to obtain self-confidence and freedom of action, but the final goal had to be that they should have their own existence as a people independent of Denmark. The same way of thinking was evident in the criticism of Elin Appel of the Liberal Left party. She was strongly against making Greenlandic education a copy of its Danish counterpart. It would degrade the Greenlandic language, and in the end destroy the Greenlandic population and create a Danish one instead. Elin Appel belonged to one of the leading families in the Danish Folk High School movement, which in the nineteenth century on a national romantic basis emphasised the value of the mother tongue and belonging to a nation. In the second reading she was accompanied by a fellow party member, Jensen-Broby, who was uneasy about the speed in the plan and the scheme to concentrate the population in the larger settlements.<sup>291</sup>

Thus we see the opponents came from very different roots. The voices of Elin Appel and Jensen-Broby were all that was left of the old cautious attitude to Greenlandic society. The Extreme economic liberalism of the 'Retsforbundet' had had certain advocates in the public debate, but had failed against the predominant 'consideration for the Greenlanders' nurtured in the Greenland administration and in the majority of the political parties. The excessive nationalism of the 'Retsforbundet' on behalf of the Greenlanders was in direct contrast to what the Greenlanders themselves wanted. The axiomatic anti-capitalism of the Communist Party did not have a hold in any Green-

291. RTFF 1949-50: 4048-60.

landic issue. Opponents were few and divided, and did not press their opposition to a vote. Thus the bills were carried with 93-95 votes in favour and 13-15 abstentions and none against.

Some other laws in the early 1950s also had their origin in the commission's report. The act on jurisdiction of 1951 and the criminal code of 1954 both followed the commission's suggestions, resulting in the distinction between Danish and Greenlandic law being abolished. The new criminal code related to all misdeeds committed in Greenland regardless of the offender's nationality. The possibility remained of taking individuals on a short stay in Greenland to court in Denmark, the obvious reason being that stray strangers could thus be punished more severely than was possible under the Greenlandic criminal code. This code was remarkable in not having a definite punishment for a definite offence. Instead it aimed at keeping the offender from further crime, and the court's sanction should be individually adapted to each person. In this the criminal code had a strong element of the traditional Greenlandic way of dealing with offenders. Both laws were unanimously carried.

## The abolition of Greenland's colonial status

Whether Greenland was in fact a colony is a matter of definition. Greenland had become connected to Norway and later Denmark in the Middle Ages, and in the Danish perception had the same status as Iceland and the Faroes, which followed the same path into the Danish realm. No one ever called Iceland and the Faroes colonies. But as the Norse settlements in Greenland died out around 1500, and when traffic resumed in 1721 only native Eskimos were found there, Greenland was never governed in the same way as the other North Atlantic dependencies, but in the typical colonial way with the trading company in charge in the first period and from 1774 directly under the state with a local governor in charge. In the middle of the 19th century, the Faroes were represented in the Danish parliament on an equal basis with the population in

mainland Denmark, but the Icelanders rejected such an arrangement and began their long struggle for independence which they finally obtained in 1918 under the Danish king becoming in 1944 an independent republic.

In Greenland nothing of the kind happened: the rule of the state company continued, and it became common to refer to the country as a Danish colony like those in the West Indies. By the end of the Second World War its colonial status was obvious to contemporaries. The Danish parliament enacted laws for Greenland with no Greenlandic representation in Parliament; the Greenlandic population were Danish subjects but were subject to the native Greenlandic jurisdiction while in Greenland; and the Danish constitution did not cover Greenland. Further clarification was made when Denmark in 1947 reported Greenland to the United Nations as a 'non-self-governing territory', which placed it alongside the seventy-four other territories reported by Britain, France and others. These were commonly referred to as colonies.

The highly critical tone in the United Nations towards the colonial powers quickly convinced the participating Danes that their country had got into bad company. The same year (1947) they began to prepare their political system for having Greenland represented in Parliament so '*Greenland could have its status as colony advanced into being an integral part of Denmark.*'<sup>292</sup>

The Danish political parties accepted this idea early in 1948. The provincial council's rejection of the offer of representation in the Danish Parliament later in that year has already been mentioned, but the Danes did not rest, and in the Greenland Commission the idea of Greenlandic representation was aired again. It was recommended that the question be transferred to the sitting commission on the constitution to guarantee that the new constitution would make the integration of Greenland possible.<sup>293</sup> This was reported in 1949 to the provincial council which agreed that this opportunity should be considered in the coming new Danish constitution.<sup>294</sup>

So far it had been the Danes who kept the question open and the Greenlanders who had hesitantly con-

292. Hermod Lannung to the newspaper *Sydvestjylland* 3 December 1947.

293. Internal papers. Minutes from sub-commission I 9 February 1949. National Archives, Ministry of Greenland.

294. LR 1949: 119.

ceded the possibility of being represented in Parliament later. The question was now transferred to the commission on the constitution. Then it was opened politically again, and this time by the Greenlanders. A member of the newly-elected provincial council, Augo Lynge, who since 1945 had been a staunch advocate of full integration of Greenland into Denmark, raised the question. His speech ended: *'Greenland is a part of Denmark and wants to be so for ever. Greenland and its population should have fully equal rights with other Danish citizens. Therefore we must uphold the desire to have Greenlandic representation in Parliament. The Greenlandic representatives must have the opportunity to speak directly in Parliament on behalf of the Greenlandic population in the same way as the Faroese do. This is in order to have a direct influence over the laws concerning Greenland, not least the financial ones.'*<sup>295</sup>

The other members of the provincial council did not comment on this part of the speech, and Augo Lynge later admitted that it was his personal opinion.<sup>296</sup> Nevertheless, the Danes seized the opportunity and asked the sitting commission on the constitution to see to it that the new document would place Greenland on an equal footing with representation in Parliament since this was the wish of the Greenlandic members of the Permanent Greenland Committee. In 1952 a draft of the relevant section of the new constitution was discussed in the provincial council. It stated briefly: *'This constitution is valid for all parts of the Danish realm. In consequence Greenland shall be represented in Parliament.'* Augo Lynge opened the debate, and said among other things: *'When we look around the world we see colonial wars in many places where the natives fight for liberation from the mother country. They do so because they deem it best for them. But here in Greenland we want to do the opposite. We want to use our right to self-determination to bind Greenland solidly to the mother country.'* The next day, 9 September 1952, the Provincial council solemnly declared its support for the draft.<sup>297</sup>

This solved the problem for the Danish govern-

ment, which had wanted acceptance from the Greenlanders. Before the referendum was taken in Denmark, the relevant section 1 was further reduced to: *'this constitution is valid for all parts of the Danish realm'*. The Greenlandic representation was stated in section 28 as being two members.

The referendum in Denmark on the constitution act of 1953 was taken on 28 May and 77.5 % voted in favour. However, for Danes the Greenland issue was not the pivotal one. More important were the abolition of the two-chamber system in Parliament, leaving the single chamber 'Folketinget' and the simultaneous change in the law of royal succession so that a daughter could succeed to throne if there were no sons, as was the case in 1953. The king, Frederik IX, was extremely popular and had three daughters, whom the Danes wanted to succeed him rather than his brother and his family. The eldest daughter, Margrethe, succeeded in 1972.

No referendum was taken in Greenland. To a later generation this seems strange, but contemporaries found it unnecessary since Greenland had not wished for a referendum. This point was criticised in the United Nations in 1954. In its special committee on colonial matters, questions were raised as to whether the provincial council had been authorised by the electorate to opt for integration into Denmark. At this point the two Greenlandic members of the Danish delegation (also members of the Danish Parliament), Augo and Frederik Lynge, took the floor and declared that the integration had been in full compliance with the wishes of the Greenlandic population.<sup>298</sup> No one challenged the missing referendum after that.

Technically the issue in the United Nations was the pronouncement by Denmark that it would cease reporting to the UN about Greenland, because the new constitution had integrated Greenland into Denmark on an equal footing. A resolution recognising this fact was carried in the General Assembly by 45 votes in favour (even including the Soviet Union), 1 against (Belgium which would not recognise UN's authority in

295. LR 1951: 9.

296. Minutes 21 February 1952, Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee.

297. LR 1952: 133-6.

298. Petersen 1975: 45. In the private archive of the Danish delegate, Hermod Lannung, a note says, "at this point we let the Greenlanders take the floor. Very effective!"



such matters), and 11 abstentions. Three member states were not present.<sup>299</sup>The whole operation had succeeded. Denmark was no longer a colonial power.

The 1950 reform caused a major reconstruction of

Greenlandic society. The colonial period was over and a new era in which Greenland would be on an equal footing with the rest of the realm was about to begin.

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299. Petersen 1975: 73.

# The development in the 1950s

The Danish effort to improve almost all aspects of Greenland's society characterised its history in the years following the 1950-reform. Under the headings of equalisation and good-bye to the colonial period Greenland would both formally and in fact be brought up to Denmark's level with the same economic system, the same civil rights, and the same standard of living. This would be done by a short powerful effort. If colonisation means to create an area abroad in the image of the mother country, it is an irony of history that the effort to end colonial status by means of integration with Denmark meant the introduction of all things Danish on an unprecedented scale. Never in the past had so much Danish been introduced in so short time.

In contrast to some other examples of colonization, this was not meant to create opportunities for the population of the mother country but to improve the life of the colonial population. It is in this aim that the programme's success has been judged in both Denmark and Greenland. As mentioned before, the programme was similar to the colonial development programmes of France and Great Britain, and some of the motives were similar: to keep colonial peoples loyal to the mother country. In its economic aspects it differed from the British and French programmes. It was not aimed at making the colony economically valuable for the mother country. Private enterprise of the mother country could participate only if it served the overall objective: to teach the Greenlanders to operate private enterprise, as I have argued above.

The impact of the programme on Greenlandic society can be analysed from every aspect in life: from the measurable changes in the material development to the Greenlanders' evaluation of this development, and their reaction to it. Many analyses have been done, but more are needed to permit the writing of a satisfactory history of Greenland in these years. There is, for example, no thorough analysis of the role of the

provincial council and the activity of the Greenlandic members of Parliament. What follows is not a definitive history, but seeks only to provide a broad outline.

The legislation on economic activity was very much as suggested by the commission.

The Royal Greenland Trade Department was separated from the civil administration and got its own board representing the provincial council, the Permanent Greenland Committee of Parliament, the Greenland Administration in Copenhagen, the Treasury, and some Danish business organizations. The task of the RGTD was now to '*secure the supply to Greenland of all goods and equipment for economic activity, and – possibly in cooperation with private enterprise – to buy, process, and export the Greenlandic produce*'. The right to engage in economic activity in Greenland was restricted '*to Danish citizens living in Greenland, and by special permit from the prime minister to other Danish citizens as well*.' Everybody producing in Greenland was allowed to export their products either through the central sale organisation, which was RGTD, or if not to pay duties to it. Greenlandic funds, which hitherto had been raised by a levy on goods purchase from the Greenlanders, were now generated by a duty on the import of sugar, spirits, wine, and tobacco. The provincial council was to fund the municipalities out of this money. The new system greatly increased Greenlandic public funds. In 1948/49-1950/51 the previous system had produced Dkr. 432,000 while the import duties in 1951/52 yielded Dkr. 4.3 million, and in 1957/58 had grown to Dkr. 5.8 million. On top of this the Danish Parliament voted yearly ever-increasing sums for investments and costs in Greenland. The level was about Dkr. 20 million in 1948 which had grown to Dkr. 100 million in 1958.<sup>300</sup>

The act increased the power of the provincial council. A single provincial council, directly elected, gained increased political authority. Its decisions no longer required approval from Denmark but came into

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300. Beretninger 1960, 6: tables 28, 29, 32.

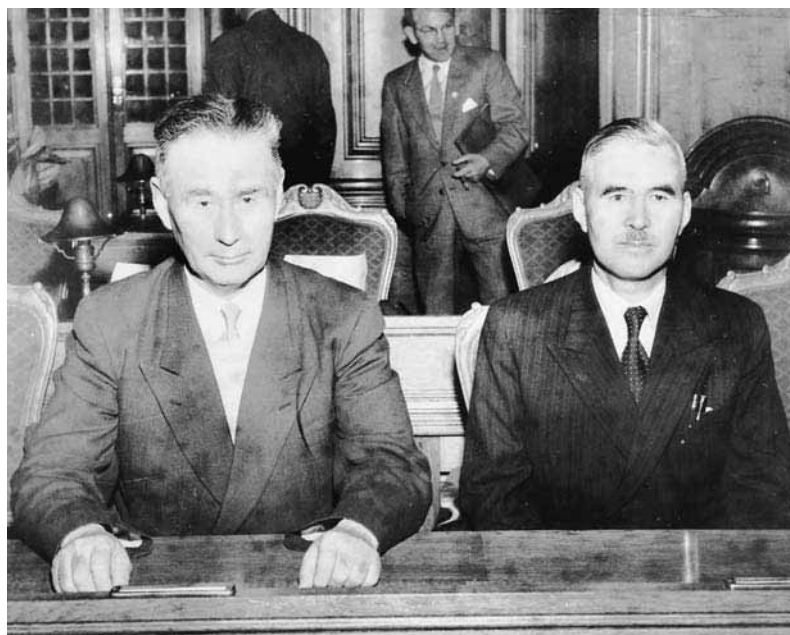


Fig. 19. The first Greenland representatives in Parliament have taken their seats in 1954. To the left you see Frederik Lynge (1889-1957) who served as a manager in the Greenland Trade Department and was an influential representative for the northern constituency 1953-1957. To the right is seen Augo Lynge (1899-1959) who was a teacher at the teacher training college in Nuuk and the most prominent spokesman for new reforms after the war. He represented the southern constituency 1953-1959 when he unfortunately perished at the shipwreck of MS 'Hans Hedtoft' in January 1959. Frederik was a cousin of Augo's father. Photo Arctic Institute.

effect at once, unless the governor had reasons to question their legality. In the interim before the new constitution gave Greenland two representatives in Parliament, the provincial council was authorized to appoint two members to participate in the meetings of the Permanent Greenland Committee in Parliament. However, while the new provincial council had greater power locally than the old one, it was by no means a nascent parliament on the road to autonomy. It remained an advisory council. The government was obliged to hear the advice of the provincial council in all legislation exclusively concerning Greenland before parliament made it law. In other legislation of special relevance to Greenland the Provincial council should be heard before the law was introduced in Greenland. Its status was comparable to that of a County Council in Denmark in some respects with greater power and in other respects with lesser power. For example it had no right of taxation. It had been given more money, but as shown above the decision on funding Greenland was made in the Danish parliament. And that was exactly the idea: to make Greenland as similar to a normal part of Denmark as possible. The Greenlanders' political emancipation consisted in having an equal part in legislation on Greenland and Denmark like any other citizen in the realm.

The existing 66 municipalities in West Greenland were reduced to 16 roughly corresponding to the colo-

nial districts. They took over local administration of civil society and were furnished with a civil servant as accountant and head of administration. Their tasks were expanded to take care of infrastructure such as roads and bridges. Social welfare was still a major task, but they were no longer involved in the judicial system.

Other aspects of life were regulated with new laws. In 1954 divorce became possible for all citizens in Greenland. Likewise, the inheritance law of 1958 applied to all in Greenland, be it Dane or Greenlander.

## The Labour Market

The Greenlandic labour force outside fishing and hunting was almost exclusively employed by the state in 1950, either as civil servants in the administration and in school and church or in the Royal Greenland Trade Department. A very few served whole or part time as servants in private homes. In 1943 the Greenlandic civil servants established a union (Bestillingsmandsforening) in Nuuk and the idea spread to all settlements along the coast by 1952. Ships' crews had started a union in 1951 (Den grønlandske Sømandsforening), and in 1952 the unskilled workers in Nuuk established an association to protect their interests. No union had achieved collective bargaining rights.



Fig. 20. The most vigorous effort was done in the health sector. The picture shows a patient being brought by helicopter to Søndre Strømfjord Airport to be transferred to Denmark for further treatment. Photo Arctic Institute.

The great Greenland Commission saw this as a problem because if private enterprise was to operate in Greenland there should be somebody to look after the interests of the employees. The commission wanted to encourage the establishment of trades unions capable of collective bargaining as in Denmark.

The Danish T.U.C. (in Danish L.O.) was asked by the ministry to help establish real trade unions in Greenland. They started in 1952 by educating the existing associations in Greenland how to negotiate and to run a proper union. In the mean time the Danish T.U.C. got a mandate from their Greenlandic colleagues to negotiate their wages in Copenhagen. By 1956 the education had been so successful that the Greenland Labour Association (Grønlands Arbejdersammenslutning) was established covering all workers on land and sea. The Danish T.U.C. continued to give advice on collective bargaining in Greenland until 1973.

This transfer of an institution developed in a more modern industrial society to a less developed colonial area depicts very well what was going on in Greenland in those years. An organised labour market was not established to answer problems in Greenlandic society, but to create the conditions for a new Greenlandic

society with an economy based primarily on private enterprise.

## Health care

The need for a greater effort was clearly recognised in 1950 and the necessary legislation passed. All that remained was to fund and construct. A serious effort was indeed made. The planned twenty-six physicians were in post in 1957, and the planned thirty-seven nurses in 1958. On top of that seven physicians and forty nurses were allocated to the battle against tuberculosis. By 1958 there were 685 hospital beds out of the planned 762 beds.

The investments in health care seem to have paid off.

Table 20 shows remarkable improvement, but there was still some way to go before mortality was down to Danish levels. The apparent lower overall mortality in Greenland in 1960 was entirely due to the relatively larger number of younger Greenlanders. Mortality by age groups was in all cases higher in Greenland.

While mortality fell, fertility rose. The birth – death surplus was in 1950 1.6 % and in 1958 3.73 %. In



Fig. 21. Education had a high priority in the reform period after World War II. Here is class in a new school in Kuummiut, a settlement in East Greenland, 1961. Photo Jette Bang/Arctic Institute.

Denmark it was 0.73%. A demographic transition well-known in developing countries also took place in Greenland in those years.

Education

The expansion of schools in Greenland was a major part of the reform programme. The plan was to establish at least three new bilingual schools, to build some twenty houses for schoolteachers, and to find about 50 teachers educated in Denmark to provide the staff.

Table 20. Mortality 1950 and 1960 (Beretninger 1951 and 1961)

	Greenland		Denmark
	1950	1960	1960
Per cent death by tuberculosis			
of all deaths	32.20	5.00	< 0.5
Mortality per 1000 inhabitants	25.00	8.30	9.50
Infant mortality < 1 year per			
100 life births	15.00	6.80	2.20

301. USG-4 1961: 32

302. USG-4 1961: 43f.

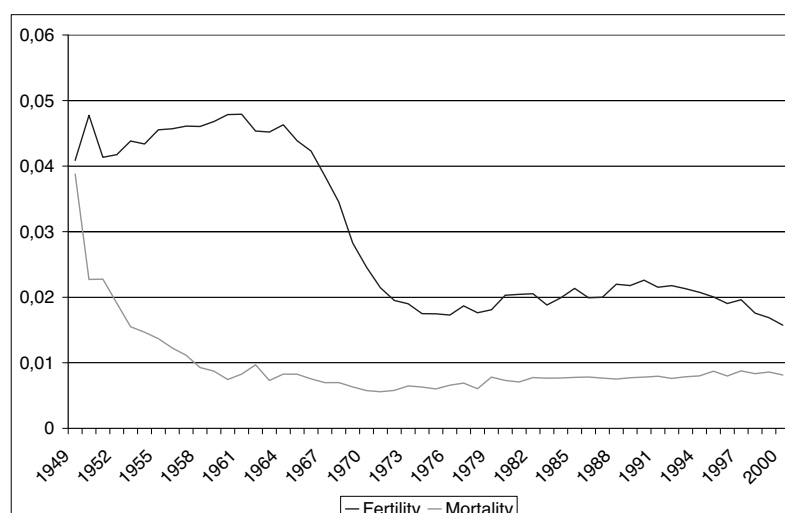
The teacher training college in Nuuk and the three junior schools should be expanded. The result after eight years is shown in table 21.

The 79 more teachers with a Danish education must mostly be Danes, because only nine of the twenty-two Greenlanders educated at a teacher training college in Denmark had returned to Greenland before 1960.<sup>301</sup> The great influx of Danish teachers was firstly a question of having enough teachers, and secondly a question of improving the quality of the teaching in Danish. The aim of making all Greenlandic children bilingual was very ambitious, and by 1961 a report concluded that it was unlikely to be achieved.<sup>302</sup>

To give Greenlandic pupils a proper training in Danish some were sent to Denmark to attend Danish schools. This started in 1961, and by 1980 when the scheme ended about ten thousand Greenlandic children had spent up to a year in Denmark. Equal numbers had shorter trips in their summer vacation combined with a few weeks' school attendance. The costs were in the main covered by the Danish Ministry of Education. The ambitious goal to make all Greenlandic children bilingual was not achieved, but most



Diagram 8. Mortality and Fertility in Greenland (GSÅ).



participants later judged their stay in Denmark as beneficial to their knowledge of Danish and to their later career.<sup>303</sup>

## Housing

Much had been achieved in education reform, and in housing too, there was significant progress. By 1963 2,950 houses had been built out of the planned 6,000 houses over twenty years.<sup>304</sup> In general the development plan aimed to strengthen the social infrastructure as can be seen by the way government investment was distributed (table 22).

In addition the government lent Dkr. 67 million to finance the Greenlanders' houses and Dkr. 17 million for Greenlandic business in the period 1950-1961.<sup>305</sup>

This actual building was in the main carried through by Danish workers and artisans, because the Greenlanders were expected to continue as primary producers or to run the new machinery when they had had a suitable training.

## Primary production

Primary production did quite well in those years as shown in table 23.

As in earlier periods production fluctuated from year to year. Blubber and seal oil remained fairly static while seal hides doubled. This suggests that the hunter families kept fewer hides than before for their own use. Sheep farming suffered a catastrophe in the winter of 1948/49 when half of the sheep died, but recovered to a steady level of about 20,000 ewes in the late 1950s. There after there were great variations. A maximum was reached in 1966 with 45,000 sheep and

Table 21. Development in education (Beretninger 1960: table 14).

	1950	1958
Number of school children	4149	5092
Number of places with a school	124	108
Number of classrooms	176	228
Number of teachers in total	251	286
– with Danish education	26	105
– with Greenlandic education	98	92
– with other education	75	61
– with no education	52	28
Number of pupils in junior high schools (non compulsory for ages 14-15)	72	131
Number of pupils in 'realskoler' (non compulsory, mainly vocational, for ages 14-16)	26	96
Number of students at Teacher Training College	9	12
Numbers attending Evening Schools	1797	4511

303. Jensen 2000.

304. G-60: 15.

305. G-60: 13.

**Table 22.** Government investment in Greenland 1948/49 – 1958 (Beretninger 1960: table 32).

	%
Health care	11.40
Schools, broadcasting, churches	7.00
Harbours, power stations, water supply, roads, etc.	24.20
Weather service	13.90
Cars, machines, cranes, ships and boats	13.40
Shops and storehouses	5.80
Factories	6.20
Houses for civil servants	12.50
Miscellaneous	5.60
Total value (million Dkr.)	300.690

**Table 23.** Primary production in Greenland 1945-1958 (G-50 Vol. 5, I: 78; Beretninger 1960: tables 17, 18, 23).

	Mill kg. Cod	Blubber and seal oil, tons	Seal hides	Female sheep	Sales to RGTD (Mio Dkr.)
1945	12.3				
1946	13.0				
1947	14.9				
1948	18.6	827	21.800	22.300	2.00
1949	17.1	704	20.100	10.900	2.30
1950	21.2	753	21.100	13.200	3.30
1951	18.2	822	23.100	14.000	3.20
1952	18.8	736	27.500	16.200	4.20
1953	20.4	886	33.100	18.900	5.40
1954	18.7	784	32.000	21.300	5.50
1955	21.0	1.062	28.200	20.800	7.40
1956	21.3	932	34.700	24.000	8.10
1957	25.2	727	37.900	17.300	9.10
1958	26.8	899	44.200	19.000	10.70

a minimum in 1976 with 13,500.<sup>306</sup> Sheep farming was confined to the southern part of Greenland where there are sufficient pastures but even here they are not abundant. Another serious check on the number of sheep is the length of the winters. A prolonged winter will jeopardize the livestock with shortage of fodder, and the following shorter summer will produce less hay for the following winter's fodder.

The fishery was expected to be the leading in-

dustry, and the fishermen indeed doubled their catch in the period. And with rising prices the earnings of the Greenlandic producers were five times higher in 1958 than in 1948. Good as this expansion in catches was, it could have been better. In the international waters in the Davis Strait just west of Greenland foreign fishing fleets took 8 to 14 times as much as the Greenlanders.<sup>307</sup>

The introduction of modern fishery equipment and fish processing in factories took place very slowly. Despite the intent of Venø and Claus Sørensen in 1948 (see chapter five), very few Danish fishermen tried their hand so the grand master plan of letting Danish private enterprise take the lead in economic development did not materialize. This possibility was foreseen in the report of 1950 which suggested that if private enterprise failed to build fishery factories, the state should to do it.<sup>308</sup> The reason why Danish capital did not take this chance has not been researched. It seems reasonable to assume that the Danish fishery did not need new fishing areas, because the fishing in the North Sea and the inner Danish waters was steadily increasing in those years. Danish catches rose from 146 millions Kg in 1945 to 423 millions Kg in 1956 as the salt water fishing fleet grew from 73,000 register tons in 1945 to 80,000 register tons in 1956.<sup>309</sup> Another reason for not operating in Greenland may be the cost, for Danish fishermen in Greenland had to contribute to the Greenlandic market fluctuation fund on top of normal expenses.

When Danish private capital did not build factories in Greenland, the RGTD took over. It was still part of the plan to modernize the fishing industry by concentrating it on those harbours at the coast which did not freeze in winter. Only in this way could the Greenlanders earn a decent living, and it would also help concentrate the population at these places to the benefit of better social services. So in 1957/58 the RGTD started plans for establishing factories. A special law authorizing the extra costs of Dkr. 57 million over seven years was passed in May 1959. All Danish political parties supported the noble intentions, but the Conservative Party and the Liberal Left opposed state

306. Grønland 1968: 96. Greenland Council Document 39/76.

307. G-60: 20.

308. G-50 5,I: 56.

309. Yearly Statistics.

finance. It would be '*state socialism*' they claimed. As an alternative they suggested incentives to Danish private capital to invest by relaxing the requirement to have Greenlanders participating in management and production and by reducing the dues to the Market Fluctuation Fund. The government would not wait any longer for private enterprise arguing that it had had its chance, but did not show up. A majority in Parliament backed the government.

This incident shows clearly that when Greenlandic issues were discussed in the Danish political system, it was in terms of the issues current in Denmark. Socialism and capitalism were certainly not an issue in Greenland at that time.

## The impact of the modernization on Greenland

The impact of the development programme in Greenland was immense. One consequence of the investments was an influx of money into the economy. The distribution of income is shown in table 24.

The trend was clear. The income from primary production had risen nine fold, but its proportion of total income had declined. Public salary income just soared upwards while the guest workers earned two-thirds of the total income of the Greenlandic population 1955 and eight-tenths in 1962. The proportion of Danes in Greenland was eight to every hundred Greenlanders, and they were not all guest workers. Not all this income was spent in Greenland. Danish guest workers sent a great deal back to their families in Denmark, but some capital stayed. It was invested in retail trade, services, and workshops. The result in 1960 is shown in table 25.

Compared to the State sector the private sector was tiny. In 1955 3,665 persons were occupied in hunting and fishing, and 3,381 persons in different enterprises in the state sector. The Dkr. 8.6 million income from private retail trade in 1960 should be compared with the Dkr. 56 million sales in the shops of the RGTD.<sup>310</sup> Furthermore, the private enterprises outside fishing and hunting were largely Danish. The great plan that Greenlanders would take over business in Greenland operating as a private sector had scarcely

**Table 24.** Distribution of income in Greenland by source (G-60: 20).

	1947	1955	1962
Greenlandic products			
including subsistence	63.0%	54.2%	49.2%
Public salary	37.0%	40.6%	44.9%
Private profits and salaries	–	5.2%	5.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Dkr. (millions)	8.100	33.000	73.300
Guest workers (million Dkr.)	–	20.700	60.400

**Table 25.** Private enterprise in Greenland 1960 excluding fishery, hunting and farming (Boserup 1963: 376-401).

	Greenlandic owner	Danish owner	Total
Number of enterprises	110	66	176
Retail trade etc	86	30	116
Production, service	14	12	26
Workshops	10	24	34
Turnover (mill. Dkr.)			
Retail trade etc (71 enterp.)	3.1	5.5	8.6
Production, service	?	?	?
Workshops	1.0	5.0	6.0
Employees			
Retail trade etc (32 enterp.)	49	31	80
Production, service	?	?	?
Workshops	45	125	170

started so it was far from characteristic of Greenlandic society as a whole.

## The reaction in Greenland

The Greenlandic reaction to all this can be seen at two levels, politically and more broadly in the population as a whole. It seemed to the Danes that the Greenlanders were not as happy as expected. Anxiety was aired in the Danish press and in the provincial council.

Two main troubles seemed to be: 1) the Greenlanders were spectators to the Danish development of the society, 2) incorporation into the realm on an equal footing seemed to be understood by the Greenlanders to mean that they would have the same benefits as Danes in Greenland especially in terms of salaries.

<sup>310</sup>. Beretninger 1960, 6: tables 5, 21.

**Table 26.** District Court Statistics, Greenland (Bentzon 1979, Vol. II: 13). \* Until 1964, the North comprised only Uummannaq and Upernavik districts, thereafter also Thule, Ammassalik and Ittoqqortoormiit.

	Growth in court cases %	
	1952-1963	1964-1975
South	89.0	113.5
Nuuk	174.5	157.5
others	113.8	228.1
Centre total	136.4	193.2
Disko Bay	120.3	115.9
North *	11.3	91.2
Greenland	106.8	146.6

Another problem emerged. Articles in the Danish press reported excessive drinking, violence and other crimes. This alarmed the administration which in 1955 responded by setting up a committee to study the impact of reforms on Greenlandic society. This Committee for Social Research in Greenland did examine a number of issues in the next eight years.

The first task the Ministry of Greenland (established 1955) gave the committee was to report on the alcohol question. The sale of spirits to the natives had formerly been prohibited but the law had been gradually relaxed into very elaborated system by which high ranking Greenlanders could get permits to buy spirits and beer. The rest of the population could not buy, but could brew their own beer, called 'immiaq'. The ingredients for beer production, hop and mash, were rationed, also according to your position, but everybody could buy some unless they were deprived of the right due to their misbehaviour. This situation was felt as discrimination by the ordinary Greenlanders, and after some relaxation of regulations 1952-1954, the sale of alcohol was totally liberated from December 1954, and everybody could buy all that they could afford.

The committee report was not unduly alarming. Consumption of imported spirits rose by 57% 1954-1959, but brewing of immiaq had decreased 47%. Thus total consumption had decreased by 8%.<sup>311</sup>

A single jurisdiction for all in Greenland was established in 1954 as mentioned above. The criminal law contained a proviso that it should be revised in

1959/60 on the basis of a report on its operation. This task was given to the Committee for Social Research in Greenland, which did its research in 1958-60 and reported in 1962.<sup>312</sup> In the new Greenlandic Code 83 sections listed the various misdemeanours, while ten sections suggested possible action by the courts. The court's task was to determine the appropriate response to persuade the criminal to change his ways and become a useful member of society. Lay judges with sound knowledge of the offender and local society manned the lowest courts. This model followed the former practice of law towards the Greenlanders, and was deemed most effective in small communities. It was also in concurrence with modern trends in Danish and European jurisprudence.

Since the new system had been operating for only four years, the committee found little to change. About a third of the sections had not yet been used. Nevertheless, the committee did suggest that sexual abuses against members of your own gender should be mentioned explicitly as in the Danish criminal code to narrow the gap between the two criminal codes. Overall the committee found that the law still was appropriate and was administered to the satisfaction of the authorities involved.

Over the next decade the number of court cases grew rapidly, but this may reflect better statistics or better law enforcement rather than more crimes. On the basis that more court cases suggest modernisation of society, table 26 may show the different pace of change in different parts of Greenland.

These statistics suggest that modernization was most rapid in the capital Nuuk in the first period, thereafter other townships in the area took over, notably Paamiut and Maniitsoq.

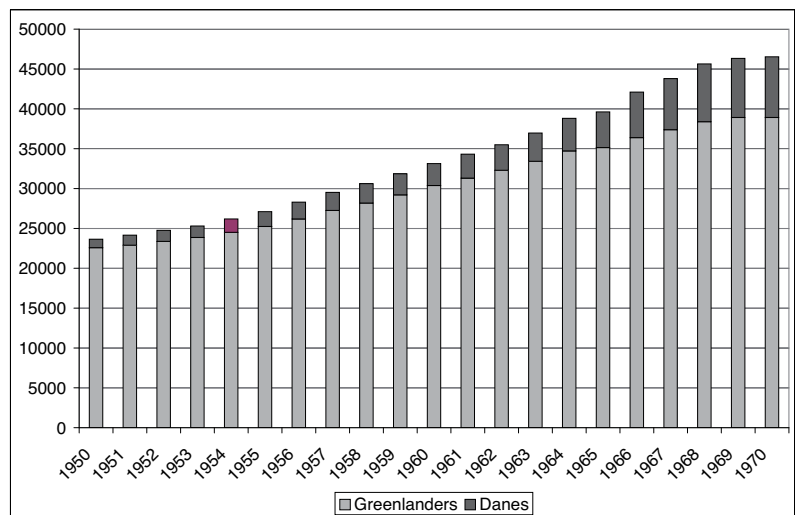
The pace and unevenness of development in Greenland can also be seen from the distribution of lawsuits by kind. Criminal offences were quite stable over the period in all parts of Greenland with 25 to 28% of the cases. Paternity cases had a declining proportion, while modern cases about economic disputes had a increasing, but uneven, proportion (see table 27).

In the first period paternity cases were evenly distributed at around 50%; the proportion fell every-

311. USG-I 1961: 44.

312. USG-5 & 6 1962.

Diagram 9. Population in Greenland by origin (annual censuses).



where, and most markedly in the South and Centre. In contrast for other civil law suits, the old-fashioned North was much behind in the first period. It increased its proportion in the second, but not to the level of the other districts, led by the modernized South and Centre.

Greenlandic society was certainly in the process of change. This is demonstrated for example by divorce arrangements. The custody of the children after a divorce can be decided by agreement between the parents or by the court. From 1955-1959 the children in 4 of 17 cases stayed with the father by agreement, and in 4 of the cases were given to the custody of the mother by the ruling of the court. In two cases the court ruled for custody to the father. This reflects the traditional economy where a woman had little chance of sustaining a family.<sup>313</sup> 15 years later, 1969-1972, this had changed. Now children stayed with their mother in two thirds of the cases by agreement as well as by the court's ruling. There were plenty of jobs for women so they could take care of a family.<sup>314</sup>

The explicit reactions of the ordinary Greenlanders to rapid modernization and the influx of many Danes in construction work and administration are difficult to discover. In numbers the Greenlanders were still in a clear majority, but many more of them came into contact with Danes at the workplace and in the administration. Up to the reform of 1950 only a few

hundred Danes lived permanently in Greenland, all of them in civil service or trade. By 1950 there were a thousand Danes among 22,500 Greenlanders increasing to 7,000 among 39,000 Greenlanders by 1970 (diagram 9).

The two groups were supposed to have equal rights in Greenland and in a lot of respects this was true. In politics, law, and in the social services the same rules applied to all. The great difference was in wages. Firstly, Danish companies mostly sent out the construction workers, and they had to pay them more than in Denmark to persuade them to go. In addition, they worked long hours at higher rates, so financially it was really rewarding for them. Many a small fortune was created and put into small business in Greenland

Table 27. Distribution of law cases about paternity and other civil cases, % (Bentzon 1979, Vol. II: 18f). \* Until 1964, the North comprised only Uummannaq and Upernavik districts, thereafter also Thule, Ammassalik and Ittoqqortoormiit.

	Paternity		Other civil cases	
	1952-1960	1965-1975	1952-1960	1965-1975
South	49.2	16.9	19.5	48.3
Centre	43.1	17.1	19.9	54.8
Disko Bay	50.1	26.6	14.8	43.4
North *	45.2	29.6	7.3	29.0
Greenland	46.4	20.3	17.4	48.7

313. USG-2 1961: 28.

314. Bentzon 1979 II: 33.



or Denmark by these workers, especially by artisans. Secondly, the Greenlanders in the civil service (about 70 persons) in Greenland had a reduction in their salary of 20% in order to narrow the gap between their income level and that of the hunters and fishermen. A special group of Greenlandic civil servants in the lower echelons (about 500 persons) were salaried close to the wage level of ordinary workers.

The Greenlanders perceived this differential as injustice. There is strong evidence that the Greenlandic conception of Greenland being placed on equal footing in the realm meant that they should be paid the same salaries as Danes in Greenland. This was indeed the conclusion of another report by the Committee for Social Science Research in Greenland.<sup>315</sup>

The report looked into difficulties in cooperation between Greenlanders and Danes in West Greenland. A survey of group attitudes and self-perceptions revealed interesting similarities and differences.<sup>316</sup>

In stereotypes the Greenlanders thought of themselves as kind, close-knit, primitive and progressive, but also lacking morals, obedient to authority, lazy and inefficient. Some respondents thought the Danes were kind and efficient, but others thought them unkind and dominant. The Danish respondents thought of themselves as efficient, kind, and energetic, but also dominant. They thought the Greenlanders kind, trustworthy, close-knit and progressive, but also irresponsible, inefficient, primitive and lazy.<sup>317</sup>

The survey concluded that ordinary Greenlanders felt themselves ignored and disadvantaged. Modernisation required qualifications, which the Greenlanders were hardly educated to obtain. Rapid development was needed so there was no time to wait for the Greenlanders to acquire the necessary qualifications.<sup>318</sup> In other words: the obstacle for rapid development in Greenland was that the Greenlanders were too much Greenlandic.

## The political debate

The provincial council was the forum in which the Greenlanders could debate the development plans and make their voice heard. Its role has not yet been fully researched, but there is a number of research theses on specific issues.<sup>319</sup>

Greenlandic politicians in the provincial council and elsewhere were also affected by modernization in their ordinary lives. They had always belonged to the top layer of Greenlandic society though this was dominated by the incoming Danes. Between 1930 and 1958 the percentage of Greenlanders in leading positions had dropped from 49 to 25 percent and from 95 to 75 percent in the lower ranks. Among the skilled workers Greenlanders were only 28 percent in 1958 against 92 percent in 1930.<sup>320</sup>

The Greenland development programme was essentially a Danish enterprise. The ministry with its agencies in Denmark and Greenland planned and arranged the work in Greenland. The summer construction work was decided on by some top-level civil servants in the closing months of the previous year. The work in Greenland was done by the a new agency, GTO (Greenland Technical Organisation) assisted by Danish private companies and some local Greenlanders. Thus there was little left for the provincial council to do. Of course, it was consulted about new laws and their comments were always acted upon. The two following case studies show the role of the provincial council.

### Faroese fishing in Greenlandic waters

This issue emerged in the 1920s and caused disagreement between the provincial council and the Danish government as described previously. The 1950 reform opened the Greenlandic waters fishery to Danish citizens living in Greenland and other Danish citizens with a government permit with specified conditions.<sup>321</sup>

315. USG-9 1963: 98.

316. USG-9 1963: 71.

317. USG-9 1963: 68. In fact the respondents were asked about the best and worst qualities. My conclusions are based on the questions with highest response.

318. USG-9 1963: 73, 92, III.

319. Goldschmidt 1976; List 1976; Sachse 1984; Hollesen 1984; Jensen 1977; Forchhammer 1996; Jensen 2001.

320. USG-3, 4, 8 1961-63: I, 81.

321. Law on Economic Activities in Greenland of 27 May 1950 §3.

The threat of vessels from Denmark and especially the Faroe Islands was the worst nightmare of the Greenlanders, and they were not slow to react. The governor made two announcements in the late summer of 1951 stating that the 'foreign' fishermen should as far as possible avoid fishing in the customary Greenlandic grounds close to inhabited areas. And they should contact local authorities to ensure that Greenlandic interests were not injured.<sup>322</sup>

These announcements had been poorly communicated to locals, and a barrage of complains was raised in Greenland. In the provincial council Augo Lynge protested vehemently. The Greenlanders opposed opening up the whole area in principle to any fisherman in Denmark and the Faroe Islands at the discretion of the Prime Minister. Instead they wanted some selected Danish/Faroese fishing boats to teach the Greenlanders modern fishery, but what had happened was that 70 Faroese vessels had been allowed to fish this year ignoring the Greenlanders and making no contact with local authorities. Lynge suggested that the provincial council should issue the fishing permits and not the ministry.<sup>323</sup> Nearly all the members spoke on similar lines. A sub committee was formed and defined the coastal area in which the 'foreign' fishermen were required to obtain the local authorities' permission to fish, covering all waters north of Nordre Strømfjord, and half the waters south of this point.<sup>324</sup>

In Copenhagen the reaction was taken quite seriously. In the early spring of 1952 a new regulation was issued which fully accepted the Greenlandic terms, and later a Faroese delegation negotiated with the Greenlandic municipal authorities to establish the quite specific conditions for fishing in each of the delineated areas.<sup>325</sup>

### **The concentration policy<sup>326</sup>**

The main idea of the 1950-reform was to concentrate the population in fewer places in order to maximise the benefit of investment. The furthest north, Upernavik and Uummannaq, and the southern area round

Cape Farewell would be almost depopulated. Coercion was out of the question, so the means to reach the goal was to concentrate investment in places with a future to attract people to places to be developed. There were three sources of development funds.

- The central government building of harbours, power plants, hospitals and other public buildings. This was determined in Copenhagen by a small group of senior civil servants, in principle by the minister.
- The allocation within the Royal Greenland Trade Department of stores and production units. These decisions were taken by the company based on the needs of the economy. The board of RGTD included representatives from the provincial council.
- The housing loans and grants decided by the provincial council out of its own funds. All three bodies tried to manoeuvre to fulfil the aims of the reform.

The provincial council in principle favoured concentration. Moving around in search of better places to hunt was familiar to Greenlanders, but two instances of population relocation in the early 1950s brought about heavy criticism in the provincial council. In 1952 Frederik Lynge condemned the fact that lack of public investment could force people to move even if they would rather stay.<sup>327</sup> The cause of this criticism was the latest steps in the relocation policy. 350 km north of Upernavik a scattered group of settlements was deemed too inhospitable to the population, and they were offered new homes in the south. However, only old people and others less fit to earn a living by hunting wished to move. Between 1954 and 1957 some 240 people did move from the north, but the new promised heaven did not appear. Mostly unfit to work the incomers became a liability in their new places as they had been in their old ones.

The evacuation of Aappillattoq had long been

322. LR 1951: 141.

323. LR 1951: 150f.

324. LR 1951: 217.

325. LR 1952: 33, 380-5.

326. This section is based on the work of Søren Forchhammer (1996).

327. LR 1952: 218.

foreseen, with apparent approval from the local population and the council. But in 1950 the newly elected provincial council member from the area thought otherwise, and in 1952 persuaded the council to support a continuation of the settlement. Copenhagen did not comply until 1955 when the administration agreed to housing loans and repair of the little harbour while the whole district was further investigated. The Appillat-toq issue was never raised again.<sup>328</sup>

In 1953 Frederik Lynge suggested a population commission to consider the policy of relocation. The provincial council agreed so as not to leave the overall investments plans and dispositions of RGTD as the only forces determining population movements. The council especially stressed that the expanding sites should be properly developed with work opportunities, houses, schools and hospitals before any major immigration took place. The words of the resolution were that: *'the provincial council has decided to appoint a commission with the task to submit recommendations to the provincial council concerning the way in which the concentration of the population which is already going on in Greenland ought to be continued. The commission is to throw light on which settlements are not considered suitable for future habitation, taking into consideration trade, economy, schooling, and traffic, and which settlements are considered suitable for future habitation but which, on the other hand, cannot be recommended for development. Finally, the commission shall examine which settlements are found appropriate as places for settlements.'*<sup>329</sup> (meaning to take more people)

The commission worked for 14 years reporting annually to the provincial council. The bigger reports came in 1957 and 1961, the last in 1967. Compared with the attitude of the planning authorities in Copenhagen which were less hesitant about concentrating investment the Population Commission wanted more places developed, fewer abandoned, and the majority kept steady that is: public support for repair, but no new investments.

The doomed settlements could receive no public support whatsoever, the bulk going to the developing areas. The 1957-report made a clear distinction

between the northern part (Uummannaq and Upernavik) where the predominant business was hunting and therefore not suited for population concentration, and the southern part that was suitable.<sup>330</sup>

Meanwhile, concentration at the bigger settlements was taking place on a purely individual and voluntary basis at such a pace that housing and other facilities could not keep up. The yearly advice from the provincial council to stop planned relocation was thus easy for Copenhagen to accept. The problem was to provide suitable places, not to get people to move there.

The experience of the development plan in the 1950s ignited a new round of reform debate.

In August 1959 the issue was raised in the provincial council. The priest, Erling Høegh of Qaqortoq, proposed a statement to the Danish Parliament. It emphasized the strong Greenlandic wish that Parliament became more aware of Greenland, to formulate a long term goal for Greenland, and to make clear the will and the capacity of the state to finance the further development. Høegh suggested that the two special agencies GTO and RGTD should be dissolved, and the relationship between the Ministry of Greenland, the provincial council and the Parliament should be sorted out. The goal ought to be *'administratively and politically to normalize the conditions in Greenland and between Greenland and Denmark so that the position of Greenland as a Danish county with equal rights – no more no less – could be assured and be a reality in daily life...'*

The speech leading to the statement included a strong commitment to private enterprise: *'Competition and real opportunities for the competent entrepreneur is commonly recognised as a source of inspiration in the West European kind of society'*, he claimed. The speech – but not the statement – also proposed the abolition of the Ministry for Greenland, and until that could happen, the civil servants in the ministry should be relieved of their *'half-political'* work as he put it. Finally, the provincial council should not in misunderstood veneration for tradition block development. Investment had to be concentrated.<sup>331</sup>

328. Forchhammer 1996: 41-4.

329. Forchhammer 1996: 47. His translation.

330. Forchhammer 1996: 45-77.

331. LR 1959: 86-99.

Thus, Høegh's speech supported the development programme and demanded faster action. On the other hand, he also felt that development was bypassing the Greenlanders, especially the provincial council. This interpretation accounts for the appeal to the Danish politicians and the critical tone towards the civil servants.

The Provincial council members agreed with Høegh that development should be furthered, and that they should have more influence in decision making. Less strongly they supported the central statement: normalisation – political and administrative – so

Greenland could become a normal Danish county with equal rights – no more and no less. Parliament was asked to address the Greenlandic issues. Erling Høegh was pleased.<sup>332</sup>

To conclude, the provincial council's reaction to development was thus to demand more equality, to bring conditions in Greenland closer to those in Denmark – economically, administratively and politically. Seemingly, the Greenlandic politicians believed the problems in Greenland arose because the development programme, rapid as it was, was nonetheless too slow. Therefore the solution was – speeding up.

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332. LR 1959: 126 f.

# Adjusting the course

## The Greenland Committee of 1960 (G-60)

In August 1959 the provincial council had called for a debate in Parliament. The government proposed, in opening the session on 6 October 1959 that the issue be taken to the Permanent Greenland Committee to consider whether 'these statements and the general development in politics and economy should be considered in a committee or a commission'.<sup>333</sup>

In the Permanent Greenland Committee the Conservatives, the Liberal Left, the two Greenlandic MPs, and the provincial council's administrative committee, which had also been invited, proposed a purely political committee of members from the provincial council and Parliament. But the minister (Kaj Lindberg), the Social Democrats, the Radical Left and 'Retsforbundet' wanted the experts on the committee as well. The minister got his way, and with clear conscience I presume as the Greenlanders changed sides and agreed with him.<sup>334</sup>

The minister originally proposed five Danish politicians, five Greenlandic politicians, four civil servants, and one representative from private enterprise.<sup>335</sup> To these were added another civil servant, and a shared representative for the workers' and the farmers' cooperatives. The Greenlandic fishermen and hunters, and the Greenlandic workers' association got a representative each. The Danish politicians were unhappy with the large number of business representatives, but the minister explained that he had been put under pressure. The two Greenlandic organisations had threatened to subvert the work of the committee if they were not represented.<sup>336</sup>

The real problems behind these manoeuvres about the composition of the committee cannot be found in the records. The attitude from the two Greenlandic organisations seems straightforward: when Danish business was represented so should the Greenlandic. Their attitude was pure egalitarian policy, although unusually forthright in the shape it took. Eske Brun, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Greenland from 1955, later said that he did not want any sort of new enquiries.<sup>337</sup> He was remarkably silent at the opening meetings of G-60. A single remark at the meeting on 12 Nov. 1959 showed his disapproval: he pointed out that *'the statement from the provincial council has nothing about a committee or commission. It was first mentioned in the opening statement of the prime minister.'*

The committee's terms of reference were announced on 18th February 1960: to consider the political, economic, and administrative conditions in Greenland, and thereafter to suggest policy alterations. In particular the role of the provincial council in spending government grants should be examined together with the political arrangement in North and East Greenland. The committee was to evaluate the development in production, and estimate the need for investment in relation to the population growth. Furthermore the committee should consider the merits of public as against private enterprise, and the possibility of allowing prices to be determined by costs. The gap between the Danish and the Greenlandic wage levels and the possibility of introducing taxes in Greenland should also be considered. Finally, the committee should look into the possibilities of moving some decisions from the ministry of Greenland to

333. FT, 1959/60 col. 7. A commission has a higher status than a committee, but does the same work.

334. Minutes 23 and 28 October, 12 and 26 November 1959 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

335. Minutes 12 November 1959 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee).

336. Minutes 11 February 1960 (Archives, Permanent Greenland Committee); G-60: 194 f.

337. To Niels Højlund in 1971 (Højlund 1972: 211, note 19).



other ministries with others to be decided in Greenland.<sup>338</sup>

This formidable list included all the problems raised by the provincial council including its chairman the governor in Greenland, P.H. Lundsteen, who had added the population problem and the price problem, and by Danish politicians. P.H. Lundsteen gave the Permanent Greenland Committee a briefing on 23 October 1959. The Committee of 1960 lasted 4 years, perhaps because it was authorised to make interim recommendations which could be acted on at once. No one questioned the fundamentals of the G-50 policy: to develop Greenlandic business to generate sufficient surplus to raise living conditions in Greenland closer to Danish ones. Thus the committee continued along the familiar path with the main emphasis on the problems in politics, administration, and economy.

One of the participants seems beforehand to have lost his faith in the feasibility of the task on the given premises as noted above: the permanent secretary Eske Brun, the main figure behind the G-50 reform. At the first meeting of the committee in May 1960 he suggested dropping the idea of having the Greenlandic wage level determined by productivity in Greenland. Instead, the general Danish wage level should be used. This would facilitate the introduction of taxes in Greenland so that Greenland could finance education and other public expenses. The Greenlanders themselves would then be responsible for social reforms. The Danish government would be left to cover the greater balance of trade deficit which would result. This suggests that Brun had come to the conclusion that the wage difference was intolerable and that one fundamental of the 1950 settlement – a balanced Greenlandic economy – should be sacrificed to achieve another – an increased self respect and self government for the Greenlanders.

However, the 1950 philosophy was stronger than its father. The representatives from the Royal Greenland Trade Department found this change particularly hard to accept. To them the Danish wage level was sheer madness, especially because it would mean post-

poning or even abandoning the introduction of private enterprise in Greenland. They repeated the slogans from the 1950-reform debate: that only a surplus in the Greenlandic economy could end Greenlandic dependence and subservience.<sup>339</sup> Eske Brun resigned his post when the commission's work was done in 1964.

The development of the economy in the 1950s was not very promising. Exports through RGTD had for some years run a surplus of Dkr. 4.6 million which had been paid to the market fluctuation fund, but in 1956 and after 1959 Dkr. 9.1 million had been paid out to sustain prices to the producers. Private enterprise had during the 10 years paid Dkr. 3.1 million. The overall deficit of Dkr. 3.2 million was in reality a state subsidy to production in Greenland.<sup>340</sup>

The newly completed programme on industrial fish processing might remedy this situation so in the end faith in the possibility of reaching the goal carried the day. The report condemned the idea of sustaining Greenlandic incomes by a permanent government grant believing that the link between the Greenlanders' own efforts and their income was essential to encourage initiative, enjoyment of work, and self respect.<sup>341</sup> This approach linked to the support of private enterprise appealed particularly to the Conservatives in the committee.

Questioning the initial bipartisan Greenland policy, which had emerged in the discussion of the industrial program in 1959, was certainly still apparent. The Conservative representative in the committee, Erik Ninn-Hansen, declared in a newspaper: *'It is our party's intention to smash the socialistic system in Greenland.'*<sup>342</sup> By that he meant the state-owned businesses like RGTD and GTO as well as the cooperatives. He protested against giving the cooperative stores an opportunity to take over the stores of the RGTD.<sup>343</sup> The majority in the committee did not share these views, but hints can be seen in the report p. 137: *'The committee did not want to engage in a discussion about principles involved in transferring the business of the state agencies either to Greenlandic individuals or to cooperatives.'*

338. G-60: 191-3.

339. Højlund 1972: 98ff.

340. Boserup 1963: 128, 190.

341. G-60: 23.

342. *Berlingske Tidende* 6 November 1960.

343. Spring 1961 (Højlund 1972: 102).

The discussions about specific economic issues showed that much of the 1950 system remained, but some lessons were learned from ten years' experience.

Economic development in Greenland was still to be based on her natural resources which would be exploited more efficiently by increasing the productivity of the work force. The fishing season should be lengthened to the whole year, and workers in the low productivity settlements and in the northern towns of Greenland should be induced to migrate to the towns with open water harbours in the south which had a labour shortage. This was exactly the same goal as in 1950, and the means proposed were also quite similar: only to invest in the promising townships, and run propaganda to convince the population of the better opportunities in those towns.

The difference to 1950 was a readiness to invest much more. For the five fish processing plants (decided in 1959 to be built in Narsaq, Paamiut, Nuuk, Maniitsoq, and Sisimiut) to work efficiently, 35 fishing vessels of 100 tons or 14 trawlers of 450 tons were needed. There were none in Greenland, and the committee proposed that the government should lead the way by building five of the 100-ton vessels, later to be transferred to the private sector. These might produce 200,000 tons of fish a year for processing. In those years the Greenlanders only caught about 35,000 tons, but foreign fishing fleets took between 200,000 and 500,000 tons a year in the Davis Strait, so there was room for a certain amount of optimism. The risk of a decline in the stock of cod was not overlooked, but it was deemed small. The committee also proposed easier financing of fishing boats and expansion of the services to fishing with more consultants, more experimental fishing, biology research and so on.<sup>344</sup>

All these suggestions were a continuation of the 1950-philosophy. But contrary to 1950 more attention was paid to the traditional economy, seal hunting, perhaps because the hunting districts (Uummannaq, Upernavik, Thule, Scoresbysund, and Ammassalik) had done quite well in the 1950s. The sale of hides had doubled, and even the fishing had expanded. Another reason was probably that the districts would be inhabited for many years to come since the open water dis-

tricts were not yet developed to receive a major influx of people. Moreover, the proposals to reduce population in the hunting districts were very cautiously phrased: From the township of Uummannaq '*an emigration should be supported*'. From Upernavik '*a certain emigration could be foreseen*'. From the Qaanaaq district '*a certain moving would be advisable*.' From Ittoqqortoormiit '*Wishes for moving away should be supported*', and from Ammassalik '*a certain emigration was advisable*.' The committee recommended building hunting huts in all these districts so that hunters could utilise a greater area, and better financing of motor-boats served the same purpose. Even salting houses for fish storing were recommended despite the questionable financial viability because other occupation possibilities were scarce. In addition some 400 new homes out of 4,500 in the building program should be placed in the hunting districts.<sup>345</sup>

Nature set its own limits for sheep farming. The committee thought it possible to expand the stock up to 60,000 if every suitable piece of land was exploited. Thus sheep farming could never be big business. Among the 196 herds in 1961 only 15-20 were big enough to sustain a family. The committee thought this figure could at best be expanded to 40-50 and the rest had to be part time farming.<sup>346</sup>

The pre 1950 pricing system was to continue. The supply monopoly of RGTD had in theory been cancelled in 1950, but the possibility of monopoly continued in fact. The law (section 16) allowed authorisation of importers for certain goods. When import duties were introduced in 1952 the RGTD was authorised to import goods liable to duties and the committee suggested no alteration. However, the intended balance between income and expenditure had not been achieved. The rise in prices after 1950 did not cover expenses. Subsidies continued on essential foodstuff (bread, flour, and vegetables), fuel, and the most important working tools. Greenlandic products were sold in Greenland beneath their price on the world market. The coalmine at Qullissat sold coal below cost, and thereby further subsidised fuel in Greenland. The construction industry, power plants, telephone service, and the coastal traffic all operated at a loss. The

344. G-60: 91-105.

345. G-60: 105-12, 48.

346. G-60: 112-5.

reform of 1950 had aimed to end this economic system of subsidies but failed. And the 1960 committee did not suggest abolition of the system. It merely suggested moderate price rises, but not enough to cover costs.<sup>347</sup>

Why not? The reason was straightforward. The incomes in Greenland were insufficient to pay market prices. Charging cost prices for foodstuff would bring the population to starvation – or below, and cost prices for other goods would nullify any idea of making business in Greenland sustainable. The subsidy system showed the gap between Danish and Greenlandic economy. Therefore, refuge was taken in the age old policy: by manipulating prices and wages to secure a steadily rising standard of living in Greenland unrelated to any economic rationale. Since the committee proposed to continue subsidies it was endorsing the traditional policy. Eventually the two economies might reach the same level, but meantime in Greenland there would be a lower standard of living than in Denmark, though it would have a substantial rise.

The Greenlandic members of the committee had scarcely participated in the discussion about what the Danes saw as problems. For Greenlanders profitability and theoretical discussion of capitalism and socialism were not the main issues. Their main concerns were the role of the provincial council in policymaking, and the question of equal pay. Equal pay was discussed in the spring of 1961. Erling Høegh made Greenland's goal clear. Through the years, the main Greenlandic dream was to have salaries equal to the Danes in Greenland. When a Greenlander had proven his ability, he should be paid like the Danes and have their fringe benefits like free housing, free supply of water and fuel, sabbatical leave and so on.<sup>348</sup>

This wish was strongly felt. As mentioned above, Eske Brun was inclined to support something of the sort. It would be comparatively cheap to satisfy what was a relatively small group of Greenlanders who were working with the Danish authorities. A very few native Greenlanders who had been educated in Denmark and

had then worked there for ten years were salaried as the Danes. The criterion was home region, which for them was counted as Denmark. The next top 66 Greenlanders enjoyed Danish salaries with a 25% reduction, but including a Greenland bonus. Below them some 700 Greenlanders enjoyed the same salaries without bonus. These levels were significantly above other Greenland salaries which were set with some regard to Greenlandic productivity.<sup>349</sup>

These other Greenlanders numbered 6-7,000 persons, and neither GAS nor the Danish TUC would accept that a small group of highly paid Greenlanders should get even more while the rest should remain on the Greenlandic level. The workers' representative, Lars Svendsen was invited to address the provincial council and spoke vehemently against introducing Danish wage levels in Greenland so Greenland did not become '*one big subsidy economy*'.<sup>350</sup> He suggested in the committee that wages in Greenland should be based on GAS wage level. Shortage of manpower should be overcome by negotiating a special bonus regardless of the origin of the worker.<sup>351</sup>

At this point in the spring of 1961 the discussions stalled. In the summer the economic expert, Mogens Boserup presented his analysis of opportunities in Greenland later published in 1963 as '*Economic Policy in Greenland*'. Boserup had been working for the UN since 1947 and most recently researched the economy of India. He concluded that Greenland had a very good chance to overcome the barriers, which normally prevented rising standards of living in developing countries. The lack of natural resources was not a major problem as the Greenlanders could expand their fishing in the Davis Strait, and because the output from this strait was only a small proportion of world production, an increase would not flood the market and depress prices. Finally, there was no problem with supply of capital as Denmark could easily finance the investment.<sup>352</sup> He further explained the differences in wages for locals and outsiders in Greenland by noting that falling export prices reduced Greenlandic wage

347. G-60: 163-76.

348. Højlund 1972: 105f.

349. Højlund 1972: 103f; Boserup 1963: 239, 347.

350. LR 1962: 18.

351. Højlund 1972: 106f.

352. Boserup 1963: 15-9.

**Table 28.** Investment plans for Greenland 1966-1975 (G-60: 198f).

	Million Dkr.	%
Export trade	125	6.7
Fishing vessels	135	7.2
Education	160	8.5
Other public institutions	170	9.1
Construction of houses	585	31.1
Public plants	220	11.8
Preliminary works for development	100	5.3
Communication and transport	167	8.9
Supply service e.a.	210	11.2
Subtotal	1,872	100.0
Reserves	228	
Total	2,100	

levels, while rising wage levels in Denmark pushed the guest workers' salaries upwards.<sup>353</sup>

These were familiar points and, as in 1950, the solution was investment to improve productivity. The committee put all the proposals together into a ten-year plan with Dkr. 2.1 billion for investment, and a further Dkr. 2.1 billion for working expenses. The investment was to be distributed between sectors as shown in Table 28.

This was a substantial increase on the Dkr. 57 million envisaged in the industrial plan of 1959. Boserup's analysis, however, had given grounds for optimism so the investment was seen to be necessary to obtain the goals as described in the committee's report p. 26:

1. To expand employment
2. To continue concentrating the population on the most suitable settlements
3. To improve business efficiency
4. To give high priority to education
5. To expand house-building

This programme can be seen as a means of increasing production and thus reducing the wages differential, but it did not offer an immediate solution. Boserup recommended maintaining the principle of wages

based on productivity. Improvement of living standards should be obtained by a family allowance and subsidising consumption rather than by raising wages so that exports would not be hampered by increased costs.

Greenlandic civil servants should no longer suffer the percent reduction in salaries, while the Greenland bonus to guest workers should be reduced to the value of free lodging and fuel bonus and should be paid only to those born outside Greenland.<sup>354</sup> This change meant replacing a discredited criterion of home region with birthplace, which was later also discredited. To make the birthplace criterion more acceptable it was presented in the report as a suggestion from the Greenlandic committee members.<sup>355</sup>

To secure agreement between the Greenlandic parties the final settlement proposed a ten percent reduction in the Danish wage scale for Greenlandic civil servants and an increase in GAS wages of ten percent. Taken together with the family allowance everybody got a 20-25 percent increase, but without any narrowing of the gap between the wages of the Greenlanders. This result was defended in the report by reference to expected economic growth from the expanded investment. The Danish ideological belief that wages should be related to productivity was thus upheld.<sup>356</sup>

Besides a rise in salaries the provincial council had also asked for 'political and administrative normalisation'. This was much more difficult to achieve. On the one hand the provincial council had more rights than any other local assembly in the realm by having the right to be consulted on legislation and the right to propose legislation. On the other hand it had less to administer than a normal Danish county council, because the huge state financed operations were administered by the central government. This system was to continue. In addition the provincial council was offered greater influence on Greenland policy in general. A new agency in Copenhagen, the Greenland Council (Grønlandsrådet) with five Greenlandic and five Danish politicians as members should plan and coordinate Greenland policy. The two Greenlandic members of Parliament were to be ex officio members,

353. Boserup 1963: 54, 196ff.

354. Boserup 1963: 243ff.

355. G-60: 160. How this implausible point got into the minutes cannot be seen from Højlund's reading.

356. G-60: 157.

and the provincial council would appoint three others. The five largest Danish parties appointed one member each, and the King would appoint the chairman. A secretariat under the minister for Greenland would service the new council. Its key role can be seen in its terms of reference:

- To prepare analyses and forecasts of growth in population, the economy, the need for houses, the need for education, and health care and other such matters.
- To prepare long term investment programmes, supervise day to day building programmes, and evaluate specific proposals for investment.
- To deal with ongoing business problems.
- To review wage development against planned growth.
- To survey whether new laws were in harmony with each other and came in the right sequence and speed.
- To review the extent to which the plans were implemented and to assess their outcomes.

Other committees with similar tasks were to be abolished. The Permanent Greenland Committee in existence since 1925 and the price and wage committee, established in 1951, ceased. The new council took responsibility for social research in Greenland. The existing Committee for Social Science Research in Greenland was not formally disbanded, but appears to have ceased to meet.<sup>357</sup>

In the Greenland Committee of 1960 there were different opinions about the proposed Greenland Council. Some of the politicians wanted it to be a purely political organ with administration, while the permanent secretary, Eske Brun, warned against stripping the Ministry of Greenland of its planning and coordination rôles. Nevertheless, the Greenland Council was established by act of 4 July 1964.<sup>358</sup> Whether the council in fact acted as its supporters hoped or its opponents feared has not been researched.

Greenlandic municipalities had previously got all

their finance from the provincial council at its discretion out of the funds raised by import duties. In future they were to have a fixed proportion of those funds in order to plan for a longer period. So far, no taxes were levied in Greenland; the committee discussed the matter but decided the time was not ripe for such experiments.<sup>359</sup>

The Greenland Committee of 1960 was empowered to make interim proposals which could be acted on before its final report. Thus Qaanaaq and East Greenland were enabled to elect members to the provincial council by act of 26 April 1961, and the municipal arrangements and legal system in West Greenland were extended to cover those two other areas as well. In 1959 the provincial council had also wished that responsibilities should be transferred from the Ministry of Greenland to other ministries. This was also done in part. The fishery surveillance, inspection and registration of ships, the lighthouse agency and meteorological service had already been transferred to the corresponding Danish agencies,<sup>360</sup> and the committee went further to suggest the transfer of the police (1965), telex service (1967), church matters (1966), health service (1968), and education (1970). The two biggest agencies, RGTD and GTO, were retained but more Greenlandic politicians were put onto the steering board.<sup>361</sup>

Finally, from 1966/67 the provincial council was empowered to elect its own chairman and set up a secretariat; all these changes represented moves towards making the arrangements in Greenland the same as those in Denmark itself, but it was far from the 'normalisation' asked for in 1959.

The report proposed much greater effort but retained the basic philosophy of 1950. Bearing later developments in mind, you might ask why. Several factors were at play. Firstly, the Greenlandic politicians wanted no change from the course chosen in 1950. The various potential problems did not seem insurmountable. Secondly, attitudes in Denmark supported a greater effort. The Danes themselves had experienced improved welfare provision and the problem of under-

357. From 1975: 58.

358. G-60: 72-6, 89f.

359. G-60: 65-9.

360. G-60: 63.

361. G-60: 78-88.



developed countries was recognised world-wide. In the competition for the political loyalty of newly independent states of the former colonial empires the rich western world had admitted that poverty, colonialism and racial discrimination were problems to be dealt with. The great influx of newly independent countries into the UN took place in the early 1960s bringing with it concern for underdevelopment which preoccupied the organisation as it came to have a majority of various formerly dependent territories. The 1960s was simply proclaimed as the decade of development. Appeals were made to guilty consciences in the rich part of the world to help the part that was poor. It would be natural for Danes to look at Greenland in this context. Greenlanders in general were without question poorer than people in Denmark, and Greenland was supposed to be an equal part of the realm. Obviously, Denmark had a clear duty to help.

It was no wonder in this context that the large grants to Greenland met no political objection in Denmark. And it may also explain why the Danish public criticised the 1960 reforms when they did not achieve the goal of equalisation. The criterion of birthplace to justify salary differences was such an issue. The press attacked it as race discrimination, and in practice it was often disregarded. But it was not abolished. It had a solid foothold in Greenlandic society with its gap between wages for guest workers and the local work force. As late as 1970 the provincial council regretted that *'it has been impossible to find another criterion better suited to do justice to everybody'*.<sup>362</sup>

## Greenlandic reaction in public

The educated Greenlanders' reaction was fierce measured by Greenlandic standards. A political party was established: the Inuit Party.<sup>363</sup> Behind the party stood a group of 'young' (they were in their 30s) Greenlanders, the editor of the A/G Jørgen Fleischer, assistant

biologist Jens Kreutzmann and journalist Ulrik Rosing. According to its programme there must be equality grounded on mutual respect and trust. Therefore, all fringe benefits for guest workers should be abolished. The Danish social welfare system should be introduced paid for from Greenlandic funds, but reimbursed from Denmark. The party also favoured more support for private enterprise. Among its supporters was not surprisingly a pair of Danish retail dealers in Greenland, Kaj Narup in Nuuk and Anders Hove in Aasiaat. In 1967 Kaj Narup won a seat in the provincial council for the party, in 1969 he was replaced by Peter Nielsen a Greenlander, but the seat was lost in 1971.

The party also stood for Parliament, but failed. In 1964 Peter Nielsen got 26.2% in the northern constituency while Ulrik Rosing got a respectable poll of 33.5% in the southern constituency. Ulrik Rosing tried again in 1966 in the same constituency winning 20.5% of the votes and in the next election Jonathan Motzfeldt nearly made it with 47.4% of the valid votes in the southern constituency.<sup>364</sup>

The first chairman of the party, Jørgen Fleischer, has explained its policy to a broader audience. The main issue was certainly equal salaries. He warned that the differentiation between employees in Greenland by unequal salaries was the greatest threat to continued ties with Denmark because demands for political independence would come next. The Greenlander should not be a second class Danish citizen. The quest for complete integration was thus still evident. In addition some hints of the later Siumut policy can be found in the statement: *'The Inuit Party hold it important that the Greenlander does not lose his national consciousness. Only by recognising its own origin and cultural heritage can the Greenlandic youth stand firm and meet the Dane as equal without inferiority complexes.'*<sup>365</sup>

The seeming paradox between these two ideas can perhaps be solved by imagining a line of thought which would protect the national characteristics of the

362. LR-S 1970: 38-40, 87.

363. Højlund 1972: 142f. His information stems from the Danish journalist, Fritz Høyrup, who made the party known in Denmark.

364. The election results are published in *Statistiske Meddelelser*. I place Jonathan Motzfeldt, the later Siumut politician as an Inuit party adherent, because Kaj Narup was his substitute. In the election statistics no party is indicated as one runs for election as an individual.

365. Inuit partiet, blot et intermezzo. In TG, 1967 p. 345-8. (The Inuit party, just an intermezzo).

Greenlanders, without accepting that this may mean any unequal treatment. The idea of Greenland as an economic unit separate from Denmark was also consistently rejected. In this policy the Inuit party had followers all over Greenland, because it concerned more than just the wage issue.

Guldborg Chemnitz had very convincingly argued that point in 1964.<sup>366</sup> She was born in a small settlement, moved to Nuuk, and later to Denmark and was educated as an interpreter. In her article she described the enormous pressure on the Greenlandic children and youth to be educated as well as the Danes. Then they would be as successful as the Danes with: *'finer clothes, more extravagant houses, and much more money'* (p. 18). During her education in Denmark she incorporated much of the Danish way of life into her character, both as a result of intentional learning and as a response to an environment she really liked. The end result of this development she described: *'In a way I have more and more striven to be both a Greenlander and a Dane, to unite them in my personality, and simply be a human being who is fond of the Greenlandic and the Danish things in life.'* (p. 26)

She recognised this situation as full of conflicts, both in personal terms when moving from one environment to the other, and also in being fully accepted by each environment as one of its own. She had a feeling of not living in either of the two, but between them. Her positive reaction was to conceive herself as a link between Greenlanders and Danes (p. 29). It was the only way to cope with her personal life: *'I myself am so much Greenlandic and Danish that it has become a necessity for me to unite these two ways of life and expression. Each time I have sensed a rapprochement between Greenlanders and Danes I felt harmony inside, on the other hand, when I have felt distance, tension or conflict I felt my personality split'* (p. 32).

Erling Høegh obviously spoke for others when in 1959 he demanded normalisation. When the result of the discussion about wages in G-60, to continue discrimination in wages on the birthplace criterion, became known it was a shock to Guldborg Chemnitz. She could not believe it, and expected parliament to block the suggestion. She could not understand or

accept the premises. Over several pages she argued against it, and concludes: *'I conceived the extension of the Danish constitution to Greenland as a Danish promise of our equal status with the Danes in the realm.'* ... *'As Greenlanders we have more or less consciously striven for a real integration in Denmark expecting to be fully accepted as Danes even if we could in some way or another be different ... but now it seems as if the Danes say stop, you are about to go too far. You are not Danes, but Greenlanders. You belong to your own country and your own society. Then I realised that we may not be meant to be real Danes, to be really accepted as we hoped for'* (p. 60).

In my view Guldborg Chemnitz expressed sorrow rather than bitterness in her article. How many felt like her? We cannot know, but she was not the only one. The same basic line of thought is found in Knud Hertling's 1977 book: *'Greenlandic Paradoxes'*. This reaction might perhaps affect only the Danish-educated Greenlanders, but those were exactly the layer from which Greenlandic politicians were recruited. If this group shared Guldborg Chemnitz's evaluation in some degree, her personal testimony provides a significant explanation of future Greenlandic politics.

There was some overlap in ideas and policies between the Inuit Party and the newly established Council of Young Greenlanders in Denmark, as Jonathan Motzfeldt was a leading figure in this new organisation. The objection to the birthplace criterion was identical. The council organised a demonstration against it in Copenhagen in the spring of 1964, drawing much attention from the press. In the Greenlandic towns of Maniitsoq, Nuuk, and Paamiut there were demonstrations against the new law. In the newspaper *Information* Jonathan Motzfeldt explained: *'the birthplace criterion is a 'Star of Zion' (a grim allusion to Nazi persecutions). It must be erased before we can talk together as citizens with equal rights in the same realm.'*<sup>367</sup>

The Council of Young Greenlanders was not the only organisation for Greenlanders in Denmark. The organisation: *'Pêqatîgît Kalâdtlit'* (the assembly of Greenlanders) founded in 1939 looked after their interests in Denmark, and commented on Greenlandic

366. Grønland i udvikling 1964: 9-64.

367. Højlund 1972: 144f.

issues, but its attitude to the wage question has not been researched. It was dissolved in 1978.<sup>368</sup>

The birthplace criterion was as we have seen only relevant to a small group of Greenlanders. For fishermen, hunters, and sheep farmers it had no bearing. One sheep farmer wrote in the newspaper AG *I wonder if the Inuit Party is nothing more than an organisation of civil servants who want higher salaries. They have made the party to bolster their wage claims.*<sup>369</sup>

The provincial council stood by its acceptance of the birthplace criterion though without any enthusiasm.<sup>370</sup> In the spring of 1964 a member Jørgen Borchersen (a Dane) suggested abolishing the criterion because it led to bitterness between Greenlanders and Danes in Greenland. Another member, Jørgen Olsen, suggested a referendum to choose between maintaining the criterion and paying taxes. The debate ended with a request to the Ministry for an evaluation of the possibility of introducing taxes.<sup>371</sup> Three years later, Jørgen Olsen raised the question again. Now he wanted the criterion abolished: *'Equal pay for equal work should apply to everybody in Greenland regardless of their place of birth, their place of living, their education, and where they have been trained.'*

Even Erling Høegh had second thoughts because discontent over unequal pay damaged Danish-Greenlandic relations in Greenland. And Elisabeth Johansen called it a disgrace for Greenlandic society. Peter Heilmann alone defended the G-60 philosophy which was to link the wages of workers and fishermen to the prices of exports, while avoiding a large gap between those groups and the civil servants. No decision was made. The problem was transferred to the committee for economic planning, a provincial council committee which was to negotiate on the issue with the ministry in Copenhagen.<sup>372</sup>

A working group under the ministry addressing

the problem in Copenhagen, however, found it still *'necessary to give the non-Greenlanders a bonus to attract a sufficient supply of workers to Greenland'*. The new law, then, retained the difference between natives and non-natives (section 10). In the ensuing debate in the provincial council critical voices were raised, but the law was finally accepted, because *'it has been impossible to find another criterion which to a higher degree gave justice to all sides'*<sup>373</sup>

### Changing attitude to integration

In the mean time the attitude to the birthplace criterion had changed in the Council of Young Greenlanders. The chairman, Moses Olsen, (later a prominent member of the Siumut Party) stated in 1970 that the council wanted to maintain the criterion.<sup>374</sup> As recently as 1969 the same Moses Olsen had argued that it was illogical that educated Greenlanders had lower salaries in Greenland than their Danish colleagues. After all, the Greenlanders were the experts particularly because they had knowledge of the native language.<sup>375</sup> The changing attitude was also visible when another well educated Greenlandic, Jacob Janussen, wrote bluntly at the same time: *'the birthplace criterion is the most regular token that equality is impossible. We must realise this even if it is bitterly hard to come to terms with. I do not necessarily accept the criterion in its present form, but I think it is impossible to have equal pay in Denmark and Greenland. The basic economic conditions are simply too far apart.'*<sup>376</sup>

It is worth noting that this acceptance of wage differences between Denmark and Greenland was not as previously acceptance of an unpleasant interim period until Greenland could afford the higher wages. Rather it had its roots in a national awakening in opposition to the idea of becoming duplicate Danes.

368. Jensen 1989.

369. A/G 1964; List 1976: 43.

370. Goldschmidt 1976: 62-68.

371. LR-F 1965: 77-85.

372. LR-E 1967: 198-201, 204-249.

373. LR-E 1970: 40, 87.

374. A/G 10 February 1970.

375. Hjarnø 1969: 81-90.

376. *Tidsskriftet Grønland* 1969: 254. Jacob Janussen was at that time a student of political science in Denmark. He later served in high ranking posts in the administration in Greenland.

## School policy

The same tendency to have second thoughts about being as Danish as possible was visible in the education policy even if a complete change was not on the agenda. The first discussion in the provincial council about a new bill on education (spring 1965) revealed only a few objections to Danish dominance in schools. The number of Danish teachers had soared from about a third in 1960 to more than the half in 1965, reaching two thirds in 1971.<sup>377</sup> The lack of Greenlandic speaking teachers was obviously the reason why the Greenlandic language as a discipline had been postponed to the third grade if the parents agreed. The provincial council had accepted the current situation, while still supporting the ministry's goal: *'to give Greenlandic youth a general education either in continuation of the school years or later. When Danish teaching has so prominent a position in the proposal it is due to the fact that practically every education must be based on predominantly Danish teachers, Danish text books, and Danish institutions.'*<sup>378</sup>

Based on this reasoning it was difficult to decide the position of the teaching of Greenlandic in secondary education. The new bill offered three choices: teaching the Danish and English language was obligatory, and French and Latin optional. The choice was whether German and Greenlandic should be obligatory or whether one of them should be optional. In Denmark German was obligatory. The ministry preferred to make Greenlandic secondary education match the Danish system, but with Greenlandic as optional in order not to strain the pupils (stated in remarks to article 22 in the bill).

Nobody in the provincial council would contemplate anything which might make the Greenlandic leaving examination inferior to the Danish one demanding that the Greenlandic version should also make Danish, English and German obligatory. Nobody liked the downgrading of Greenlandic by making it optional. Some members accepted it as a sacrifice to a

better education (Peter Heilmann, Erik Egede, Hans Lyng, Jørgen Olsen, and Marius Sivertsen) while others referring to the Greenlandic electorate's feelings towards their language wanted to put compulsory Greenlandic in addition to a syllabus identical with the Danish one. (Anda Nielsen, Elisabeth Johansen, Peter Jensen, Lars Ostermann, and Knud Kristiansen).<sup>379</sup> By the autumn session of the provincial council an internal committee proposed a compromise making Greenlandic obligatory in the first and second year in secondary school but optional in the third year.<sup>380</sup>

In the Danish parliament the Greenland representative, Knud Hertling, focused on the two first years in primary school. He would not accept postponement of the Greenlandic language. In the bill's committee stage he created so much doubt that the law was postponed to the following year's session. In the final debate on 2 June 1966 he argued in a nationalistic tone. He still opposed the postponement which he saw as a degrading of the Greenlandic language, but his protests achieved little. The law required the school board to hear parental views and gain their approval before it could postpone teaching Greenlandic, provided that adequate teaching capacity was at hand. It is hard to see that this procedure would cause any change in Greenlandic schools since the main problem was still lack of Greenlandic speaking teachers. Hertling in fact did admit that the main effect of his effort was to ensure that the language question in Greenlandic schools was debated.<sup>381</sup> In the following years the provincial council returned several times to the issue that under the circumstances was insoluble. In the primary schools Danish teachers were essential, and they could not teach Greenlandic.

## The teachers

To educate sufficient Greenlandic speaking teachers was a major problem. The provincial council had created a dilemma by demanding education in Greenland identical with that in Denmark. This deterred

377. *Perspektivplan 1971*: 73. The statistics show teachers with a Danish training. Very few Greenlanders were among those, in 1970 only 20 corresponding with 5% of the group.

378. LR-F 1965: 15.

379. LR-F1965: 98-102.

380. The debate on the law was extensive, see LR-F 1965: 9, 5-9, 14-42; LR-E 1965: 55-63, 96-102. These volumes hold also the draft, remarks, and committee reports. This presentation is based on the work of Ditte Goldschmidt (1946: 48-52).

381. Hertling 1977: 40-46.

Greenlanders because they had to master a second quite different language: Danish. But the council saw no other way to achieve an education up to Danish standards.

Doubts about making education in Greenland a duplicate of the Danish system surfaced first outside Greenland: in the ministry of Greenland. Just after the reform of 1950 the strategy was to educate Greenlandic teachers in Denmark. Thus, the Teacher Training College in Nuuk was reformed in 1957 to train teachers only for the first two grades. This education gave less competence than the Danish one, so such teachers were paid less and this attracted very few Greenlanders. A further reform in 1964 established education in Nuuk at the same level as in Denmark, with nearly the same curriculum. One of the four years of the course was to be at a Danish teacher training college. Teachers with this education would be placed at the same level as those educated in Denmark, and with some additional study they were qualified to teach in primary schools in Denmark as well as in Greenland.<sup>382</sup>

All these proposals had been debated by the provincial council in 1963; it welcomed them, as did Nikolaj Rosing (Greenlander) in Parliament.<sup>383</sup> However, in 1966 a new law for primary schools was enacted in Denmark to come into effect in 1969. From now on students at teacher training colleges were required to have an A level certificate on entry. What about teacher education in Greenland? Should it still be identical with the Danish? The ministry had its doubts expressed in a statement of the general purpose of school education in Greenland.

To be a true school for the people *'the school in Greenland should firstly be staffed by Greenlandic teachers, unless you want the Greenlandic population fully integrated into the Danish.'* This was moving some way from the aim in 1963: *'to further the integration between Denmark and Greenland it is essential to have a education in Greenland which would enable teachers from*

*Greenland to teach in Danish primary schools.'*<sup>384</sup> In 1969 the ministry was willing to modify its position to avoid setting the level of education *'so high that only a few Greenlanders would be able to cope.'* Moreover, it also suggested that a special teacher training was essential in Greenland in order to produce both Greenlandic speaking teachers, and teachers of Greenlandic.<sup>385</sup>

The debate in the provincial council in 1969 was inconclusive. Generally speaking members wanted Greenlandic education on a level that would make it valid in Denmark. This was not to educate teachers for Danish schools, but to make sure that Greenlandic teachers would not be left behind in salaries and careers. This meant education at Danish levels with some minor amendments to suit Greenland.<sup>386</sup>

The issue returned to the agenda in 1972. The ministry explained the long period of inaction with the excuse that it had been busy on other matters, adding that the debate on Greenland policy had challenged the basic aim of making education in Greenland and Denmark broadly alike. The ministry asked for further postponement, which was granted. This shows it was the ministry which had delayed the Danification of Greenland. This change of view can be dated to about 1970.

### Privatisation and self government

In the G-60 report unease about the limited Greenlandic participation in free enterprise was evident, an unease fully shared by the provincial council. In 1966 the Ministry for Business Activity suggested that the Danish Trade Act should be introduced in Greenland. This would mean ending the requirement of 6 months' residence in Greenland for anyone wishing to start a commercial enterprise. The provincial council resisted strongly even suggesting in 1967 that requirement should be made stiffer by stipulating residence on local wage levels. The ministry considered this contrary to Danish ideas of natural justice, but the provin-

382. Act of 13 May 1964. The background story is in a ministry paper of February 1969 (LR-F 1969: 181-190).

383. Goldschmidt 1976: 42-45.

384. LR 1963: 315; LR-F 1969: 18. In Denmark the compulsory school for all from the age of 7 to 14 is called People's School (Folkeskole). The age span has since been lengthened to 8 and 9 years.

385. LR-F 1969: 189f.

386. LR-F 1969: 193, 315.



cial council stood firm.<sup>387</sup> On this issue its policy was clear. Greenlanders should run private business in Greenland, which was fully in harmony with the Danish policy generally, and it was indeed one aim of the 1950 reforms.

In 1967 the provincial council was empowered to elect its own chairman and chose Erling Høegh. The speeches at his inauguration in May show the conflict between traditionalist and reformist views. The oldest member, Jørgen Olsen, chairing the meeting declared this was a historic day because the Greenlanders had achieved *'the rightful claim of every nation: self determination.'* He even quoted Abraham Lincoln saying: *'part of a nation can be subdued in eternity, or a whole nation can be subdued for many years, but a whole nation cannot be subdued in eternity.'* These words may sound more forceful in English than in Greenlandic which hardly distinguishes between 'nation' and 'people'. This was, moreover, a somewhat unusual translation of the remarks attributed to Lincoln.

About the future Jørgen Olsen was more vague. He thought the provincial council had to consider the proper status of the *'Greenlandic group of people'* within the Danish realm, whether they should strive to be an independent nation, or to be recognised as a special minority inside the realm, or to continue the struggle for equality with the Danish population in all fields.<sup>388</sup> The latter option was of course the aim of the 'normalisation' policy from 1959, which Jørgen Olsen had accepted at that time, but obviously, he had now moved further.

The newly elected chairman, Erling Høegh, had a quite different view. In September he commented: *'We up here have no other wish than to maintain the relationship established in 1950 between Greenland and Denmark based on relations between the two people through centuries. I do not even see dimly any Greenlandic wish to alter this.'* The economic development set in motion should continue: *'It is our decision not stop and not to be delayed on the road to the new Greenland.'*<sup>389</sup>

His statements show that Erling Høegh like any

politician who hopes to be successful was ready to respond to changing public opinion as for example two years later in a television hearing on Greenland. He had shortly before told the press that Greenland was moving in the direction of the Faroe Islands (meaning towards Home Rule), and was asked to elaborate. He emphasised that secession was not behind the Greenlandic wish for more responsibility, only more self-government. He was even ready to accept a lower standard of living as a price for it.<sup>390</sup>

### Greenlandic reactions outside the provincial council

The general attitude of Greenlanders in the late 60s could be summarised as: A more Greenlandic Greenland. This was most obvious in the aims of the Sukaq party established by Knud Hertling in 1970 (sukaq is the centre pole in a traditional Greenlandic house, thus indicating a very solid support). The party should be *'a guarantor for cohesion between Denmark and Greenland.'* However, it should be a Greenlandic party, and not the branch of any Danish party, *'because it had to be in a free position to work for the Greenlandic population'.* Hertling characterised the party as moderate socialist. It believed, for example that privatisation should not be pursued regardless of cost, and the new organisations should preferably be on a co-operative basis. In general Greenlanders had to stop measuring everything in Greenland by the Danish ruler. They should acknowledge their own worth and their own identity.<sup>391</sup>

Moderation was not the hall mark of another group of Greenlanders joining the debate. Its core was young Greenlanders being educated in Denmark, and it seems reasonable to relate their uncompromising attack on the authorities to the contemporary youth revolution in Denmark and throughout the world. Like the youth revolution the Greenlanders soon struck Marxist overtones. In autumn 1970 the leftist magazine Politisk Revy suggested a socialist Greenland. It attacked the Greenlandic upper class and the American

387. Goldschmidt 1976: 68-75. She is probably right in assuming that the opinion of the provincial council hardly had any bearing in these cases because it was the chief constable who issued the trade permits.

388. LR-F 1967: 4.

389. LR-E 1967: 4ff.

390. Grønland - en TV høring 1969: 5-8.

391. Tidsskriftet Grønland 1968: 1 - 8.

bases in Greenland.<sup>392</sup> In December 1970 about a dozen pages were devoted to the Greenland Problem as it saw it. A socialist Greenland was the goal, a Greenlandic society constructed by Greenlanders and governed by them. The Greenlandic lower classes: hunters, fishermen and workers had a duty to make it happen. The real enemy was the class society that was seen as a consequence of the Danish presence. Fire was concentrated on the Greenlandic civil servants who were paid far more than other Greenlandic workers. The workers must engage in the fight, and *'expel the apparatchiks in their own organisations. These people who feathered their own nest without paying attention to the misery around them.'* Thus wrote a Greenlandic Karl Isaksen under the headline: *'Fight Back, Greenlandic!'*

Another Greenlandic studying in Denmark, Arqaluk Lynge, was very clear in defining the group's strategy and goal. Greater national independence was the goal to be achieved by resisting further equalising with the Danes which would only lead Greenlanders to complete alienation from their culture. A national conscience should be created, a national solidarity against those who *'we on immediate recognition can discern as not being one of us – and whose interests does not concur with ours.'* It was admitted that: *'to concentrate the fire on the Danes was the most obvious and easiest way'* because they were already scapegoats for what was going on in Greenland. In his view the majority in Greenland had been misled by the Greenlandic upper class by being promised wonders if only Greenland was integrated in Denmark. He thought that greater political independence was the only means of obtaining *'a socialist society without asking the Danish Parliament for permission.'*<sup>393</sup>

His fierce hostility to Danish bourgeois society was obvious. In the local paper in Aasiaat, Aasiak, he thundered against the failure to hear the Greenlandic majority in the debate. Speaking only Greenlandic they could not participate in a debate conducted in Danish. He also objected to the formation of political

parties in Greenland because he suspected the leaders would only look after their personal interests. He saw the relatively low participation in the elections as a token of the people's indifference, and an indication that the parliamentary system was unsuited to govern Greenland. He wrote: *'I hope it is clearly understood, that democracy is (too!) imported from Denmark, and it is no good (either!).'* To solve the economic problems in Greenland he suggested selling Denmark!<sup>394</sup>

You may question how seriously the different suggestions were meant, but you cannot doubt that he had an axe to grind. This was a radical throwing down the gauntlet, challenging the Danes to rule Greenlanders. The selling of Denmark was a radical expression of this thinking, and perhaps a vehement response to arguments he had been served in discussions in Denmark.

Debate among Greenlanders coincided with debate among Danes. During the 1960s the magazine 'Grønland' produced a series of articles highlighting the danger of a breakdown of ancient Greenlandic culture, and neglect of the Greenlandic language. The common remedy was to suggest that Greenlanders must take control. Several publications took the same line.<sup>395</sup> The recurrent attitude was nicely formulated by Niels Højlund in 'Krise uden Alternativ' 1972. Højlund, a historian, teacher, priest, and journalist, had spent the years 1968-1970 as a journalist at Greenland Broadcasting, and he then took two years leave to work out: *'what were our aims, what were our motives, which ideas did we have about the desired outcome, and when did we assume the task was done?'* (p. 7). For his part he thought the task was in principle already done. Apart from still being willing to pay the bills, the task was no longer a Danish one, but Greenlandic (p. 205).

## The debate in parliament

The growing discussion around 1970 about Danish-Greenlandic relations produced a debate in Parlia-

392. *Politisk Revy* 9 October 1970.

393. *Politisk Revy* 18 December 1970.

394. A/G 16 April 1970: 8.

395. Among them Mads Lidegaard, priest and teacher in Greenland 1953-1965, writer of articles and books (1962; 1968; 1973).

Danish Broadcast published *Grønland en TVA-høring* 1969, the Danish National Museum published *Hjørnø* 1969. See also Jensen 1971.

ment. Danish hesitations about setting things in motion in Greenland may be seen by the fact that the initiative was simply a debate in Parliament. The previous pause for thought in 1960 had resulted in a committee, which reported after four years in one volume and there had been the earlier mammoth report in six volumes from 1950. This time the debate started from a report from the Greenland minister, A.C. Normann of the Radical Left Party. The debate<sup>396</sup> may show where the political parties stood while the minister's report presumably expressed the policy of the government, a centre right wing coalition of the Liberal Left, the Conservative, and the Radical Left.

Could any change in policy be detected?

The minister started from the previous report (G-60), suggesting that its assumptions had been challenged by the rapid population growth which necessitated a far bigger effort to improve the living standards (column 5263).

The growth in population was the crucial point for the minister, far more serious than the steadily growing subsidy, Dkr. 650 million in 1970 against Dkr. 140 million in 1960, and more important than the decline in fishing (column 5264). Just as the fish processing factories were built and a deep sea fishing fleet was building up, nature had played man a trick by making the sea temperature slightly colder resulting in a much reduced cod stock only partially replaced by the growing shrimp fishing. This development is showed in table 30.

On the basis of these statistics the minister was not hopeful about the capacity of business in Greenland to contribute to a rising living standard. He thought the main occupation should still be based on cod fishing because it was an all year round activity, and he had some hopes of oil and mineral prospecting – 22 search concessions had been issued so far (column 5268f). Increased capital transfer was needed in the future, but at a slower pace than in the 1960s, he thought (column 5272). Finally, he could only hope that rising productivity could keep pace with the demand for better living standards because otherwise: *'an increased capital transfer or employment of a greater number of Greenlanders in Denmark was needed.'*

Thus far, the minister had kept to the main philo-

**Table 29.** Greenland population 1930-1970. 1930 and 1945 census, thereafter the yearly ministerial reports).

	Europeans	Greenlanders	Yearly growth for Greenlanders %
1930	413	16,488	
1945	580	20,832	1.6
1950	1,061	22,581	1.6
1955	1,867	25,234	2.3
1960	2,762	30,378	3.8
1965	4,483	35,132	3.0
1970	7,62	38,912	2.1

**Table 30.** Fish production 1960-1970, 1000 tons (Perspektivplan for Grønland 1971-1985: 16). \* with head, gutted.

	Cod*	Shrimp	Other fish
1960	24.2	1.8	4.7
1961	29.8	2.6	3.9
1962	30.5	3.4	3.7
1963	20.3	3.3	5.3
1964	14.1	3.8	6.2
1965	20.7	5.1	6.9
1966	24.7	5.2	6.1
1967	23.2	5.6	5.8
1968	17.5	5.6	5.8
1969	17.5	6.7	5.8
1970	15.7	7.8	4.9

sophy of the years since 1950. The rest of the speech commented more directly on the current debate. He admitted: *'that the acclimatisation to a modern West European way of life had created immense problems for the Greenlanders'*, but was confident that they could cope. He admitted that guest workers covered much work in Greenland, but thought they were indispensable because too few in Greenland were qualified. Therefore, education must still have first priority. Concerning the problem of requiring Greenlanders to master Danish in order to be educated, another issue in the current debate, he also maintained the 1950 philosophy: it was a necessity. *'The mastering of Danish was a precondition to make it possible for the Greenlanders to rise to the same economic and cultural level as reigned in the other Nordic countries'*, he claimed and hoped: *'that*

396. FT 1969/1970. The report from the minister 23 April 1970 column 5263-78. The debate 30 April 1970 column 5382-5484.

*Danish would become a useable and living language for the Greenlanders without giving up Greenlandic.*<sup>397</sup>

The minister also rejected suggestions in the public debate to slow the pace of development and to relax the policy of concentrating more people in the towns. *'It is better to make an effort to overcome the interim difficulties than to delay a development that is bound to come sooner or later'*, he said. His commitment to modernity in a Danish version was unshaken. Rhetorically he finally asked: *'I suppose that nobody favours reducing the quest for education and enlightenment in our days. Likewise, our welfare society is supposed to secure the population employment, a fair wage, and a good social standard.'* The only hints that something had happened since 1950 were mention of the possibility of moving more Greenlanders to Denmark, and the minister's observation of: *'a greater understanding of the link between productivity in Greenland and the living standard'* (column 5277).

The speakers for the governing parties were of course in line with the minister, but some variance can be seen. H.J. Lembourn, Conservative, would *'slow down the pace of the development to get a better balance between its speed and the capacity of the population to adjust.'* He would prefer *'a more Greenlandic Greenland'* to *'a danicized Greenland with growing conflicts between the two groups.'* In his view this meant fewer Danish guest workers at a possible cost of less perfect work (column 5392f). Holger Hansen, of the Liberal Left, agreed basically with the minister, but was inclined to see a problem in the fact that the Greenlanders did not sufficiently feel themselves part of the development. He put some confidence in the act on income taxes in Greenland, recently passed in the provincial council (column 5396f). Svend Haugaard, Radical Left, brushed aside all talk about too hasty development by asking which home, which kindergarten, and which working place had been built too early (column 5399). Regarding equalisation between Greenlanders and Danes the policy was clear. In Denmark total equality should prevail. Greenland, however, should primarily be for the Greenlanders. Therefore, they should have a greater responsibility to manage, even if this meant slower development and errors

of judgement. The essential thing now was to alter the role of the Greenlanders from being spectators to participants, and he argued that most of the endeavours would be in vain if this was not achieved (column 5402).

The opposition in Parliament took much the same line as the government. Carl P. Jensen, Social Democrat who had been minister for Greenland 1964-1968 agreed that *'the goal was to give the Greenlanders greater responsibility for development, just like the policy in Denmark towards local authorities'* (column 5388).

Those who had taken the floor up till now were all members of the Greenland Council from 1964 and had consequently a feeling for Greenlandic matters and they were all from the parties that had been responsible for policy in the period. The spokesman for a fairly new party, the Socialist Folk Party (a splinter party from the Communists), Gunhild Due, had just joined the Greenland Council, and was perhaps as a newcomer more critical of the political goal. She favoured privatisation provided it meant Greenlandic taking over of Danish business, but would prefer the co-operatives to have a greater role. She also favoured a reduction of Danish guest workers to be replaced with Greenlanders. The limited capacity of the larger open water settlements to accommodate the influx of people from the smaller settlements she would lessen by making the lesser settlements more attractive by building smaller production plants there. She admitted that she had perhaps been too enthusiastic for making education in Greenland the same as in Denmark. A new attitude was cautiously aired: *'Perhaps we ought to consider having schools in Greenland which would educate the Greenlanders to those circumstances most of them will experience.'* Her final advice was: *'Keep your ears open, mister minister, listen to the Greenlanders themselves and their opinions. Try to penetrate the wall of civil servants here and in Greenland!'* Greenland should be a good land for the Greenlanders themselves, she argued (column 5406-5408). The Socialist Folk Party followed later its own advice by asking the Greenlandic politicians Moses Olsen and Lars Emil Johansen to produce the party's Greenland policy.

The final spokesman was Kjær Rasmussen from

397. Column 5274 f. The evolutionist thinking of the minister was part of an age long European and Danish defence of colonialism and imperialism. Already in 1905 the new progressive Liberal Left Party held out their hands to the Greenlanders: *'They shall not remain children under our tutelage, but become a nation which we strive to elevate.'* (RTFF 1904/5 column 1975).

the Left Socialists, a splinter from the Folk Socialists in 1968. He seems to have had no contacts with groups in Greenland, proposing a wide ranging sociological inquiry in Greenland to discover: *'what the broad so-called common population in Greenland wanted'* (column 5413). The party had obviously no policy on the issue. He favoured modernisation, but asked some critical questions about Danish dominance, and whose pockets the state subsidies finally benefited. *'We cannot get rid of the suspicion that an imperialistic policy is followed in Greenland'* (column 5411).

This was what the political establishment in Denmark had to say about the future of Greenland. From the government to the tiniest party in Parliament there was only a slight difference of opinion. Change must continue, but the pace could be discussed. Greenlanders should be more involved, but how to achieve this was not agreed. All deplored the Danish dominance in civil service and free enterprise (apart from fishing, sheep breeding and hunting), and saw more education as a remedy.

Besides the spokesmen from the political parties some members of Parliament had more particular interests to safeguard. The president of the Danish Association of Fishermen, Henry Sørensen, Liberal Left, wanted Danish fishermen catching salmon in Greenland to be able to obtain fuel, provisions, repairs and so on in Greenland for a price similar to those in Denmark. The Faroese Johan Nielsen, Social Democrat, wanted to maintain the rights of the Faroese in Greenland, and preferably extend them a little. Former president of the Danish Association for Tourism, Svend Horn, Social Democrat, argued for a tourism to be established and administered by Danes in Greenland. The two later speakers pointed out that these changes would benefit Greenland as well (column 5427-5431).

The two Greenlandic members of Parliament naturally took the floor as well. Nikolaj Rosing declared that problems were steadily growing, and that the policy had not resulted in activity and involvement on the Greenlanders' part. On the contrary, it had nourished passivity, carelessness, and discontent. He therefore suggested halting the policy of concentration of the population in bigger settlements, finding more

employment for the Greenlanders, and building small houses instead of huge blocks of flats. He suggested abolition of the birthplace criterion for wage differentials arguing that it was the main source of discord in Greenland (column 5413-18). Knud Hertling agreed with this, and also wanted to make it more difficult for Danes to reside and do business in Greenland (column 5418-5424).

Summing up the debate, the minister did admit the conflict between the aims of a more Greenlandic Greenland with presumably a lower standard of life, and an integrated Greenland in which the Greenlanders might be alienated. He also admitted that current policy was a compromise between these two, which had not worked out too well. Nevertheless, he called on Parliament to continue the programmes started in 1950 and supported by the great majority in Greenland. (column 5444f).

To some Greenlanders the debate in Parliament was a disappointment. Jakob Janussen for example could see only limited attempts to discuss the central issues such as a danicized or more Greenlandic Greenland. He declared that he was not sorry that Parliament had left the problems untouched because: *'Only the Greenlanders were entitled to answer the general and to us so essential question about which kind of society we want in Greenland after a debate in Greenland and in Greenlandic.'*<sup>398</sup>

## The Holsteinsborg Conference

Many people in Greenland were willing to have such a debate. The chairman of the provincial council, Erling Høgh, had in his 1970 New Year speech issued invitations to a conference about the future of Greenland. All those invited were Greenlanders: the young Greenlanders from Denmark and Greenland and the Greenlandic politicians of the provincial council, the municipalities and Parliament.<sup>399</sup>

The open invitation was at first regarded with suspicion by the young Greenlanders. Would it merely follow the usual procedure with Danish experts formulating the problems? It had to be *'the Greenlanders themselves who selected the relevant issues and possible solu-*

398. *Tidsskriftet Grønland* 1970: 220-222. Folketingets Grønlandsdebat 30 April 1970.

399. A/G 22 January 1970: 8.



tions to the problems, Moses Olsen argued.<sup>400</sup> But the nervousness disappeared, perhaps facilitated by the gesture of goodwill in choosing one of the young Greenlanders, Lars Emil Johansen, to be the editor of the conference report.<sup>401</sup>

The conference took place at the Knud Rasmussen Folk High School in Sisimiut from 20 to 30 June 1970 with a total of 59 participants from Denmark and Greenland. Danish experts were not totally excluded, since the economist Mogens Boserup gave the opening speech on the language question, while the chief of RGTD, Jens Fynbo, and the consultant for the Danish Cooperatives, Sven Thorsen initiated the debate on business, and the civil servant Claus Bornemann opened the debate on public information. Despite these contributions by Danish experts the main work of the conference was a search by Greenlanders for their own solution to their problems, and in some cases such solutions were found.

Several of the objectives were well known such as the desire of the provincial council for a greater say vis-à-vis the Danish authorities, and the wish of the municipalities in Greenland for greater independence from the provincial council. Similarly the idea of moving Greenlandic agencies such as the GTO from Denmark to Greenland was very familiar. The desire to employ more Greenlanders in construction work had been heard before, but now there was a formal proposal to compel visiting firms to ensure that at least one third of their work force were Greenlanders.<sup>402</sup>

Mogens Boserup stood by his opinion expressed earlier that Greenlanders should as soon as possible become bilingual so they could compete successfully and lose their feeling of inferiority. He saw no future for a written Greenlandic, but could imagine a spoken Greenlandic as a cultural heritage binding the Greenlanders together.<sup>403</sup> His ideas were completely rejected. Everybody else favoured teaching in Greenlandic from the first day in school arguing that this

would ensure a harmonious development for the children.

Rather than downgrading of Greenlandic they wanted more text books in Greenlandic and teacher education in Greenlandic too. The suppressed anger at the depreciating of their language, and the awakening of the idea that to follow Danish norms was not always to their benefit can be found in expressions such as: *'serious consideration should be given to whether the Greenlandic teacher training should be a duplicate of the Danish one, or whether other ways can be found.'* And *'the groups contradict Boserup when he claims that the Greenlanders can only have full equality if they become Danish speakers.'* And still more sharply: *'in conclusion the majority wish to state that Boserup's suggestion to end Greenlandic teaching in the first two years in school shows a disrespect for the Greenlandic language.'*

Clearly the participants had a more 'Greenlandic' attitude than had previously been expressed in the provincial council. They took an elegant departure from Boserup when he had to leave the conference. They thanked him for having sparked off the debate on the use of Greenlandic, and gave him as a present a model of a kayak, but without cladding because that would be the image of Greenland *'if we are deprived of our language!'*<sup>404</sup>

The question of salary differentials was inevitably discussed. Most participants favoured maintaining the birthplace criterion and giving the lowest salaried and the independent earners the bigger part of any future rise in income. Everybody was for the introduction of taxes in accordance with the view of the provincial council, which had just voted for this in its spring session.<sup>405</sup>

A key policy of the reform of 1950 was the concentration of population in the bigger settlements on open waters to increase support for fishing and improve social services. This was explicitly denounced by the conference: *'All participants agree that the concentra-*

400. A/G 22 May 1970: 12.

401. Johansen 1970. The report exists in two versions, one with 77 half size pages in Danish which is mainly used here, and a more comprehensive one printed in Greenlandic: Sisimiune Atautsimêrssuarneq. The newspaper A/G covered also some of the debate on 14th and 27th July and 24th of August.

402. Johansen 1970: 10.

403. Johansen 1970: 14.

404. Johansen 1970: 15-22.

405. Johansen 1970: 25-29; LR-F 1970: 60.

*tion of the population has to be reduced as much as possible, even completely stopped, because the original precondition is no longer valid,*<sup>406</sup> probably meaning that cod fishing was no longer a promising economic prospect.

In this way the conference went through the problems of society one by one: popular education, school and education, the economy, alcohol problems etcetera. All discussions were ended by a resolution opposing some ideas and recommending others. The conference also emphasised the need to let the Greenlanders have a greater say in Greenland, but that policy was already signaled in the latest discussion in Denmark. In a way this had been on the Danish agenda ever since the establishment of the Guardians' Councils in the 1860s accelerating in the twentieth century. The new element was how this was going to happen.

On some matters the conference set new standards: more Greenlandic teaching in school, reducing or ending the concentration of population in fewer settlements. An overall political statement about the future of Greenland was apparently not discussed.

Some of the 'young' participants did, however, suggest a resolution with a political goal: *'a politically more independent Greenland is an essential part of our political goal,'* and *'we are a national minority'* (the Greenlandic version could equally be translated as *'we are a Greenlandic people'*) and *'we want this fact respected.'* This would mean a heavier load to carry but the young were ready for this. However, the connection with Denmark should not be cut: *'It would be an irreparable damage all of a sudden to cut the aid'*, they said.

It is worth noting that this resolution did not request complete independence, but simply a more self-governing Greenland. The Greenlandic version has exactly the same idea. The resolution proposed *'nangminerssornernigssaq'*<sup>407</sup> which became the official Greenlandic name for home rule nine years later.

It was endorsed by seven members, among them later prominent Greenlandic politicians like Emil Abelsen, Jacob Janussen, Lars Emil Johansen, and Arqaluk Lynge.

406. Johansen 1970: 35.

407. Literally: a means to become more self-reliant.

# The road to Home Rule

As described in the previous chapter in the years about 1970 there were several indications that the relationship between Greenland and Denmark had come to a watershed. The key point was that Greenlanders aimed to take greater responsibility in running Greenlandic affairs.

In 1971 there were elections for the provincial council and the Danish Parliament. It was time for the young Greenlanders to manifest themselves in the elected assemblies. The provincial council elections took place on 16 April, but the change of membership was the lowest ever. Only seven out of seventeen seats or 41% changed hands. In previous elections the percentages of newly elected members had been: 1967: 65; 1963: 50; 1959: 69; 1955: 92, 1951: 92.

Despite the small turnover, some young Greenlanders were successful. Among the new members five were 'young', but only two of them were markedly for 'a new policy', while the three others either later joined the Atassut party or no party at all. On the other hand, the two 'new policy' victories were remarkable. Jonathan Motzfeldt defeated the chairman of the council, Erling Høegh, while Lars Emil Johansen took the seat of the deputy chairman, Nikolaj Rosing. The change was not a new social class winning political power, for the two new victors had the same occupation as their opponents, priest and teacher, respectively. It was rather a change of generation as the newspaper A/G recognised, hoping too that the election would pave the way for a new policy.<sup>408</sup>

At the general election of the Danish parliament 21 September 1971 Knud Hertling was unopposed in the northern constituency. In the southern constituency the sitting member Nikolaj Rosing was nominated, and so were Erling Høegh and another of the defeated provincial council candidates, Moses Olsen, who had lost by a small margin to his uncle, Jørgen Olsen. Moses Olsen took the seat against the two established

politicians. He won 2550 votes while there were 2437 for Rosing, and 2161 for Høegh. An analysis of the election shows that the two established politicians had blocked each other by winning 3 and 2 communities each, while Moses Olsen only won one, but came second in three others.<sup>409</sup>

Erling Høegh accepted the consequences of the election, moved to Denmark and joined the Conservative Party. Afterwards he stayed out of politics in Greenland and died in 1993. Rosing in contrast remained as a candidate for Parliament and regained the southern constituency in 1973 sitting until his death in 1976.

This defeat for the new policy in the south was balanced by victory in the north where Lars Emil Johansen defeated Knud Hertling holding the seat until 1979, when he was elected to the new Home Rule Parliament. Thus, supporters of the 'new policy' held one of the two Greenlandic seats in the Danish Parliament through the '70s. Their role in Danish politics has not yet been researched.

Support for the policy of Lars Emil Johansen and Jonathan Motzfeldt grew after 1971 in the provincial council with the emergence of recognisable political parties. Siumut (meaning forward) is the oldest. Already in 1975 a group of 'new' politicians started to publish the magazine Siumut to propagate their policy. This magazine is bilingual showing the need also to communicate to Danish readers, and it is a good source for the party's attitude in different areas. The party started in 1976 with local associations in some settlements and these came together formally as a party in 1977.

Atassut (meaning interdependent, literally: a means to hold on) became a party in connection with the general election of 1977, and got Otto Steenholdt elected. The party emphasized the value of being linked to Denmark, in a way continuing the policy of

<sup>408</sup> A/G 1971, 9: 2; Jensen 1977: 15.

<sup>409</sup> Gulløv 1971.

the great reform years. A brief, if provocative comparison would place Atassut as a party wishing to benefit Greenlandic society by making it as Danish as possible with due consideration of special conditions in Greenland, while Siumut would make Greenland as Greenlandic as possible, and only as Danish as necessary. This was the starting point. During the next generation Atassut became more Greenlandic, and Siumut more cautious in challenging Danish goodwill. None of the Greenlandic parties wished for union with any party in Denmark. Cooperation in Parliament, though, was closest between Atassut and the Social Democrats, at times with Liberal Left, and between Siumut and the Folks Socialists.

In Greenland party allegiances became apparent in the provincial council. Of the members elected in 1971 three later became Siumut, three joined Atassut but eleven remained independent. The election of 1975 returned eight Siumut and seven Atassut, the independents being reduced to two.

Two other parties ran for election to the 'Landsting' in 1979. Inuit Ataqatigiit (meaning Inuit association) was established in 1977, with a clear left socialist rhetoric, supported in Denmark by the Left Socialists. Its president was the above mentioned Arqaluk Lynge. Sulissartut Partiat (Worker's Party) originated from the trade union whose leaders had formerly been Siumut members. Neither of them secured representatives.<sup>410</sup>

## Voting on the Common Market

Although a common feeling about 1970 suggested a new relationship between Denmark and Greenland, it was the Danish joining of the Common Market in 1972, which directly triggered the Home Rule model. In the referendum in October 1972 the electorates in Denmark and Greenland voted differently. The Danes were for, while the Greenlanders were against. This was the first time in history where the Greenlanders chose not to follow the Danish course. The constitutional status at the time would require that Greenland was included

in joining the Common Market. Thus a new status had to be found if Greenland were to be excluded.

The issues that worried Greenlanders were the prospect of a common fishery policy in which fish in Greenlandic waters could not be reserved for the Greenlanders. Also fish pricing by auction was different from the Greenlandic fixed price system. Some opponents in Greenland also criticised the free movement of labour and capital, which would prevent political management of the economy. I suggest that these technicalities could have been overcome, and that the real issue was the political one of being tied up to Brussels just at a time when all the endeavours were to be less tied up to Copenhagen. I think the following narrative will substantiate my position.

The advocates of joining the EEC emphasized the benefit of following the Danish course (they seemed to have assumed a Danish yes in the referendum). They also pointed to the possibilities of grants from the European common funds for regional development and social welfare. In short: to have access to a money-box much larger than the Danish treasury.<sup>411</sup>

In 1967 the Danish parliament authorized the government to apply for membership of the Common Market. Both Greenlandic members supported the application. The same year the provincial council was asked for its opinion in accordance with the council's right to be heard in issues of special relevance for Greenland. After a very short debate the council gave its consent to let Greenland follow Denmark into the Common Market. Of course, it wished to have special arrangements to protect the Greenlandic interests in fishing, the rights to establish business and the subsidy system which had already been suggested by the government. The council also wished to have a more thorough survey of the consequences for Greenland. The matter seemed to be uncontroversial at the time.<sup>412</sup>

But before the issue returned to the agenda in 1971-1972 there had been an election with some new Greenlandic members in the provincial council and Parliament. It was from these new members that the objections and finally the opposition to Greenland joining came. It started cautiously. Parliament decided

410. Very little is written about the Greenlandic parties, but many references are made in literature after the mid 1970s.

Michelsen 1979 and Sørensen 1979 have analysed some aspects of their activities. See also Dahl 1986: 79-101.

411. Jensen 1977: 17-29.

412. Jensen 1977: 30-2.

in May 1971 that a referendum should be held about joining the Common Market, and in accordance with the constitution Greenland would vote on the same day and be included in a single electorate, just as with parliamentary elections. This arrangement was later criticised, but at the time the two Greenlandic members (Hertling and Rosing) had no objection.<sup>413</sup>

The provincial council was in session 15 September to 2 November 1971 and was informed of the ongoing negotiations about joining which were expected to be concluded during November 1971. The council did not question the proposed procedure. Jonathan Motzfeldt displayed some mistrust by suggesting that the provincial council should send a representative to Brussels to ensure that the special situation in Greenland was made clear to the participating countries. He would demand a permanent special arrangement. The council was more cautious. It suggested to the ministry that the executive committee of the provincial council should participate in the ensuing negotiations – if possible also in Brussels. Thus, the suggestion from Jonathan Motzfeldt came to nothing. He had even suggested the representative be the former chairman, Erling Høegh. The suggestion of Høegh might have been a cunning move from Motzfeldt, or just a token that the issue was still outside party policy.<sup>414</sup>

At the final negotiations in Brussels the executive committee of the provincial council had participated, and approved the outcome. Moses Olsen had also been present,<sup>415</sup> but in Parliament he abstained from voting on approval of the result. He did not have special objections to the results regarding Greenland: Denmark was allowed to continue subsidizing Greenlandic society, and the demand for residence of at least six months to obtain a business licence could also continue. So could the exclusive rights of the Greenlandic fishermen to waters inside 12 nautical miles.<sup>416</sup>

It seems that the young Greenlandic politicians

made their mind up during the remaining part of the negotiations which ended on 12 December 1971. Greenland was not to join. In Parliament Moses Olsen asked for separate voting in Greenland without making it clear whether a separate date or two separate referenda were in mind. He also raised again the possibility of altering policies once a member. Could the 6-month's residence before business license be extended? Could the fishing limit of 12 nautical miles be expanded? And what about the (hypothetical, he said) question of a future demand in Greenland to alter its constitutional status inside the realm?<sup>417</sup> Moses Olsen got no answer to his hypothetical questions.

The imprecise meaning of 'separate' in the remarks of Moses Olsen in December became quite clear in February 1972 when Moses Olsen and Jonathan Motzfeldt in a broadcast from Greenland Radio demanded separate referenda one in Greenland and one in Denmark each decisive in its area. They argued that Danish voters should not be entitled to decide whether Greenland should join or not. The Minister of Greenland, Knud Hertling supported by doctor of law Ole Espersen argued that this was not legally possible. The law about elections in Greenland would have had to been changed first, and the negotiations with the EEC would have to be resumed as they had been carried out on basis of existing laws. This would mean delaying the entry of Denmark into the EEC. Hertling perhaps unintentionally suggested a goal for the young Greenlandic politicians to strive for. He said: 'a separate vote in this matter would require a home rule arrangement as in the Faroes.'<sup>418</sup>

When two separate referenda was ruled unlawful by the minister and the legal advice Jonathan Motzfeldt backed off, but he suggested in the provincial council session in Spring 1972 that the date of the Greenlandic vote ought still to be after the Danish one.<sup>419</sup> As this would make no difference in reality it is

413. Jensen 1997: 37; FT 1970/71: 6727f.

414. LR-E 1971: 13-5.

415. LR-F 1972: 33. The executive committee being: Lars Chemnitz (chairman), Jonathan Motzfeldt, J.C.F. Olsen and Nikolaj Karlsen.

416. Jensen 1977: 37.

417. FT 1971/2: 1730-4.

418. In the newspaper *Land og Folk* 3 February 1972 according to Einar Lund Jensen (1977: 37f). In the Faroes the local parliament, the Lagting, had declined the offer to join in with Denmark, and consequently the Faroese voters were never asked.

419. LR-F 1972: 44.



easy to spot the political tactic behind the suggestion. He linked his political position in Greenland to a Greenlandic NO at the referendum, and a separate date would give the best platform to agitate for that. Support in the provincial council was perhaps greater than expected. Eight members were in favour, and seven against with two abstaining.<sup>420</sup> In the minutes (Danish version) 'separate' was used in the sense: two separate dates, but also in the sense: two separate votes to be counted separately. Who voted which way was not recorded so it is impossible to say whether this split was the first sign of the known 8-7 split between Siumut and Atassut later in the 1970s.

Before the next session of the provincial council in the autumn it became clear how Jonathan Motzfeldt could use the idea of a later date for the Greenlandic vote, especially the fact that it was not accepted. In his home region in the South he started to collect voters' signatures to support the demand, and he agitated for a NO in the referendum because the Danish government had been unwilling to accommodate the wish for a later date.<sup>421</sup> The Greenlandic debate was neither of long duration nor especially intensive.<sup>422</sup> A substantial argument for joining was the need to follow the same course as Denmark, while the opponents wanted to keep Greenland clear of the EEC without threatening the link to Denmark. A hint of the attitude outside the provincial council came from a conference in Sisimiut/Holsteinsborg in the summer. The participants who were representatives from political parties and associations in Greenland voted twenty-two to two against joining the EEC.

In the provincial council the opposition had grown since spring. On 22 September 1972 it stood twelve to four against the EEC. The opponents could look forward with confidence to the day of the referendum, 2 October, and started to prepare the future. In fact, they were already in action. On 19 September Jonathan Mozfeldt had proposed to the provincial council that a Danish-Greenlandic political commission, committee or working group should be ap-

pointed to investigate how a home rule arrangement could be introduced in Greenland. The provincial council should prepare a memorandum for the commission. He was painstaking in stressing that this did not mean any hidden agenda of secession from Denmark, but just home rule similar to the Faroese one. It was unanimously carried.<sup>423</sup> The idea of having home rule for Greenland became so popular that the magazine A/G and Knud Hertling both later claimed that they had inspired Motzfeldt to raise the question.<sup>424</sup>

The referendum on 2 October 1972 turned out a massive majority of 70.8% of the valid votes in Greenland against joining the EEC. The only places with a majority in favour were Ivittuut, a Danish naval base, and the tiny settlement of Tasiluk in the district of Qaqortoq. Everywhere else the no votes were in a crushing majority, as high as 79.9% in Kangaatsiaq and no lower than 56.7%<sup>425</sup> in Thule. The referendum was a smashing success for the 'young' Greenlandic politicians. They had won their first great case, and they naturally claimed to have the support of the people for their version of a more 'Greenlandic Greenland'.

The preparations for the next round started right away. In a Greenlandic broadcast Moses Olsen declared: *'Sooner or later our crystal-clear decision must lead to political consequences'*<sup>426</sup> The issue was also touched on in the opening debate in Parliament on 11 October 1972 when the Radical Left suggested postponing the membership of Greenland in the EEC until the end of 1975 – as the Faroese could – to prevent a severing of the relationship between Denmark and Greenland. Moses Olsen suggested preparing a referendum in Greenland immediately about the relationship to Denmark. The minister, Knud Hertling, responded that a referendum about just that could be the outcome of the discussion in the committee which had been announced. The Danish uneasiness about the outcome in Greenland was imbedded in the answer from the minister for EEC-affairs, Ivar Nørgaard: The arrangement had to continue as agreed,

420. LR-F 1972: 49.

421. Jensen 1977: 39.

422. Jensen 1977: 40-69.

423. LR-E 1972: 7, 104f.

424. See Jensen 1977: 77 f; Hertling 1977: 61f.

425. Gulløv & Heilmann 1973. The percentages above are calculated from Grønland 1973: table 105.

426. A/G no. 21 1972; Jensen 1977: 71.

*'but should the Greenlanders themselves want another arrangement with Denmark than the present one, for example as the Faroese, I can assure you that we would be able to negotiate other conditions for Greenland in Brussels.'*

The day after in the newspaper Ekstrabladet Moses Olsen explained his wish for a changed relationship with Denmark. He rejected secession with a wording that became standard in the later Siumut Party attitude: *'a complete secession would today and for years to come be pure wishful thinking. You cannot just throw away the only real connections we have – and they happen to go through Copenhagen. Remember, we are a people who don't tread on new ice without being sure it can support us. Had this been the case we would have fallen through thousands of year ago.'* What he wanted was a loosening of the ties to Denmark – a sort of home rule on the Faroese model.<sup>427</sup>

The phrasing was sophistical. To characterize secession as wishful thinking is not to say that you do not share the wish. The allusion to the ability of the Greenlanders to survive in a tough environment is a typical phrase on the part of Siumut. It was an attempt to bolster the Greenlanders' self-confidence. This was a response to much of the debate on the shortcomings of the development programme in Greenland, which can be summarised in the view that the Greenlanders were too much Greenlanders. They were not skilled enough to manage in a modern society, it was asserted. That is why education and training played so great a part. The Greenlanders themselves were so to speak part of the problem. Siumut turned this upside down. In their policy the Greenlanders were part of the solution. That is why their policy was 'a more Greenlandic Greenland'.

## The Greenlandic Home Rule committee

The minister for Greenland, himself a Greenlander, pleased the Greenlanders by establishing a purely Greenlandic home rule committee, consisting of five

members from the provincial council and the two Greenlandic members of Parliament. The task was broadly to suggest how and in what stages the provincial council could have more impact on and more responsibility – including financial responsibility – for future development in Greenland. The committee was also to consider the rôle of the provincial council in making laws for Greenland within the limits of the Danish constitution. Finally, the committee should consider the possibility of the provincial council taking over more functions from the Ministry for Greenland.<sup>428</sup>

The home rule committee worked for two years with five meetings including a conference in Sisimiut/Holsteinsborg in June 1974, held as in 1970 and 1972: a broad representation of Greenlandic organisations and the members of the provincial council and the municipalities should in groups consider the issues on the agenda. The minutes from this conference suggest<sup>429</sup> that there was a solid backing for the committee's proposals. In plain words: an introduction of a Greenlandic home rule firmly within the Danish realm consisting of Greenlandic administration of, and making regulations for a list of specified activities with the further possibility of taking over the remaining Copenhagen government activities in due course.

Foreign policy was clearly within the Danish government's competence, but a majority of the participants wanted to exclude fishing limits and international agreements on fishing from foreign policy and to make these matters the responsibility of the Greenlanders themselves. Also the natural deposits of raw materials should be their own affair, they thought. The participants also raised the issue of relations to the EEC, and suggested that the proposed Home Rule Authorities should deal with this issue.

Fishing limits, raw materials, and the EEC were not covered by the committee's proposals, so the conference had been more 'Greenlandic' than the committee had dared to be, perhaps inspired by the radical minority in the committee. Only Lars Emil Johansen and Jonathan Motzfeldt and maybe Jørgen Olsen could be placed as radicals with some certainty, while

427. The debate summarized by Jensen (1977: 71-76).

428. Hertling 1977: 64f.

429. Minutes from Greenland Home Rule conference in Holsteinsborg 1974, 'Nangminerssornerulernigssaq pivdlugo Sismiune atautsimineq, 1974' (Jensen 1977: 80-84).

the rest: Lars Chemnitz, Otto Steenholdt, Nikolaj Rosing, Niels Carlo Heilmann, and Agnete Nielsen constituted the 'moderate' wing. With the exception of Nikolaj Rosing who died in 1976 they all joined the Atassut party after 1979.

The committee report was issued in February 1975 – printed in A/G 6 March 1975 and as annex 4.1 in the provincial council minutes autumn 1975. It was remarkable in expressing the reasons for wanting home rule. The reasons were to some extent familiar, but here the Greenlanders themselves expressed them officially.

The Siumut tone was recognizable: *'First it has to be acknowledged that Greenland and its original population is so different from the rest of Denmark that the relationship can never be as between the regional population groups in Denmark.'* A strong feeling for the language was expressed. There are, they argued, huge problems in transforming thoughts from the one language into the other, and it is not a question of education because the Greenlandic language has a close connection with the Greenlandic way of living and thinking. *'and the Greenlanders do not want to give up their language. On the contrary, they wish to maintain and strengthen it as a clear precondition for maintaining Greenlandic identity and culture. Once the Greenlandic language has been lost as the mother tongue and everyday language we are very much on our way to extinction as a minority group.'* Also the striving to stop being spectators of the development in Greenland was mentioned. These reasons were new compared with the official ones in 1948 and 1959, and can safely be seen as the consequences of rubbing shoulders with the Danes a lot more since the rapid growth was set in motion from 1950.

The report followed the conference in the summer in placing the mineral resources in the special sphere, but suggested fishing limits and agreements remain a shared responsibility. Any specific model for home rule was not described, but the report pointed to the Faroese model as a possible example.

The committee entitled its report 'introduction to negotiation and preliminary report', suggesting that it

planned to continue the work as several phrases in the report indicated.<sup>430</sup> In accordance with this view the provincial council appointed new members to the home rule committee at its next session in Spring 1975, but the new Minister for Greenland, Jørgen Peder Hansen, preferred to consult with the Greenland Council, and then agreed with the executive committee of the provincial council to set up a new commission consisting of seven Greenlandic and seven Danish politicians plus a non-political chairman and a delegate from the Association of Greenlandic Municipalities.<sup>431</sup> (KANUKOKA: acronym for Kalaallit Nunaanni Kommunit Kattuffiat). The provincial council consented to the mandate at its session in the autumn and the commission was set up on 9 October 1975.

## Home Rule negotiations in the commission

The commission worked for nearly three years and delivered its report in April-June 1978. The members were: the non-political chairman, Professor, doctor of law, Isi Foighel<sup>432</sup> was Danish by birth. So were the seven other members of Parliament appointed by the political parties according to their size. Thus there were two Social Democrats, one each from the Progressives, the Liberal Left, the Radical Left, and the Conservatives. The Christian Folk Party and the Left Socialists alternated in one seat.

The provincial council appointed five: Lars Chemnitz (Atassut), Niels Carlo Heilmann (Atassut), Otto Steenholdt (Atassut) who was replaced by his brother Konrad Steenholdt (Atassut) in 1977, Severin Johansen (Siumut), and Jonathan Motzfeldt (Siumut). The Greenlandic members of Parliament Lars Emil Johansen (Siumut) and Nikolaj Rosing were also members. Rosing was replaced by Ole Berglund 1976, and he was in turn replaced by Otto Steenholdt in 1977.

In agreement with the provincial council the mandate was that: *'Especially based on the report section from the Greenlandic home rule committee the commis-*

430. For example 'The committee has not finally decided ...'; 'wishes to consider further and discuss with Danish politicians'; 'will be dealt with in the continued work of the committee' (LR-E 1972: 112). 'which later could be discussed in a broader forum' (Hertling 1977: 63) is written after this outcome actually happened, and is thus no evidence for earlier considerations.

431. LR-E 1975: 116.

432. Professor Foighel was a Doctor of law who later joined the Conservative Party and served as Minister of Law.

sion should go through the tasks which the Ministry for Greenland and other ministries in Denmark had regarding Greenland to examine how to increase the responsibility of the provincial council on these matters,' thereafter the commission should suggest 'a home rule arrangement for Greenland inside the realm.' Together with a time table for the establishment of home rule the commission should prepare the necessary laws to establish it.<sup>433</sup>

This mandate was clearly how and not whether home rule should be established, and the main model was to transfer to a Home Rule body some of the authority which Parliament and government in Denmark hitherto had in their hands. By introducing home rule as legislation in the Danish Parliament it could in theory be taken back again by the same Parliament. Some scholars argued that this model was wrong. Jens Brøsted advocated vehemently the alternative: to recognize the Greenlanders' rights as an independent people, and then negotiate with them which activities should be managed in common and which should be run separately.<sup>434</sup> Later Frederik Harhoff has argued the same point in his thesis for the doctorate in law, 1993. His main point is, that even if in theory the Danish constitution gives the right of repealing Home Rule, the circumstances of its introduction make it politically impossible to do just that unilaterally. Thus Home Rule in Greenland has added a new aspect to the Danish constitution.<sup>435</sup> In this respect it is not different from the British Parliament setting up Canada, Australia etc. in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Both scholars were inspired by the new development in international law concerning aboriginal peoples. The core juridical issue was whether the Greenlanders were an independent people in their own right over whom the Danish government had no legitimate right to rule or whether they were a part of the population of Denmark over which the government had such rights. The Danish government held the latter view. In case of a Greenlandic wish to secede completely from Denmark the government would not object, but as long as Greenland was a part of the Danish realm the home rule arrangement had to respect the Danish con-

stitution just as the mandate for the commission stated.

The final distribution of administration and policy spheres in the Home Rule arrangement of 1979 ended up in 3 lists:

1. Self financed activities in which the Greenlandic authorities should have full legislative power: The administrative system in Greenland, taxes and duties, land use planning, fishing and hunting inside the territory, farming and herding, wild life conservation, regulation of business and competition. These areas should be transferred by request from either side.
2. Subsidized activities to be conferred on Greenland by specific laws agreed by both parties setting out the main principles and the size of the subsidy. The minister was responsible for ensuring adherence to the principles, and Parliament granted the subsidy, but the administration was in the hands of the Greenlandic authorities. The comments on the law presupposed a subsidy size based on the costs of the activity up till now, and regulated by the growth in the Danish GDP: Church and religious matters, social welfare, labour market regulations, education, culture and conditions in business. These activities were expected to be taken over before 1 January 1984. Later health care, regulation of tenancy, housing regulation, supply of goods, internal transport, and protection of the environment could be taken over. Further areas could with mutual agreement be transferred in the future.
3. Activities for which the Danish authorities would retain full legislative and financial responsibility: The constitution, foreign policy, defence, currency, the prison system, criminal and civil law.<sup>436</sup>

Compared to the lists in the report from the Greenlandic Home Rule Committee there was a slight rearrangement. Activities concerned with the administration of justice were moved from the self-financed list to list no. 3. On the other hand some activities that

433. Report 1978, 2: 5f.

434. Brøsted 1979: 1-50.

435. Harhoff 1993: 504.

436. Report 1978, 1: 23, 42-65.

the Greenlanders had suggested remain under the Danish authorities were placed on the subsidized list. No controversy arose from these differences but serious trouble came concerning mineral resources, over which the Greenlanders wished to have authority. The question was exempted from the Home Rule Law, and placed in a special law.

## Mineral resources

The act on mineral raw materials in Greenland of 29 November 1978 gave the Home Rule authorities as well as the Danish government a right of veto on prospecting for and processing the minerals. A committee with equal representation was established together with a mineral agency under the Ministry of Greenland. A crucial rule in section 26 stipulated that any surplus income from mineral activity should be used for reduction of the government subsidy to Greenland. Distribution of income beyond that was up to future negotiations.

This arrangement shows a considerable Danish political and economic interest. Not only would the activity be under close observation, but also the Greenlanders would not be allowed to have the entire surplus if there really was something to earn. The treasury should not only be relieved of its subsidies, but the possibility of future gains should also be safeguarded. This was an age-old Danish attitude. Precisely this line of thinking is found in the laws of 1908 and 1925 concerning the administration of Greenland as treated earlier in this book. The Danish government would like to have at least some of the subsidies paid over the years refunded if possible. On top of that was the new situation in the 1970s of the energy crisis, and any extraction of oil and uranium in Greenland would mean a greater certainty of energy supplies for Denmark. Importing nearly 80% of its energy at the beginning of the 1970s Denmark was extremely vulnerable to Middle East disturbance. It was only around 1990 that oil extraction from the North Sea lifted Denmark off that hook. The Greenlanders were well aware of that situation, I presume. Therefore they wanted to

control mineral resources themselves, not necessarily to avoid repaying the 'debt' to Denmark, but rather to be able to control their own destinies in case the minerals really proved profitable.

I shall venture the thesis that Danish reluctance to let the Greenlanders have the minerals augmented nationalism in Greenland on top of the EEC referendum. The nationalistic tone was quite clear from the beginning of the Siumut campaign. From the very first issue of their magazine 'SIUMUT' in January 1975 the right of the Greenlanders to the minerals was linked to their being a specific people with their own rights. '*Greenland and its treasure are owned by the aboriginal people in the country*', it was claimed. In autumn 1975 Odaq Olsen raised the question in the provincial council. He suggested that the opening section of the law on minerals in Greenland instead of '*All minerals in Greenland belong to the state. Research and extraction of such minerals is the prerogative of the state*' should read: '*all mineral raw materials in Greenland, and all kind of riches found in our country are owned by the permanent residents in Greenland. Research and extraction of such minerals is the prerogative of the provincial council.*'<sup>437</sup>

Several of the council members cautioned that this was a touchy subject, but were nevertheless in favour of giving a statement of principle before the home rule negotiations started. Reluctantly, the chairman, Lars Chemnitz, took the question to a vote: '*He put to vote that the Greenlandic underground and its riches belong to the permanent residents, and this should be stated in the home rule negotiations.*' The fourteen members carried his suggestion unanimously.<sup>438</sup>

This is the version in the minutes in the words of the secretary. According to the taped version the crucial term for the owners was (here translated to English): '*The riches in Greenland belong to its population*' and '*Riches in Greenland should belong to the permanent population in Greenland.*'<sup>439</sup> It is understandable that discussion arose about what exactly was decided, and in the coming political debate there was argument about who belonged to the permanent population. The newspaper A/G 6 November 1975 used different expressions for the 'owners' such as the population of Greenland, the local population, the population in the

437. LR-E, 1975: 302.

438. LR-E 1975: 213, 218.

439. The party's magazine Siumut (1 January 1976: 13 f) has printed the tape and translated it to Danish. See also Sørensen 1979



country, the permanent population, the Greenlanders, the Greenlandic population. The parallel text in Greenlandic said (here translated to English): the Greenlanders, the real inhabitants of Greenland, the population in our country, the Greenlandic people/society, and the Greenlandic people.<sup>440</sup> The different expressions show that the nation building was still at an early stage, but they all excluded the Danish government from ownership.

During 1976 the divisions hardened. The Young Greenlanders' Council together with some youth organizations in Greenland held a summer festival (aasivik in Greenlandic). Their resolution demanded a free, independent Greenland in which the Danish authorities had been replaced by Greenlandic ones in a bloodless revolution.<sup>441</sup> The prime minister of Denmark, Anker Jørgensen, said in a broadcast interview on 4 November 1976: *'No dice! If you want ownership of mineral resources in Greenland then you must face the consequences and say that you want to cut the links to Denmark.'* The expression was remembered in Greenland. When the prime minister visited Greenland in 1977 he was given a pair of dice cups engraved *'No dice!'* (actually in Danish: *'Der er ikke noget at raffle om'*).<sup>442</sup> The same attitude expressed in other words prevailed among the Danish members of the home rule commission at their meetings in November 1976.<sup>443</sup>

It was the Siumut party that had raised the question of the ownership of the minerals, and it was persistent. Their magazine had a permanent column from November 1976 to April 1977 in which the wording of the UN convention of 16 December 1966 was stated: *'All people have a right freely to dispose of their natural riches and resources to their own benefit.'* When the negotiations reached deadlock on the issue it was Siumut that found a solution. On 17 May 1977 the Nuuk branch of the party decided to suggest to the commis-

sion: *'In order to safeguard the basic right of the Greenlandic nation to the mineral resources in Greenland, a law shall be made which shall stipulate that research and extraction of the said resources shall take place according to agreement between the Greenlandic authorities and the Danish government respecting the existing union between the two countries.'*<sup>444</sup> The expression 'the Greenlandic nation' was too narrow for the Danish members, so the final version became: *'The permanent population in Greenland has basic rights to the natural resources in Greenland'* (Section 8, 1).

This version would include those born in Denmark who for a shorter or longer time lived permanently in Greenland.

## Membership of EEC

As described above this question had started the whole process of introducing home rule for Greenland. In brief, it could be said that Greenland wanted home rule to disconnect itself from the EEC. But the law on home rule in Greenland did not lay down how this could happen. Section 15 simply stated that the Danish government in cooperation with the Home Rule authorities should take care of Greenlandic interests in the EEC. A brief reference was made in the report, that home rule would not be an obstacle to changing the relation of Greenland to the EEC. Such a change would require action from the central government, and was not to be regulated in the Home Rule Act.<sup>445</sup>

The Left Socialist member, Steen Folke, had raised the question in the commission but the majority refused it as being outside their mandate.<sup>446</sup> On the other hand, the Danish government had officially promised that it would respect a wish from the future home rule authority to alter Greenland's relationship to the EEC.<sup>447</sup> This was apparently guarantee enough

440. The Danish version: *Grønlands befolkning, den lokale befolkning, landets befolkning, den fastboende befolkning, grønlænderne, and den grønlandske befolkning*. The Greenlandic version: *kalâtdlit, Kalâtdlit-nunāne nunaqavigsut, nunavta inuê, nunap inuvê. kalâtdlit inuiaqatigît, and kalâtdlit inuiait*.

441. A/G 5 August 1976: 26.

442. *Information* 3 August 1977.

443. Jens Brøsted (1979: 59f) has researched these meetings.

444. Report 1978, 2: 49f.

445. Report 1978, 1: 35f.

446. Report 1978, 1: 112.

447. Report 1978, 2: 54.

for Siumut. As it turned out, Greenland left the EEC in 1985 without any controversy.

## **Implementation of the Home Rule 1979**

The law on Home Rule for Greenland was unanimously carried in the provincial council in April 1978, and was debated in Parliament in May. Only the Left Socialists who found it too limited, and the Progressive Party who found it too far-reaching expressed reservations. Lars Emil Johansen, Siumut Party, had to be in favour as he had accepted the result as participant in the negotiations. But he did not omit to indicate that the result did not fully comply with their wishes even if it was better than the present arrangement. *'We have not given up any of our demands, but we have realised that due to superior counter force we have to wait for their fulfilment.'*

The final vote in Parliament was taken in November 1978 with all parties in favour except the two mentioned at each end of the political spectrum.

The referendum on 17 January 1979 in Greenland gave a massive 73% in favour. Three parties had advocated a yes: Atassut, Siumut, and the newly established Workers Party, while the left wing Inuit Ataqatigiit was against. The election to the new local Parliament, the Landstinget, took place on 4 April, and gave Atassut 41.7%, Siumut 46.1% of the valid votes. Due to the election system Siumut gained 13 of the 21 seats in Landstinget while Atassut took the rest. Siumut members took office in the new home rule government, Landsstyret: Jonathan Motzfeldt, prime minister; Lars Emil Johansen, business affairs; Thue Christiansen, Culture; Anders Andreasen, outlying districts; and Moses Olsen, social welfare.

On 1 May 1979 the home rule authorities took over responsibly for future development on the agreed terms. A new era could begin.

# A more Greenlandic Greenland

A keynote in the introduction of Home Rule was to make Greenland more Greenlandic. It has in many ways succeeded, although slowly, and much of the old system prevailed now with Nuuk as the centre instead of Copenhagen. The hard facts of nature and distance both to the world markets and internally cannot be changed merely by a new political leadership.

## The population

It had been a political goal since the 19th century to have Greenlanders staffing the administration and other employment in Greenland. However, the construction of a modern infra structure drew an army of Danish workers and administrators to Greenland after 1950. Reducing the need for guest workers was therefore another goal of the Home Rule authorities. The development is shown in diagram 10. The number of Danes in Greenland has recently fallen, numerically as well as relatively. From 7,620 (16.4%) in 1970 the num-

ber reached a peak of 9,572 (17.7%) in 1987 and has since fallen to 6,622 (11.8%) in 2000.<sup>448</sup>

The Home Rule Authorities and the municipalities followed the same trend in gradually increasing the percentage of Greenlanders in the public service. The statistics distinguish only between those employed on local terms and those employed at expatriate rates. This will roughly correspond to Greenlanders and Danes even though more and more Danes were employed on local terms. The result can be seen in diagram 11.

The average has risen from about 55% in 1978 to 75% in 1993, the municipalities having the highest percentage. The apparent decline in 1979-80 in Home Rule local staff is due to the take over of staff previously employed by the Danish administration in Greenland, and reorganisation of the public agencies in 1986-87 is responsible for the similar decline in those years. In reality the administration of Greenland has become more Greenlandic.

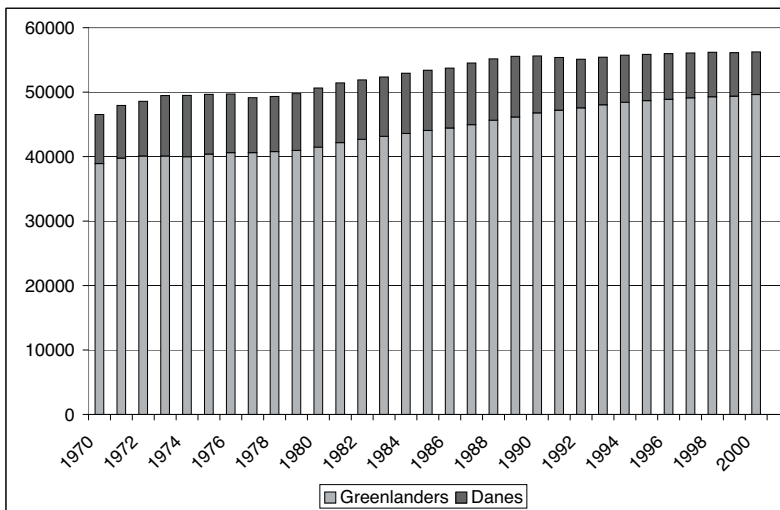


Diagram 10. Greenlanders and Danes in Greenland 1970-2000 (GSÅ).

448. The notion of Greenland and Dane in population statistics is not ethnically clear-cut. Since the 1950s the statistics have birthplace as criterion: - in Greenland or outside - and some ethnic Greenlanders may have been born in Denmark and vice versa, but for a rough estimate the term Greenland and Dane will suffice.

**Diagram 11.** Local work force in public service (Petersen & Janussen 1998: 150).



## The economy

Running the economy was without question the greatest single task for the Home Rule Authority. State companies or agencies operated all major business. These were at an appropriate time to be taken over by the Home Rule Authority. The proportion of the work force in the three basic economic sectors has been fairly stable during the period.

In the primary sector fishing was dominant with 2,419 persons in 1976, and 3,450 in 1996. The secondary sector was mostly made up of fish processing factories. It is significant that between a half and two third of the work force was employed in public administration and in companies and agencies owned by the Home Rule Authority.

### Fishing

Fishing has dominated Greenlandic production since the 1920s. The development since 1978 is shown in diagram 12. Greenlandic fishing means fishing by Greenlandic vessels predominantly in Greenlandic waters. Very little is taken outside.

The diagram shows that the shrinking of the cod fishery continued after 1978 except for some good years around 1990. Cod fishing is very sensitive to even small variations in sea temperatures. Shrimp fishing has taken its place, and in the closing years of the century also other species, especially Greenland halibut and crabs. The overall picture is that the catch has

doubled in the 20 years of Home rule – again with the exception of the extraordinary good catches around 1990.

The economic importance of fishing is great. Unfortunately, Greenland Statistics count only the gross domestic production at factor cost for the whole economy, and not for the different sectors, so the annual development cannot be shown. A special report in 1998 calculated the gross turnover for fishing, hunting and the fish processing industry as Dkr. 2.455 billion out of a total turnover in the whole economy of Dkr. 9.712 billion, thus corresponding to 25.3%.<sup>449</sup> Exports give quite another picture. In these, export of fish products accounts for about 95 % in the late 1990s.

### Hunting

The age-old primary economic activity, the hunting of sea mammals, has shown a steady growth. But the decrease of its economic importance is visible in the

**Table 31.** Distribution of the work force 1976 and 1996 by sector (GSÅ 1980: table 69; Danielsen 1998: 124-126, 176-184).

	1976	%	1996	%
Primary sector	3,262	17.2	4,11	16.3
Secondary sector	5,1	26.8	4,82	19.1
Tertiary sector	1,976	56.0	16,24	64.5
Total	19,013	100.0	25,17	100.0
Employed by the authorities	10,659	56.1	15,143	60.2

<sup>449</sup> Danielsen et al. 1998: 24.

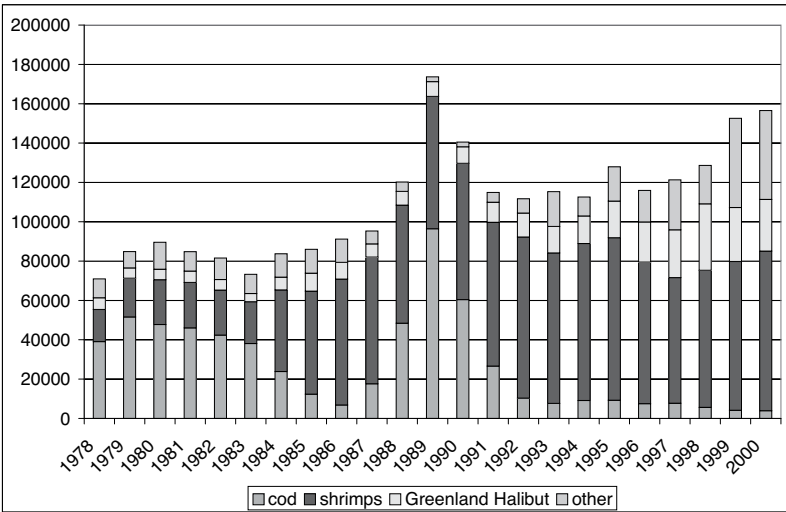


Diagram 12. Greenlandic fishing 1978-2000 (Grønland 1980-89; Greenland Statistics 1990-2001).

fact that Greenland statistics from 1979 to 1992 estimated that 700-800 hunters were active, sustaining a population of 2500 persons, mainly in the north and east of the country. In 1993 a system of hunting

licences was introduced, and the number of persons who hunted for a living and those who hunted as leisure were recorded together with their catches.

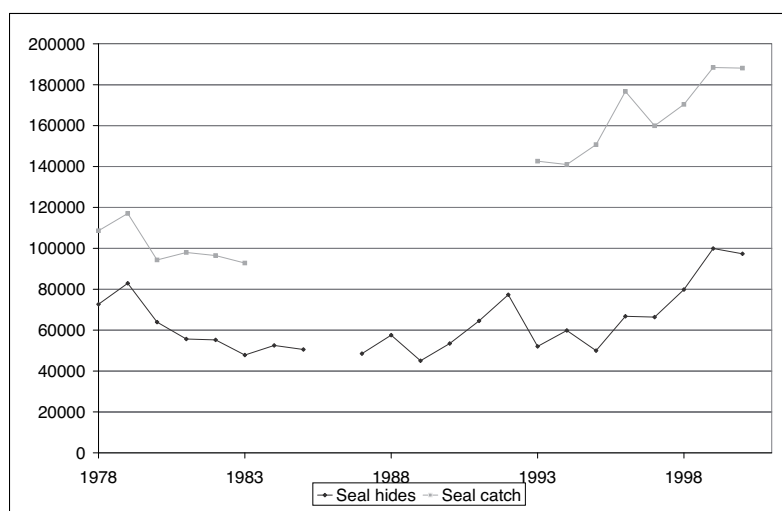
It is quite clear that the number of persons with



Fig. 22. Contemporary Greenland is well serviced by modern stores. Photo Aka Lynge/PolarPhotos, 2006.



**Diagram 13.** Seal catch and trading in of seal hides 1978-2000 (Greenland Statistics 1980-2001).



hunting as their main occupation has declined while the number of leisure hunters has soared. Nearly 12,000 persons are active in shooting seals, other sea mammals, birds, and reindeer. This is equivalent to half of the male population over 15 years of age.<sup>450</sup> So clearly, hunting has still an importance for the population as a supplement to the food supply although in the money economy it is insignificant. In the mid 1980s trading-in of hunting products counted for less than 0.5% of the GDP<sup>451</sup>. The catch of seals – although with no figures 1983-1992 – and the trading-in of seal hides is shown in diagram 13.

The higher level from 1993 in the catch is no doubt due to better statistics, because with the introduction of the new licensing system all catches were reported and not only what is traded. It is also clear that only a fraction of the hides was traded-in. The rest was used by the hunter himself or sold to private buyers. It is interesting to note that in the heyday of seal hunting around 1900 barely 100.000 seals were caught.<sup>452</sup>

## Mining

Mining has had a very chequered history in Greenland. From 1854 to the Second World War cryolite was a significant economic asset for the Greenland admin-

istration but mining and export finally ceased in 1987 due to exhaustion of reserves. From 1924 to 1972 a coalmine on the island of Disko contributed to fuel supplies. A lead and zinc mine operated at Mestersvig on the east coast 1956-62.<sup>453</sup> Then in the 1970s another lead and zinc mine was opened at an old quarry, Maarmorilik, just north of Uummannaq. Because of a black part on the rock wall in the shape of an angel, it was named 'The Black Angel'. It was operated by Greenex A/S (a Danish-Canadian company) from 1973-1990 when the deposits were exhausted. At its height it

**Table 32.** Hunters in Greenland 1993-2001 (Greenland Statistics 1995: 88; Greenland Statistics 2001: 104).

	For a living	For leisure	Total
1993	4,067	5,452	9,519
1994	3,150	4,166	7,316
1995	3,294	4,092	7,386
1996	3,996	5,930	9,926
1997	2,617	6,985	9,602
1998	2,573	7,642	10,215
1999	2,706	8,320	11,026
2000	2,585	8,193	10,778
2001	2,669	9,302	11,971

450. Greenland Statistics 2001: 425. This is nearly the same relation between men and guns as 100 years before. Cf. note 10.

451. Grønland 1987: 121.

452. See Chapter 2.

453. Trap 1970: 640.

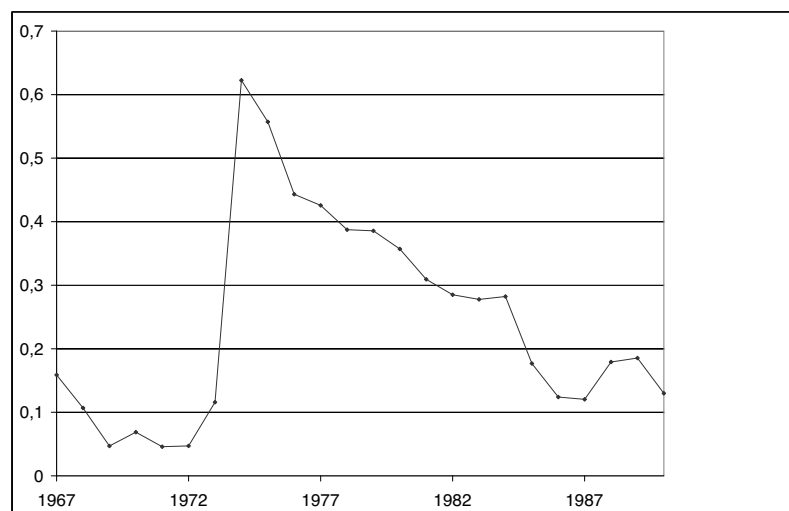


Diagram 14. Minerals' proportion of export value.

employed around 300 workers, half being Greenlanders<sup>454</sup>. Over the years much effort has been devoted to prospecting for minerals and oil. Many concessions have been awarded, but so far without any economic success.

The economic importance of mining can be seen in diagram 14, showing minerals as a proportion of exports.

In addition to their economic significance mineral resources and mining played a major role in politics causing political disagreement in the negotiations for Home Rule as noted above (The road to Home Rule). During the Home Rule negotiations the Greenlanders resented the proposal that mineral reserves should remain the property of the central government. After

negotiations a compromise of joint management between the Home Rule Authority and the central government was agreed. Initially the joint administration of the mineral business was in Copenhagen, but moved to Nuuk in 1998. The original agreement from 1978 was that royalties from the mining companies should be shared equally between Greenland and Denmark, but the basic Danish subsidy to Greenland was to be reduced by the amount of royalties gained on an annual basis. This was amended in 1988 to give Greenland 50% of the revenue up to Dkr. 500 million without any reduction in the block grant. Sharing of any revenue above this level was to be negotiated between the parties.<sup>455</sup>

### Other occupations on land

In Greenland – like other modern societies – most of the work force is employed outside the primary extractive industries. The distribution of employment in 1996 is shown in table 33.

One quarter of the work force is employed in maritime activities. Of the remainder public administration, private service, and transport account for 41.1% of the work force. The infrastructure is operated by publicly owned companies operating aviation, shipping and energy supply. Other businesses on land are building and construction, employing nearly 2,000 persons, commerce with 3,540 persons, and various

Table 33. Distribution of the work force 1996 (Danielsen 1998: 178).

	No. employed	%
Fishing and fish processing	6,380	25.5
Raw materials	40	0.2
Tourism	210	0.8
Other business on land	8,220	32.7
Public infrastructure	2,130	8.5
Public administration and private service	7,950	31.6
Marine and air bases	240	1.0
In total	25,170	100.0

454. *Grønland 1979-1990*; Thomassen 2003.

455. *Grønland 1989*: 132.



Fig. 23. The bulk of export and import is by ship. Here a pile of containers and one of Royal Arctic Line's carriers in Nuuk harbour. Photo Axel Kjær Sørensen 2003.

other services with 1,040 persons. The remaining 1,640 are employed in hotels and restaurants, as consultants, and production other than fish processing.<sup>456</sup>

### The companies

From the earliest beginning in 1721 one large company had managed all trade into and out of Greenland. From 1776 it was organized as the Royal Greenland Trade Department, which was own by the state. As time went on the company took control of preparing products for export and all related business such as internal transport, carpentry, ship repair, construction of public buildings and provision of infrastructure. By 1950 the technical aspects were taken over by another state agency, the Greenland Technical Organisation (GTO).

An important part of the Home Rule arrangement was to hand over the administration and financial responsibility for these companies to the Home Rule Authority. The largest, the Royal Greenland Trade De-

partment, was to be taken over in stages. The first part, PROEKS (production and export), was scheduled to be transferred by 1 January 1984, but was postponed for a year. It was divided into three independent agencies:

- KTU: Kalaallit Tunisassiorfiat (production)
- GHT: Grønlands Hjemmestyres Trawlervirksomhed (Home Rule Authority owned Trawler Fleet)
- Royal Greenland: internal supplies and export sales.

The RGTD had run a deficit for many years, which had been covered by the Danish treasury. Thus it was agreed that following the Greenlandic take-over a continued subsidy would be provided by Copenhagen to cover the expected continuing deficit.

To calculate the deficit was not that easy because it differed from year to year. From 1980-1983 the average deficit in production and export was about Dkr.

456. Danielsen 1998: 178-184.



Fig. 24. Greenland has also its own international airline. Here one of Greenland Air's aircraft in Søndre Strømfjord bound for Denmark. Photo Aka Lynge/PolarPhotos, 2006.

100 million, so it seemed fair that the Danish government offered this amount as subsidy. Unfortunately, the year of the final negotiation, 1984, produced a much larger deficit of Dkr. 228.2 million. Under these circumstances the offer was finally raised to Dkr. 165 million. The Greenlanders grudgingly agreed, but they were not pleased.

The Greenlanders had high expectations for this part of the economy. Huge investments in the fishing industry was proposed, and actually carried through. New forms of management were contemplated, including local production committees, made up of local politicians, trade unions, and the local branch of the fishermen' and hunters' association. These committees were to have the functions of a Board of Directors for the factories, but they never operated effectively.

In some ways the PROEKS did well. Dkr. 1 billion was invested in new trawlers, new processing factories, and new sales offices in Denmark and other countries, and the turnover grew from Dkr. 530 millions to

874 millions in three years. The problem was, that the PROEKS also ran a deficit, as much as Dkr. 321 millions in 1987. Such losses would threaten the financial basis of the Home Rule Authority and the whole Greenland economy, and the agency was reorganized in 1990 by merging the three branches into a single company, Royal Greenland Ltd. in which the Home Rule Authority held all the shares.<sup>457</sup>

In the mean time – by 1 January 1986 – the Home Rule Authority had taken over the rest of the RGTD which had handled the supplies to Greenland, the postal service, retail sales in Greenland, internal and international passenger traffic, airports and heliports. Another company owned by the Home Rule Authority, KNI (Kalaallit Niuersiat) was put in charge of the business. The block grant was enlarged by Dkr. 37 millions, corresponding to the previous Danish net contribution to the business. The business principles of the RGTD continued. The main characteristic was that retail prices should be the same everywhere in Greenland

457. Skydsbjerg 1998: 95-101.



Fig. 25. Ilisimatusarfik – University of Greenland is not the biggest university in the Danish realm, but its location is certainly the most beautiful. Notice the iceberg to the right in the fiord. It has drifted 100 km from the permanent ice cap. The building is the old station for the Moravian Brethren build in 1738. The university moved in after a restoration in 1987. It has about 150 students in 4 faculties: Greenlandic language and literature; business; cultural and social history; and theology. Photo Axel Kjær Sørensen 2003.

regardless of real cost. Thus retail prices in the coastal cities were higher than necessary to cover the extra cost in transportation to the outlying settlements thus leaving room for private retailers to undercut the KNI in the bigger towns.<sup>458</sup>

The KNI did rather well in the early years. It ran a surplus until 1991, taking advantage of being the commissioned wholesale importer of dutiable goods to private retail dealers. The KNI also aggressively expanded their shops in the bigger towns to compete with private business, in fact with so much success that the organisation hitherto the favourite of Siumut, the cooperatives, ran into great difficulties. In 1992 the Home Rule Authority ordered KNI to reduce its wholesale profit, and then reconstructed KNI, ending its monopoly on import of dutiable goods, and splitting the business into three separate companies from 1 January 1993. Firstly there was KNI Detail A/S – later Pisiffik – which was to compete on free market terms in the larger towns, and was no longer obliged to have the same

prices all over Greenland. Secondly KNI Service A/S – later Pilersuisoq – was to take over the retail shops in smaller towns and settlements where the market was too small for real competition, delivering supplies at reasonable prices. A yearly subsidy of Dkr. 100 millions from the Home Rule Authority was given to keep prices down. Finally Royal Arctic Line A/S covered all sea transport to and from Greenland and inland freight. At first a Danish shipping company, J. Lauritzen, became a partner with two-thirds of the shares,<sup>459</sup> but two years later, 31 May 1996, J. Lauritzen sold his shares to the Home Rule Authority, and the Royal Arctic Line was again a public owned company.<sup>460</sup>

Thanks to the subsidy to Pilersuisoq the whole KNI-concern managed to run a surplus from 1996.<sup>461</sup>

The next stage of transfer took place on 1 January 1987 when the huge Greenland Technical Organisation became an agency owned 100% by the Home Rule Authority. It was renamed Nunatek and had five sections:

458. Skydsbjerg 1998: 101-3.

459. Skydsbjerg 1998: 143-6.

460. Skydsbjerg 1998: 174.

461. Greenland Statistics 1991: 416; 1995: 471; 2002: 136, 463.





Fig. 26. The old harbour seen in 2003. In front the first hospital, beside the flag pole to the left is the house built for Hans Egede in 1728, and further down the quay are the Trade Department's buildings, now Greenland National Museum. Above the museum there are new blocks of flats from the late 20th century. Photo Axel Kjær Sørensen.

- Nuna-Tek Tele was in charge of telephone and postal and telegraphic service
- Nuna-Tek byggevæsen (construction of shipyards, service, energy and water supply)
- Nuna-Tek Værfter (shipyards)
- Nuna-Tek Energi (energy)

The new organisation was supposed to aim at balanced budgets like the old GTO. The yearly deficits had been covered by the Danish treasury, and the block grant was augmented by Dkr. 62 millions to continue this practice.<sup>462</sup>

Some of the services were later reorganised as limited companies. Nuna-Tek Tele became Tele Greenland A/S on 1 June 1994, and its postal services became a division under its own name, Post Greenland, on 1 July 1997. In 1994 the administration of the houses and flats owned by the Home Rule Authority was organised as a limited company under the name of A/S

Boligselskabet INI, the Home Rule Authority holding all the shares.

The general pattern of these transfers of agencies has been first a virtually unchanged organisation under a Greenlandic name, then later in the mid and late 1990s reorganisation as limited companies, probably following the trend in European and Danish public administration to privatise state owned companies. This perhaps took the burden of daily administration from the Home Rule Authority, but left it as owner with responsibility for the overall policy all the same.

The last major activity to transfer was the health care system which was taken over on 1 January 1992 without any reconstruction of the organisation.

By these transfers the Home Rule Authority became responsible for the whole Greenlandic economy and public administration. The Home Rule Authority had in some ways the same position as the RGTD at the beginning of the century, being in charge of all law

462. Skydsbjerg 1998: 104.



Fig. 27. The freighter had just unloaded its cargo at Uummannaq harbour. It brought chocolate and sweets and some cans of beer from Denmark, milk from Norway, cork from southern Europe, fruit from southern Africa, and apples from Tasmania. Photo Kirsten Basse 1975.



making, investment decisions, and of running the greater part of the economy.

### The Greenlandic finance

The overall Greenlandic economy continued in the Home Rule period to be characterised by a substantial subsidy from Denmark, now mostly administered by the Greenlanders themselves. The subsidy raised the living standard to a level comparable with continental Europe. Thus the GDP per inhabitant in 1997 was US\$ 19,251 placing Greenland between Canada and Spain in affluence. If the subsidy from Denmark is included the total was US\$ 27,209 to spend per inhabitant thus placing it in the vicinity of the US level.<sup>463</sup> From 1980 the subsidy was in two parts, a block grant and some direct expenses.

### The block grant

The block grant was supposed to cover the expenses of functions where the Home Rule Authority took over administration with an agreed subsidy. Thus its size depended on which activities were taken over, and calculated from the net state expenses of the previous years. The idea was that the Danish treasury should neither lose nor gain by the transfer. In order to keep up with inflation it was agreed that the calculated amount should be adjusted by the change in the Dan-

ish GDP at factor cost in the private sector. This was in fact very beneficial for Greenland, because it reflected not only the rising prices but also the real growth in the Danish economy. Greenland was so to speak guaranteed the same percentage of the Danish GDP as it had in 1979.

The block grant was given by the Danish parliament. The procedure was that the Danish government first agreed terms with the Home Rule authorities on the grant, and then presented a bill to parliament where a very large majority carried it.

It was expected that the arrangement would be reviewed every three years. In fact it was reviewed after one year in 1980, and again in 1982, 1984, 1985, and several times later, because new functions were transferred, and a new adjustment principle introduced. This new principle was introduced in 1983 on Greenland's request to allow for the fact that inflation in Greenland was higher than in Denmark. In 1982 Greenland inflation was 13.5% while in Denmark it was only 10.1%. It was agreed that the increase instead of following the Danish GDP, should follow the mechanism used for setting the budget of the Ministry for Greenland which also took inflation in Greenland into account. In return Greenland agreed that the royalties from Greenex's mining should be fully deducted from the block grant.<sup>464</sup> The change was accepted by the

463. Greenland Statistics 2002: 189ff.

464. LR-E 1982: 69-79.

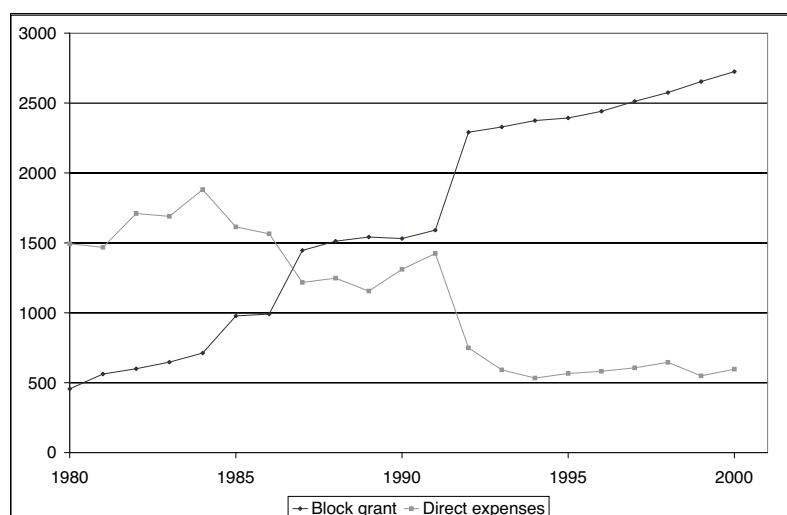


Diagram 15. Transfer from Denmark, current prices 1980-2000 (Grønland 1980-89; Greenland Statistics 1990-2000).

Danish parliament, which stressed that the mechanism now agreed should be the final one.<sup>465</sup> But later in 1988 when the Ministry for Greenland had ceased to exist, the system again changed to follow general Danish inflation. In return Greenland was allowed to keep up to Dkr. 500 millions of the mining royalties without any deduction from the block grant.<sup>466</sup>

In 1983 by these changes Greenland gained a 13.09% increase, against a rise of only 10.1% in Danish GDP, and 6.9% Danish inflation. But the link to real growth in the Danish economy was broken. As inflation came under control from the mid eighties Greenland did not quite follow suit, thus reducing the value of the block grant in Greenland. Since 1994 however inflation in Greenland has been slightly lower than in Denmark, making the block grant – increased by the Danish rate of inflation – more valuable.

The overall development can be seen in diagrams 15-17. Direct expenses have over the years been replaced by the block grant.

The total transfer has risen from Dkr. 2.0 billion in 1980 to Dkr. 3.5 billion in 2000. Allowing for Greenlandic inflation, however the value in 2000 was actually only Dkr. 1.420, a decline of nearly 30%. Using Danish inflation rates, since most imports to Greenland comes from Denmark the figures would be Dkr. 1.515 billion in 2000, a decline of 25%, as shown in diagram 16.

This finding is congruent with an analysis made by the economist Martin Paldam who calculated that while at constant prices the Danish grant tripled 1955-1979 with an annual growth rate of 4.8%, from 1980-1992 again at constant prices it declined by 18% giving an annual decline of 1.5%.<sup>467</sup> This means that Greenland covered more of the expenses herself assuming that the national income of Greenland was stable which seems to have been the case.

Diagram 17 has been constructed from figures provided by the Greenland Statistical Office. The gross domestic income is made up of local production (GDP) and the subsidy giving the total available to Greenlandic society for consumption and investment, public as well as private. After an initial leap of 10% in 1980 the trend was downwards until 1993 with an intermediate rise 1987-9. From 1994 the trend was steadily rising so the Greenlanders were almost 10% better off in 2000 than in 1979. This seems to indicate that the age-old political goal that Greenland should raise its living standard by its own effort was happening with the Home Rule Authorities in charge.

### The balance of trade

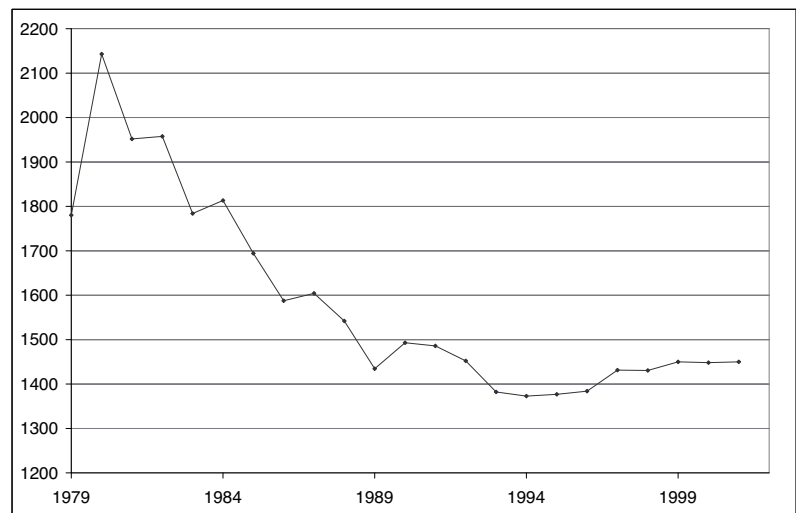
The grant from Denmark allows Greenland to run a deficit in her balance of trade. This has been the case in most years except in 1989-1990, when there was a small surplus, but the deficit is not as great as the sub-

465. FT 1982-83. Column 2524-30.

466. Grønland 1989: 132.

467. Paldam 1994: 58.

**Diagram 16.** Transfer from Denmark, constant prices (1981) 1979-2001.



sidy. Up to 50% of the transfer is possibly used for extra imports, but mostly the deficit is fluctuating around 25% of the subsidy. The reason may be that the guest workers and others place their savings outside Greenland and thus create a substantial capital export, but this is not shown by the statistics which do not cover capital exports. Exports and import of services are also missing from the figures.<sup>468</sup>

Greenland is predominantly a fishing economy, and has become more so during the Home Rule years. From around 50% of exports in 1979 it has risen to between 90-95% in the late 1990s, because export of minerals ceased about 1990. Since 1990 Greenland statistics have shown imports divided into goods required by industry and goods for consumption. The two sets of figures are of the same magnitude.<sup>469</sup>

**Diagram 17.** Gross domestic incomes at disposal per inhabitant in Greenland 1979-2001, fixed prices (Greenland Statistics, 2003).



468. The hidden capital export creates a major problem for setting up a proper balance of payments between Denmark and Greenland. A specified research for 2001 by the Danish National Bank gave a deficit for Greenland in bonds of nearly DKK 1 billion (Pengestrømme 2003: 54, 68, 94) thus accounting for one third of the gap between grant and surplus import of round 3 billion DKK this year.

469. Figures are calculated mostly from Greenland Statistics homepage 2003. Some supplements are taken from the printed issues of the Statistics.

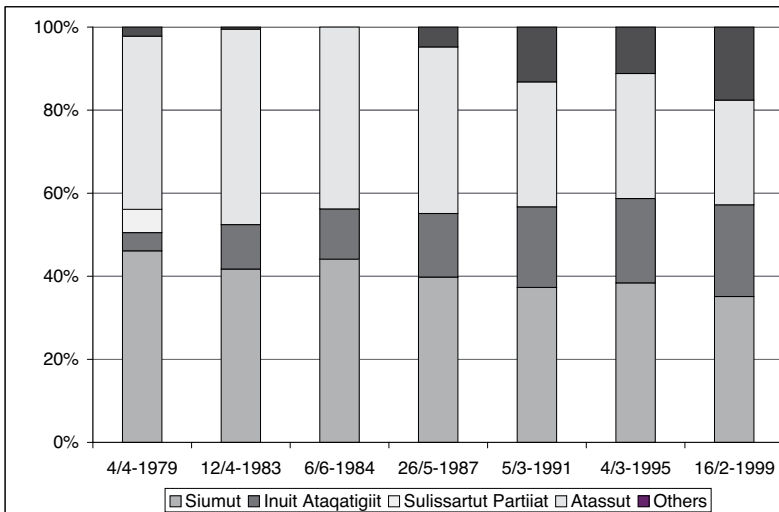


Diagram 18. Elections for the local parliament (Landstinget) (Greenland Statistics, 2003).

## The political parties

As mentioned in the previous chapter two parties dominated the early Home Rule years: Siumut and Atassut. They held this position for the next twenty years although the leftist party, Inuit Ataqatigiit, managed to increase its electoral support from 4.4% in 1979 to 22.1% in 1999. The Workers Party disappeared after the 1979 election, but other small parties took 1-4 seats 1987-1999. If we consider Siumut, Inuit Ataqatigiit and the Workers Party as leftist and Atassut and the others as centre or rightist parties, then leftist parties have been the majority for the whole period.

Siumut had always been the largest party, except in 1983 where Atassut gained 46.6% of the votes and Siumut only 41.3%, but as Inuit Ataqatigiit got 10.6% and supported Siumut it stayed in power. Again in 1987 Atassut gained slightly more votes than Siumut, but from 1984 to 1995 Siumut ruled in coalition with Inuit Ataqatigiit, and again from 1999. From 1995-1999 a grand coalition of Siumut and Atassut formed the local government.

## Politics

The aim of the new trend in Greenlandic politics from the beginning of the 1970s was to make Greenland more Greenlandic and more self-reliant. As shown above the first step on the economic journey has been taken, and the composition of the work force is more

Greenlandic in 2000 than in 1979. But there is much more to it than this. To make Greenland more Greenlandic was also to develop a stronger feeling among the Greenlanders that they were a separate nation and that they had much to be proud of. They were not just incomplete Danes, but a separate nation with its own culture, language, and values, which demanded to be recognised as such. To be part of the Danish realm was acceptable as long as they were allowed to develop their own society up to modern standards following their own values. Based on a century long tradition in Danish Greenland policy they expected to be supported by Denmark in their endeavours not least financially. That support was granted.

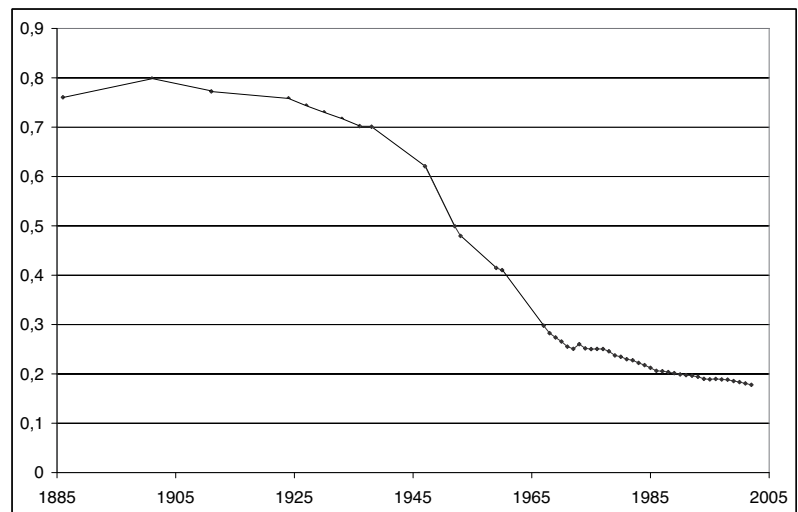
## The concentration policy<sup>470</sup>

Since the days of hunting the population in Greenland had lived dispersed in relatively small groups along the coast, a distribution well suited to a hunting society. Colonisation from 1721 did little to change this situation because hunting was still the primary business up till the beginning of the twentieth century. Then something new happened. The population began a voluntary movement from the smaller to the bigger settlements, after 1950 called towns, as can be seen in diagram 19.

The speed of concentration increased from the 1920s before it became official policy in the 1950s when it may have caused the steeper slope of the curve

470. This section is based on the brilliant work of Søren Forchhammer (1996).

**Diagram 19.** Percentage of population living outside towns 1886-2002 (Greenland Statistics, different sources).



during that period. It is also noteworthy that the rate of concentration was slowing before the Home Rule Authority began its policy of preserving the smaller settlements in the early 1980s. Even after 1980 the decline continued steadily. The lesson seems to be that a population migrates mainly according to pull and push factors in their surroundings. State policy may be influential on the margin, but cannot really change the course of the movement.

Already in the 1950s the Greenlandic politicians were becoming reluctant to encourage concentration because the bigger settlements did not have sufficient housing and employment to take in substantial numbers of coastal people. The general wisdom of concentration was not questioned. A new angle was added to the issue during the political discussion in the 1970s in the search for a more Greenlandic Greenland. To live in small settlements in balance with the surrounding nature was hailed as the genuine Greenlandic way of living. In this view the concentration policy, formulated by the Danes, and supported by the Greenlandic politicians of those days had endangered this piece of genuine Greenland.<sup>471</sup>

The new generation of Greenlandic politicians in charge from 1979 felt that something had to be done to preserve this vital part of Greenlandic identity. The Home Rule Authority took action immediately. The first Home Rule government (Landsstyre) of 1979 was formed by Siumut, which won 13 of the 21 seats in par-

liament, and 5 of these seats came from the remote areas. Suddenly the population in these areas held a crucial political importance. No wonder then that settlements and remote districts got their own ministry headed by Anders Andreasen, elected in the district of Ammassalik on the east coast.

He launched a major programme to give the smaller settlements and remote districts facilities like those in the towns. Every settlement should have a factory for fish processing – smoking, drying and salting. Furthermore there should be a power station, and an adequate water supply. The Home Rule Authority would provide generous financial support, lowering the local contribution from 5 to 2.5% of the investment. The businesses should be arranged as cooperatives, so the local population could own and manage their own production. Cooperative business has long been supported by Siumut as a way to escape the disliked capitalistic private enterprise, and the overwhelming presence of the Royal Greenland Trade Department. Since 1974 a great many power plants had been established in the settlements on a cooperative basis.

Besides investment in production facilities every settlement was also to have a community centre for meetings and cultural activities, and a service building with washing facilities, and facilities for preparation of hides and mending of tools.

No one in the Landsstyre dared to contest his pro-

471. Forchhammer (1996: 140-149) has provided overwhelming evidence for this trend.



gramme. It was carried unanimously.<sup>472</sup> The key words were: decentralisation, participation, and cooperative ownership of the means of production. The implementation of the programme was however far from easy. Power supply in the settlements faced problems in financing and in lack of skilled maintenance staff. On top of this the price of power was far higher than in the towns because of the small number of consumers. An implementation programme for the service buildings was first initiated in 1983, but by 1991 only 13 had been built with 5 under construction. 40 settlements were still without.<sup>473</sup>

In January 1985 the settlement policy took another direction, in practice if not in theory. A five-year plan was established with heavy investment in the fishing industry. The greater part of the investment went to fish processing plants in the towns and to build up a high sea fishing fleet, just like all the plans since 1950. For the next 4 years Dkr. 1.5 billion<sup>474</sup> were invested, of which some Dkr. 12 million was reserved for modernisation of the plants in the small settlements. However, by 1988 only Dkr. 3.8 million was actually spent.<sup>475</sup> The political desire to fulfil the promises to the settlements obviously remained, but it faced difficulty in practice. Perhaps someone had got second thoughts about the economic wisdom of trying to help the settlements catch up with the towns in facilities. A report from the Home Rule Authority in 1989 suggested that four smaller settlements with 66, 49, 36, and 7 inhabitants were too small to receive industrial production facilities. For all the others the pledge to modernise their production facilities over time was maintained.<sup>476</sup>

The main objective of the five-year plan of 1985 was to make Greenland economically more self-reliant, and a keyword for the operation of PROEKS was business like. The agencies of the Home Rule Authority should be oriented towards business and profit. At the same time the principle of support for the settlements should rule. The huge investments did not

pay off. The Home Rule Authority borrowed increasingly until in 1988 the brakes were applied. Now the virtues were frugality and efficiency, to use the available means as efficiently as possible. In real life that would mean investment in those towns with a capacity to utilise the new plant and factories most efficiently. But smaller settlements should still be developed. In 1989 the minister in charge of fishery, industry and outer districts, Kaj Egede, managed to secure an annual commitment of Dkr. 132 million to settlement development. But this did not happen, perhaps because the professional management in the industry did not pursue the goal already having trouble in getting enough fish to process in the town factories, perhaps because of a tacit political agenda which favoured economic rationality, but did not dare to bring it out in the open.<sup>477</sup>

In 1990 the minister for economy, trade and traffic, Emil Abelsen, dared. In the clash between economic rationality and continued investment in the settlements, he chose rationality. We must concentrate our resources in the natural centres of growth, and use some of the profit from these centres to improve life in the settlements, was the future policy he proposed for his party Siumut. Qaqortoq in the south, Nuuk, Sisimiut, and Ilulissat on the west coast were singled out as these natural centres of growth. The plan was accepted in the Landsting, but a veritable storm of protest broke out from the mayors of those towns not named as centres. They were afraid their communities would not benefit from investment. Emil Abelsen tried to calm them down in the press by in effect repudiating the controversial content of the new policy, stressing that the solidarity policy was still in operation. After the 1991 election Lars Emil Johansen succeeded Jonathan Motzfeldt as prime minister. He formed a coalition government of Siumut and Inuit Ataqatigiit, and further conciliated the mayors at the meeting of the municipal association in May 1991, declaring that the new government had a quite different approach to

472. Forchhammer 1996: 164-170.

473. Forchhammer 1996: 177-178.

474. Skydsbjerg 1998: 99.

475. Forchhammer 1996: 179.

476. Forchhammer 1996: 185.

477. Forchhammer (1996: 193-207) discusses this issue at length.

development policy. The idea of the four growth centres was dead.<sup>478</sup> Despite this retreat the decline of settlement population continued (diagram 19), so if a more Greenlandic way of living means to live in small dispersed settlements, the Home Rule period has not managed to keep Greenland Greenlandic in this respect.

### Leaving the EEC

As described in *The Road to Home Rule* the inclusion of Greenland in the European Common Market in 1972 was a major reason for the Greenlanders to seek a Home Rule arrangement so they could get out again. In the meantime the Home Rule Authority chose to play the game. Some investments were reimbursed by the regional fund from Brussels via Copenhagen; the magnitude was about Dkr. 46 million a year. Some social expenses to a value of about Dkr. 33 million a year were likewise reimbursed. Other funds provided 6 million a year. And the European Investment Bank provided some Dkr. 32 million annually in loans during the 1970s.<sup>479</sup> The total reached about Dkr. 84 million a year in addition to the loans. The grants from the EEC represented about 8% of the value of the Danish grant to Greenland which was about Dkr. 1 billion a year at 1980 level. The EEC grant corresponded roughly to the level of income from selling fishing licenses to the community after Greenland left the EEC in 1985.

For the direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979 Denmark got 16 seats, but gave one of these to Greenland. The Siumut candidate, Finn Lynge, was elected on 9 June 1979 against Atassut's Jørgen Chemnitz. Only 33.5% of the electorate actually voted. Lynge repeated his victory in 1984 against another Atassut candidate, Konrad Steenholdt. The poll was again very low: 35.6%.<sup>480</sup> In the meantime a referendum was held in Greenland on 23 February 1982 on whether to stay in or leave the EEC. Nearly

three out of four voters participated. 52.2% voted for leaving while 46.0% preferred to stay.<sup>481</sup> This was a clear majority, but much less than the 73% votes against EEC in 1972.

Greenland actually withdrew from the EEC on 1 February 1985. A status similar to other EEC attached former colonial dependencies and territories overseas was negotiated that gave Greenland free access to the European market, even for fish products. In return Greenland was to allow a negotiated access to fishing in Greenlandic waters for EEC fishermen under a licence, which the EEC paid for.<sup>482</sup> The income from fishing licences became a source of steady income over the years. Starting in 1985 with some Dkr. 200 millions on a yearly basis it rose to nearly Dkr. 300 millions in 2000 corresponding to around 8% of the income of the Home Rule Authority.<sup>483</sup>

The negotiated agreement brought political upheaval in Greenland because of the concession of access to fishing. In the Home Rule Parliament Inuit Ataqatigiit voted against while Atassut grudgingly accepted, but then supported a no-confidence motion. The Home Rule statute did not allow dissolution of the Parliament during the elected period, but the Parliament then passed such a law, and an election followed on 6 June 1984. The outcome was a stalemate between Siumut and Atassut, as before the election, but now Siumut and Inuit Ataqatigiit formed a new Home Rule government, a coalition that lasted to 1995.<sup>484</sup>

Departure from the European Union was not intended to isolate Greenland from the world. The intention was rather to maximise control of its own affairs. It is a matter of political judgement whether the Greenlandic interests are best taken care of inside or outside the union. You may argue that being outside the union Greenland is more on its own, though without being entirely isolated. I think the matter might be different if Greenland could join the union as a full member, not as part of Denmark.

478. I think Forchhammer (1996: 207-12) is right to interpret this controversy as a token of how delicate the question of concentration still was.

479. For basic figures, see *Danmark - Forord til regionaloversigtern*; figures for 1973-74 are from the periodical 'EF-mit' and kindly provided by Inge Seiding.

480. Grønland 1984: table 116.

481. Grønland 1982: table 118.

482. Grønland 1987: 27f.

483. Grønland 1984-1989; Greenland Statistics 1990-2000.

484. Skydsbjerg 1998: 74-6, 86.



Fig. 28. The Greenland Flag. Photo Henning Thing/  
PolarPhotos.

### The Greenlandic flag

To build a nation you need a flag. Before 1979 the Danish flag was used in Greenland by both the authorities and citizens. The newspaper *A/G* took the initiative in late 1978 by inviting its readers to suggest the form of a national flag. It received many ideas, but no action followed. In 1985 the Home Rule parliament discussed the issue again, and asked the public for proposals. Out of more than 600 suggestions two were selected for consideration by parliament. The choice was between a green banner with a white cross, thus resembling the other Nordic flags, and a red/white flag with a circle symbolising a rising sun over the permanent ice and an iceberg in the red water (diagram 20). The parliament chose the sun banner and did not hold a referendum as had been promised. Inauguration of the new flag took place on a newly decided national day, 21 June 1985, the summer solstice.<sup>485</sup>

The Danish flag was still allowed, and is still used by some private citizens, even though the sun flag seems to be more popular.<sup>486</sup> In showing the flag Greenland is thus more Greenlandic now than before 1979 when the only flag was the Danish one.

### A brief review of the situation in 2000

The transfer of legislative and administrative functions from Copenhagen to Nuuk in Greenland has been a success, and has been carried out virtually as anticipated at the time the Home Rule Act was passed. The Greenland Home Rule Act reserved certain matters to the Danish parliament – namely constitutional affairs, foreign policy, defence, currency, the prison system, criminal and civil law. All other functions could be transferred to Greenland, either to be paid for by Greenland or with funding from Copenhagen to cover costs. By 2000 nearly everything was transferred leaving only some supervisory tasks with the Danish authorities: health and safety at work, veterinary service, control of the quality of fish products, meteorological observations, and the inspection of ships.<sup>487</sup> In all other cases the Home Rule authorities make the rules and administer the activity. Legislation for Greenland is no longer a matter for Danish politics.

Home Rule has also made itself felt in foreign relations. Representatives from Greenland can be part of Danish representation abroad, for example at the European Union in Brussels since 1992, and 1999–2002 also at the Danish embassy in Ottawa. Greenland also participates in the Danish delegations to numerous international organisations dealing with the Arctic including whaling, and in the various organisations fostering cooperation between the Nordic governments and parliaments. In three organisations dealing with fishing in the North Atlantic Greenland has the leading role in the delegation of ‘Denmark on behalf of Greenland and the Faroe Islands’. She is an ordinary member of the North Atlantic Commission for Sea Mammals. Greenland has also been a prominent participant in creating and running the Inuit Circumpolar Conference from 1977 and the representation was taken over by the Home Rule authorities in 1979. The ICC is a forum for cooperation for all Inuits in the arctic area. A close relationship with Nunavut, the Inuit Area in Canada, has been established.<sup>488</sup>

Greenland is now (in 2003) preparing herself to

485. Skydsbjerg 1998: III-3.

486. Personal observation May 2003.

487. Grønland 2001–2002: 27.

488. Grønland 2001–2002: 28–41.

claim greater independence in foreign policy, leading to an amendment of the Home Rule Act.<sup>489</sup> The political background has been the role of the Americans in the defence of Greenland – and the United States. The Greenlanders are worried that the air base in Thule being part of an American early warning system might eventually draw fire on Greenlandic soil. They are also worried about possible pollution of the ground with nuclear materials and waste of other kinds. The Danish government is prepared to work closely with the Home Rule authority in negotiations with the United States.<sup>490</sup>

The new relationship with Denmark is described as Self Governance. Full independence is not on the agenda of the majority – yet. But it is probably the ultimate goal for many Greenlanders.

## Epilogue

Irrespective of the character of the relationship between Denmark and Greenland since the Middle Ages, the relationship around 1900 was perceived as a colonial one. Being a colonial power at this time was seen as enhancing national prestige. And the relationship had all the characteristics of colonialism. It is fair to say that Denmark was a benevolent colonial master of Greenland, perhaps founded on a view of Greenland parallel to Iceland and the Faroe Isles, the other North Atlantic Norwegian dependencies taken over by the Danish king in 1380, which together with Greenland remained Danish when Norway was ceded to Sweden in 1814. The difference was that Greenland was a non-European, non-agrarian, and non-Christian arctic hunter society at the time of the second colonisation in 1721. Hence the policy became different, taking a colonial flavour.

However, Denmark shared benevolence towards indigenous people with other colonial powers in other

places in the world where conditions was comparable, in particular the absence of colonists to oppress the local population, and the fact that the riches to be gained were modest, and the burden of sustaining political control was negligible. The British, the French, and the Dutch empires can show similar examples.

Danish Greenland policy was from the very beginning administrated by the Royal Greenlandic Trade Department, and politics was also to a great extent formulated by the company, and other civil servants in Greenland. Political reforms in Denmark were introduced in Greenland by zealous civil servants. The introduction of local assemblies in the 1850s was modelled on similar local assemblies in Denmark from 1841, the reform years 1900-1912 had their background in the parliamentary development in Denmark from 1901. The Danish civil servants in Greenland also played a decisive initiating role in the reforms after the Second World War in 1946 and 1950. Similar development took place in other colonial empires, all in the endeavour to keep the loyalty of colonial peoples in the new world order where colonialism came under heavy fire, and the cold war worsened. Then by requesting Home Rule in Greenland the Greenlanders took the initiative in the early 1970s.

The development in Greenland was thus very similar to colonial developments elsewhere. The Greenlandic response to the colonial presence can be found elsewhere as well. Short of military resistance to the colonizers the Greenlanders went through the same political phases as in other empires. From around 1900 the 'westernised' elite sought equality with the Danish civil servants in Greenland regarding jobs and civil rights. Their vision was to create a Danish-Greenlandic society as Danish as possible and as Greenlandic as necessary. The phase of mass mobilisation, to renounce being a Danish duplicate and ultimately to get rid of the 'colonizers' began in the early 1970s.

489. Report 2003.

490. Press release 14 May 2003.

# Governors and High Commissioners in Greenland

The title in Danish was 1782-1925 'Inspektør', 1925-1950 'Landsfoged', 1950-1979 'Landshøvding'.

1911-1967 the governors in Greenland were ex officio chairmen of the provincial councils as well.

## South Greenland (Nuuk/Godthåb)

Stephensen, Regnar	1899-1902
Bendixen, Ole	1903-1912
Hastrup, Oluf acting	1913-1914
Harries, Carl Frederik	1915-1923
Simony, Christian, acting	1924, 1945-1950
Petersen, Knud Honoré <sup>491</sup>	1925-1929
Madsen, F.A., acting	1930
Oldendow, Knud	1931
Svane, Aksel	1932-1941
Brun, Eske acting	1941-1945

## North Greenland (Qeqertarsuaq/Godhavn)

Daugaard-Jensen, Jens	1900-1912
Lindow, Harald	1913-1924

Rosendahl, Philip	1925-1927, 1929-1939
Berthelsen, Jørgen acting	1928-1929
Brun, Eske	1939-1945
vacant	1946-1947
Christensen, Niels Otto acting	1947-1950

## Greenland (Nuuk/Godthåb)

Lundsteen, P.H.	1951-1954, 1957-1960
Christensen, Niels Otto	1955-1956, 1963-1972
Nielsen, Finn acting	1961-1962
Lassen, Hans J.	1973-1979

## High Commissioners

After 1979 the title of the highest ranking Danish official in Greenland is 'Rigsombudsmand', corresponding to the English title High Commissioner.

Petersen, Torben Hedegaard	1979-1992
Spore, Steen	1992-1995
Martens, Gunnar	1995-2002

491. In 1929, Petersen changed his name to Oldenow.

## Appendix 2

# The Provincial Councils 1911-1979

This list is compiled from the meeting minutes. Information appears in the following order: constituency number, family name, Christian name, main occupation, residence, (attendance).

### **The Southern Provincial Council** (Sydgrønlands Landsråd)

Elected indirectly in 11 constituencies by the municipality councils members. Eligible: male, 25 years of age, and with Greenlandic legal status.

#### **1911-1916**

Sessions: 7-12 August 1911; 8-13 July 1912; 30 August-2 September 1913; 10-17 August 1914; 10-19 August 1915; 2-10 August 1916

1. Kleist, Josva, senior catechist, Narsaq Kujalleq (not 1915)
2. Hansen, Jens, hunter, Nanortalik (not 1915)
2. Mathiesen, Johs, hunter, Salliit (only 1915)
3. Hansen, Gerhardt, hunter, Alluitsup Paa
4. Josephsen, Johannes., hunter, Qaqortoq
5. Egede, Otto, hunter, Narsaq
6. Hegelund, Jakob, hunter, Paamiut
7. Motzfeldt, Hans, senior catechist, Qeqertarsuaat
8. Møller, John, photographer, Nuuk
9. Lyberth, Nathan, hunter, Maniitsoq (not 1914)
10. Rosing, Peter, hunter, Kangaamiut (not 1914)
11. Sivertsen, Carl, hunter, Sisimiut(not 1914)

#### **1917-1922**

Sessions: 9-14 July 1917; 23-26 July 1918; 12-17 July 1919; 12-16 August 1920; 14-15 July 1921; 7-10 July 1922

1. Kleist, Josva, senior catechist, Narsaq Kujalleq (not 1917)
1. Knuthsen, Saul, catechist, Aappilattoq (1917)
1. Simonsen, Simon, hunter, Narsaq Kujalleq (1920)
2. Abelsen, Hosias, hunter, Nanortalik (1917)
2. Mathiesen, Johs, hunter, Salliit (not 1917, 1919)
3. Hansen, Jens, hunter, Nanortalik
4. Høegh, Pavia, carpenter, Qaqortoq

5. Motzfeldt, Enok, hunter, Narsaq (not 1920)
5. Motzfeldt, Jokum, hunter, Qagssimiut (1920)
6. Petersen, Pavia, hunter, Paamiut
7. Mathæussen, Iver, hunter, Narsaq
8. Lynge, Niels, senior catechist, Nuuk (not 1922)
8. Egede, Abel, hunter, Nuuk (1922)
9. Platou, Albrecht, hunter, Napasoq (not 1921)
10. Rosing, Karl, hunter, Kangaamiut (not 1921)
11. Olsen, Seth, hunter, Sisimiut(1917-19)
11. Olsen, Marius, hunter, Sarfannguaq, (1920-22, not 1921)

#### **1923-1926**

Sessions: 11-18 July 1923; 26 July-1 August 1924; 27 June-1 July 1925; 10-15 July 1926

1. Hammeken, Kristian, trading post manager, Aappilattoq (not 1925)
1. Kleist, Josva, senior catechist, Narsaq Kujalleq (1925 subst.)
2. Salomonsen, Kristoffer, hunter, Nanortalik
3. Lund, Isak, senior catechist, Alluitsup Paa
4. Høegh, John, smith, Qaqortoq
5. Lund, Henrik senior catechist, Narsaq
6. Albrechtsen, Peter, hunter, Arsuk
7. Berthelsen, Hisekiel, hunter, Qeqertarsuaat (only 1923)
7. Berthels, Asser, hunter, Grædefjorden (not 1923)
8. Lynge, Kristoffer, printer, Nuuk (not 1926)
8. Petersen, Jonathan, teacher at Teacher Training College, Nuuk (1926 subst)
9. Petersen, Ole, trading post manager, Maniitsoq (not 1926)
9. Petersen, Peter, hunter, Maniitsoq (1926 subst.)
10. Rosing, Karl, hunter, Kangaamiut (not 1925)
11. Olsen, Simon, catechist, Sisimiut
11. Olsen, David, trading post manager, Sarfannguaq

#### **1927-1932**

Elected indirectly in 11 constituencies by the municipality councils and district councils members. Eligible: male, 25 years of age, male Greenlander regardless of



legal status and Danish civil servants with more than 2 years of service in Greenland.

Sessions: 26 July-2 August 1927; 1-8 August 1928, 3-9 July 1929; 2-9 July 1930; 16-18 June 1931; 22 June 1931; 13-18 July 1932.

1. Hammeken, Kristian, trading post manager, Aappilattoq (not 1932)
1. Kleist, Josva, senior catechist, Narsaq Kujalleq (1932 subst.)
2. Lund, Jacob, catechist, Nanortalik
3. Nielsen, Frederik, trading post manager, Alluitsup Paa
4. Høegh, Pavia, carpenter master, Qaqortoq
5. Lund, Henrik senior catechist, Narsaq
6. Lauf, Elias, senior pastor, Paamiut (not 1932)
6. Nyekjær, Sofus, hunter, Paamiut (1932 subst.?)
7. Hansen, Nicolaj, hunter, Qeqertarsuatsiaat (1927, resigned 1928)
7. Berthels, Asser, hunter, Grædefjorden (1928 subst.)
7. Johnsen, Theophilos, hunter, Qeqertarsuatsiaat (1929, 1930, 1931, 1932)
8. Chemnitz, Jørgen, assistant clerk, Nuuk
9. Lynge, Niels, ordained pastor, senior catechist, Maniitsoq (not 1932)
9. Petersen, Ole, office clerk, Maniitsoq (1932 subst.)
10. Kreutzmann, Hans, hunter, Kangaamiut (not 1928)
10. Rosing, Karl, hunter, Kangaamiut (1928 subst.)
11. Olsen, Frederik, foreman, Sisimiut

### 1933-1938

Sessions: 29 July-8 August 1933; 10-20 July 1934; no session 1935; 25 June-9 July 1936; 5-14 July 1937; 12 July-? 1938.

1. Hansen, Sofus, trading post manager, Sangmissoq (not 1933, 1937, 1938)
1. Kleist, Josva, senior catechist, Narsaq Kujalleq (1933, 1937 subst.)
1. Knudsen, Ferdinand, trading post manager, Aappilattoq (1938)
2. Salomonsen, Kristoffer, hunter, Nanortalik
3. Lynge, Niels, ordained pastor, Alluitsup
4. Laurent-Christensen, A., district physician, Qaqortoq (not 1936, 1938)
4. Høegh, Pavia, carpenter master, Qaqortoq (1936, 1938 subst.)

5. Egede, Otto, hunter, Narsaq
6. Egede, Gerhard, senior pastor, Paamiut (not 1933)
6. Petersen, Sem, catechist, Narssalik (1933 subst.)
7. Petersen, Hans, hunter, Qeqertarsuatsiaat (not 1933)
8. Lynge, Kristoffer, editor, Nuuk (not 1937)
8. Egede, Lars, hunter, Saarloq (1937 subst.)
9. Petersen, Ole, office clerk, Maniitsoq (not 1936)
10. Rosing, David, hunter, Kangaamiut
11. Mathiesen, Karl, hunter, Sisimiut (only 1933)
11. Kleist, Elias, hunter, Sisimiut

### 1939-1944

Sessions: 2-20 July 1939; 3 May 1940 (joint session with North); 23 June-2 July 1941 (joint session); 15-31 July 1943 (joint session).

1. Knudsen, Ferdinand, trading post manager, Aappilattoq (not 1940)
2. Simonsen, Josva, hunter, Narsaq Kujalleq (not 1940)
3. Høegh, Frederik, trading post manager, Ammassivik (not 1940, 1941, 1943)
3. Simonsen, Josva, hunter, Alluitsup Paa (1941)
3. Poulsen, Morthen, hunter, Alluitsup Paa (1943)
4. Lynge, Hans, author, Qaqortoq
5. Egede, Niels, retired teacher, Narsaq (not 1943)
5. Egede, Otto, sheep farmer, Narsaq, (1943 subst.)
6. Egede, Gerhard, senior pastor, Paamiut
7. Motzfeldt, Egede, baker, Qeqertarsuatsiaat (not 1940)
8. Lynge, Kristoffer, editor, Nuuk
9. Petersen, Pavia, retired catechist, Maniitsoq (not 1943)
9. Skifte, Albrecht, shipmaster, Maniitsoq (1943 subst.)
10. Kreuzmann, Karl, hunter, Kangaamiut
11. Lennert, Frederik, trading post manager, Assaqlutaq

### 1945-1950

Sessions: 28 August-20 September 1945 (joint session); 2-22 July 1946 (joint session); 1-12 July 1947; 31 July-14 August 1948 (joint session); 23 July-5 August 1949 (joint session); 25 July-5 August 1950 (joint session).

1. Knudsen, Ferdinand, trading post manager, Aappilattoq (not 1948, 1949, 1950)
1. Mouritzen, Silas, hunter, Aappilattoq (1948, 1949, 1950)

2. Boassen, Egede, hunter, Nanortalik (not 1946, 1948, 1949, 1950)
2. Abelsen, Jacob, office clerk, Nanortalik (1946, 1948, 1949, 1950 subst.)
3. Lund, Isak, senior catechist, Ammassivik
4. Lynge, Hans, author, Qaqortoq (left Qaqortoq 1945)
4. Lynge, Klaus, foreman, Qaqortoq (1946 subst., 1947, 1948, 1950)
4. Nielsen, Frederik, headmaster, Qaqortoq (1949 subst.)
5. Lund, Isak, sheep farmer, Narsaq (not 1950)
5. Motzfeldt, Lars, sheep farmer, Qagssuarsuk (1950)
6. Egede, Gerhard, senior pastor, Paamiut (not 1946, 1949, 1950)
6. Berthelsen, Kristian, hunter, Paamiut (1946, 1949, 1950 subst.)
7. Motzfeldt, Egede, baker, Qeqertarsuatsiaat
8. Chemnitz, Jørgen, office assistant, Nuuk (not 1949)
8. Lynge, Augo, college teacher, Nuuk (1949 subst.)
9. Skifte, Albrecht, shipmaster, Maniitsoq
10. Kreuzmann, Karl, hunter, Kangaamiut
11. Lennert, Frederik, trading post manager, Sarfanguaq (not 1949)
11. Olsen, Jørgen C.F., telegraphist, Sisimiut (1949 subst.)

### **The Northern Provincial Council** (Nordgrønlands Landsråd)

Elected indirectly in 12 constituencies by the municipal councils members. Eligible: male, 25 years of age, and with Greenlandic legal status.

#### **1911-1916**

Sessions: 14-17 August 1911; 25 July-2 August 1912; 27-31 July 1913; 28-29 August 1914; 26-31 July 1915; 27 July-1 August 1916.

1. Frederiksen, Abel, hunter, Iginniarfik (not 1911)
1. Rasmussen, Jacob, hunter, Attu (1911)
2. Stork, Abia, hunter, Manermiut
3. Brandt, Wille, hunter, Aasiaat (not 1915)
3. Brandt, Abia, hunter, Aasiaat (1915)
4. Zeeb, Peter, hunter and catechist, Ikamiut (not 1911, 1916)
4. Banke, Isak, hunter, Ege (1916)
5. Jeremiassen, Isak, hunter, Kitsissuarsuit
6. Lange, Johan, hunter, Sarqaq (not 1916)

6. Hendriksen, Adam, hunter, Ritenbenk (1916)
7. Stork, Gudmand, hunter, Skansen (not 1911)
8. Josefsen, Albrecht, hunter, Niaqornat
9. Henningsen, Johan, hunter, Uummannaq
10. Løvstrøm, Thomas, hunter, Illorssuit (only 1911)
10. Zeeb, Isak, hunter, Illorssuit from 1912 (not 1916)
11. Mørch, Ole, hunter and catechist, Upernivik (not 1914)
12. Svendsen, Jan, hunter and catechist, Aappilattoq (not 1914)

#### **1917-1922**

Sessions: 27 July-1 August 1917; 23-26 July 1918; 4-6 September 1919; 18-25 August 1920; 11-12 July 1921; 7-10 August 1922.

1. Frederiksen, Kasper, hunter, Iginniarfik
2. Stenholdt, Nathanael, hunter, Kangaatsiaq (died 1919)
2. Mikisuluk, Jonas, hunter, Kangaatsiaq (1919-1921, died 1922)
3. Sørensen, Valdemar, cooper, Aasiaat
3. Frederik Lynge, manager assistant, Aasiaat (1922)
4. Samuelsen, Johan, hunter, Akulliit (not 1921)
5. Gundel, Johan, hunter, Ilulissat
6. Zethsen, Jonas, hunter, Ritenbenk
7. Geisler, Jeremias, hunter, Skansen
8. Cortzen, Jonas, hunter, Niaqornat
9. Zeeb, Enoch, hunter, Saatut
10. Løvstrøm, Thomas, hunter, Illorssuit (not 1918)
10. Villumsen, Tobias, hunter, Ukkusissat (1918, 1919)
11. Christiansen, Siegvard, hunter, Kangarsusuatsiaq (not 1917, 1919)
12. Bidstrup, Johan, trading post manager (not 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922)
12. Hejlmann, Sigvard, senior catechist, Tasiusaq (1918, 1920, 1921, 1922)

#### **1923-1926**

Sessions: 7-11 August 1923; 7-11 August 1924; 6-15 August 1925; 21 July-4 August 1926.

1. Geisler, Gerth, trading post apprentice, Attu
2. Hendriksen, Karl, reader, Kipingasok
3. Abelsen, Isak, hunter, Aasiaat
4. Petersen, Julius, hunter, Ikamiut
5. Siegstad, Ludvig Geisler, hunter, Ilulissat
6. Zethsen, Jonas, hunter, Ritenbenk
7. Kleist, Isak, hunter, Qeqertarsuaq

8. Lyberth, Karl, miner, Qaersuarssuk (not 1925, 1926)
8. Cortzen, Jonas, hunter, Niaqornat (1926 subst.)
9. Pollas, Pavia, foreman, Uummannaq (not 1925)
10. Jonathansen, Jonas, hunter, Illorssuit (not 1925)
11. Hansen, Hans, senior catechist, Upernavik (not 1925)
12. Kristiansen, Karl, catechist, Kuuk (not 1925)

### 1927-1932

Elected indirectly in 12 constituencies by the municipality councils and district councils members. Eligible: male, 25 years of age, Greenlander regardless of legal status, and Danish civil servants with more than 2 years of service in Greenland.

Sessions: 30 July-13 August 1927; 18-31 July 1928; 29 July-7 August 1929; 14-24 July 1930; 9-16 July 1931; 15-24 June 1932.

1. Filemonsens, Johannes, hunter, Tunungasoq (only 1927)
1. Geisler, Gerth, trading post apprentice, Attu (not 1927)
2. Lundblad, Peter, hunter, Kangaatsiaq (not 1929 died 1930)
2. Schmidt, Isak, hunter, Vestre Ejland (1929 subst.)
3. Lynge, Frederik, manager assistant, Aasiaat
4. Jensen, Pavia, trading post manager, Ilimanaq (1927-29)
4. Olsvig, Carl, foreman, Qasigiannnguit (1930, 1932 subst.)
5. Storch, Mathias, vice dean, Ilulissat (not 1929, 1931)
5. Thomsen, Boye, catechist, Ilulissat (1929, 1931 subst.)
6. Rosing, Jens, hunter, Ritenbenk
7. Porsild, Morten P., head of Arctic Station, Qeqertarsuaq (not 1930)
7. Dalager, Peter, assistant clerk, Qeqertarsuaq (1930 subs.)
8. Kruse, Tobias, hunter, Niaqornat
9. Kruse, Edvard, senior catechist, Uummannaq
10. Larsen, Thomas, catechist, Ukkusissat (only 1927)
10. Møller, Samuel, senior catechist, Illorssuit (not 1927)
11. Hansen, Hans, senior catechist, Upernavik
12. Pjetursson, Johannes, hunter, Ikerasaarsuk

### 1933-1938

Sessions: 7-14 July 1933; 14-19 July 1934; no session 1935; 29 June-9 July 1936; 26 July-2 August 1937; 28 July-? 1938.

1. Filemonsens, Johannes, hunter, Tunungasoq
2. Lundblad, Lars, hunter, Kangaatsiaq
3. Kaspersen, Søren, senior catechist, Aasiaat (not 1938)
3. Rosing, Nikolaj, teacher, Aasiaat (1938)
4. Petersen, Jonas, senior catechist, Qasigiannnguit
5. Thomsen, Boye, catechist, Ilulissat
6. Street, Peter, senior catechist (not 1933)
6. Nielsen, Mathæus, foreman, Qullissat (1933, 1937, 1938 subst.)
7. Porsild, Morten P., head of Arctic Station of science, Qeqertarsuaq
8. Petersen, Hans, trading post manager, Niaqornat
9. Johansen, Jørgen, hunter, Uummannaq
10. Møller, Samuel, senior catechist, Illorssuit
11. Kleemann, Rasmus, hunter, Sdr. Upernavik (only 1933)
11. Kristiansen, David, hunter, Kangersusuatsiaq
12. Olsen, Hendrik, trading post manager (not 1933)
12. Nielsen, Hans, trading post manager, Tasiusaq (1936, 1937, 1938)

### 1939-1945

Sessions: 4-17 June 1939; 3 May 1940 (joint session with South); 26 June-2 July 1941 (joint session); 15-31 July 1943 (joint session).

1. Petersen, Niels, hunter, Aulatsivik
2. Siegstad, Isak, catechist, Kangaatsiaq (not 1943)
2. Rosing, Nikolaj, trading post manager, Kangaatsiaq (1943 subst.)
3. Abelsen, Knud, office clerk, Aasiaat
4. Jensen, Frederik, trading post manager, Akulliit
5. Fly, Amasa, hunter, Ilulissat
6. Lynge Frederik, trade manager, Qutdligssat
7. Kleist, Isak, hunter, Qeqertarsuaq
8. Petersen, Hans, trading post manager, Niaqornat (not 1939)
9. Kruse, Edvard, senior catechist, Uummannaq (not 1939)
10. Møller, Samuel, senior catechist, Illorssuit (not 1939)
11. Olsen, Hendrik, manager assistant, Upernavik (not 1940, 1941)

12. Nielsen, Jens, trading post manager, Nutaarmiut (not 1939, 1940, 1941)
12. Bidstrup, Knud, hunter, Tasiusaq (1939 subst.)

### 1945-1950

28 August-20 September 1945 (joint session); 2-22 July 1946 (joint session); 10-22 July 1947; 31 July-14 August 1948 (joint session); 23 July-5 August 1949 (joint session); 25 July-5 August 1950 (joint session).

1. Street, Peter, senior catechist, Attu (not 1946, 1948, 1950)
1. Filemonsens, Johannes, hunter, Attu (1946, 1948, 1949, 1950 subst.)
2. Rosing, Nikolaj, trading post manager, Kangaatsiaq (not 1949)
2. Lundblad, Lars, hunter, Kangaatsiaq (1949 subst.)
3. Kaspersen, Søren, senior catechist, Aasiaat
4. Jensen, Frederik, trading post manager, Akulliit
5. Sivertsen, Marius, forman, Ilulissat
6. Mathæussen, Peter, senior catechist, Sarqaq
6. Lynge, Frederik, trade manager, Qullissat (1949)
6. Lange, Johan, office clerk, Qullissat (1950)
7. Nielsen, Peter, office assistant, Qeqertarsuaq (not 1949)
7. Dalager, Peter, office clerk, Qeqertarsuaq (1949 subst.)
8. Kruse, Tobias, hunter, Niaqornat
9. Fleischer, Peter, manager assistant, Uummannaq
10. Johansen, Kristian, trading post manager, Ukku-sissat
11. Mathæussen, Samuel, senior catechist, Kangersuatsiaq (not 1949)
11. Olsen, Hendrik, manager assistant, Upernavik (1949 subst.)
12. Thomasson, Johan, hunter, Tussaaq

### Greenland Provincial Council 1951-1978 (Grønlands Landsråd)

#### 1951-1954

Directly elected in 13 constituencies by all voters in Greenland regardless of their legal status and sex.

Sessions: 26 September-23 October 1951; 28 August-29 September 1952; 3-19 September 1953; 30 July-27 August 1954.

1. Nielsen, Jakob, trade manager, Aappilattoq
2. Nielsen, Frederik, headmaster, Qaqortoq

3. Egede, Gerhard, pastor, Narsaq
4. Kristiansen, Abel, senior catechist, Arsuk
5. Lynge, Augo, college teacher, Nuuk
6. Egede, Peter, trading post manager, Kangaamiut, Nuuk
7. Olsen, Knud, store assistant, Sisimiut
8. Rosing, Nikolaj, trading post manager, Kangaatsiaq
9. Lynge, Frederik, trade manager, Aasiaat
10. Sivertsen, Marius, foreman, Ilulissat
11. Olsen, Jens, pastor, Qeqertarsuaq (not 1954)
11. Berthelsen, Hans Egede, printer, Qeqertarsuaq (1954 subst.)
12. Fleischer, Peter, manager assistant, Saatut (Uummannaq)
13. Olsen, Hendrik, manager assistant, Upernavik

#### 1955-1958

Sessions: 2 August-5 September 1955; 12 July-14 August 1956; 15 July-24 August 1957; 21 July-30 August 1958; 10-17 March 1959.

1. Nielsen, Jakob, trade manager, Aappilattoq, Nanortalik
2. Lynge, Klaus, office clerk, Qaqortoq
3. Egede, Carl, fisherman, Narsaq (not Marts 1959)
3. Motzfeldt, Lars, sheep farmer, Qassiarsuk (Marts 1959 subst.)
4. Høegh, Erling, pastor, Paamiut
5. Nielsen, Peter, office clerk, interpreter, Nuuk
6. Møller, Lars, senior catechist, Maniitsoq
7. Olsen, Jørgen F.C., senior telegraphist, Sisimiut
8. Karlsen, Nikolaj, fisherman, Aqigsserniaq, Kangaatsiaq
9. Brandt, Ole, teacher, Aasiaat
10. Jensen, Frederik, trade manager, Akulliit, Bugten
11. Olsen, Carl, master smith, Qullissat, Disko (not Marts 1959)
12. Kruse, Edvard, senior catechist, Uummannaq (not Marts 1959)
13. Nielsen, Ole, trading post manager, Upernavik (not Marts 1959)

#### 1959-1962

Number of constituencies expanded to 16.

Sessions: 23 July-12 September 1959; 8 August-10 September 1960; 8 August-12 September 1961; 10 August-15 September 1962; 13-17 May 1963.

1. Nielsen, Jakob, trade manager, Aappilattoq, Nanortalik
2. Høegh, Erling, pastor, Qaqortoq
3. Egede, Erik, sheep farmer, Narsaq
4. Jakobsen, Nathan, trading post manager, Avigaat, Paamiut
5. Heilmann, Peter K.S., college teacher, Nuuk
6. Møller, Lars, senior catechist, Maniitsoq
7. Olsen, Jørgen F.C., senior telegraphist, Sisimiut
8. Karlsen, Nikolaj, fisherman, Aqigsserniaq, Kangaatsiaq
9. Lynge, Hans J., senior telegraphist, Aasiaat
10. Sivertsen, Marius, foreman, Ilulissat (Bugten)
11. Nielsen, Andreas (Anda), office clerk, Qullissat (Disko)
12. Johansen, Elisabeth, midwife, Uummannaq
13. Svendsen, Ole, hunter, Kangarsusuatsiaq, Upernavik (not May 1963)
13. Kleemann, Rasmus, skipper, Upernavik (May 1963 subst.)
14. Jensen, Peter, catechist, Qaanaaq (from 1961)
15. Abelsen, Hendrik, senior cathecist, Ammassalik (from 1961)
16. Arqe, Magtikalaat, hunter, Ittoqqortoormiit (from 1961) (not 1962)

#### 1963-1966

Sessions: 15 August-21 September 1963; 2-18 March 1964; 31 August-9 October 1964; 10-24 May 1965; 31 August-9 September 1965; 14-31 March 1966; 22 August-7 October 1966.

1. Poulsen, Jørgen, catechist, Tasiusaq (Nanortalik)
2. Høegh, Oluf, electrician, Qaqortoq
3. Egede, Erik, sheep farmer, Narsaq
4. Petersen, Anton, fisherman, Paamiut
5. Heilmann, Peter K.S., deputy-headmaster, Nuuk
6. Josefsen, Albrecht, fisherman, Maniitsoq
7. Olsen, Jørgen F.C., senior telegraphist, Sisimiut
8. Ostermann, Lars, trading post manager, Attu (Kangaatsiaq)
9. Lynge, Hans J., radio assistant, Aasiaat
10. Petersen, Richard, senior catechist, Ilulissat (Disko Bugten) (not May 1965)
10. Sivertsen, Marius, foreman, Ilulissat (May 1965 subst.)
11. Nielsen, Andreas (Anda), office clerk, Qullissat (Disko)
12. Johansen, Elisabeth, midwife, Uummannaq

13. Kristiansen, Knud, catechist, Upernavik
14. Jensen, Peter, catechist, Thule
15. Borchersen, Jørgen, trade inspector, Ammassalik (not Autumn 1966)
15. Ignatiussen, Harald, hunter, Ammassalik (Autumn 1966)
16. Arqe, Magtikalaat, hunter, Ittoqqortoormiit (not May 1965, March 1966)
16. Petersen, Sivert, catechist, Ittoqqortoormiit (March 1966 subst.)

#### 1967-1970

Up to 5 supplementary seats can be elected.

Sessions: 23-27 May 1967; 5 September-12 October 1967; 9 august-26 September 1968; 19 april-13 may 1969; 16 September-17 October 1969; 17 March-16 April 1970; 17 September-18 October 1970.

1. Abelsen, Marius, headmaster, Nanortalik
2. Høegh, Erling, pastor, Qaqortoq (chairman)
3. Egede, Erik, sheep farmer, Narsaq (died 1967)
3. Holm, Niels, policeman, Narsaq (from Autumn 1967)
4. Petersen, Iboeth, skipper, Paamiut
5. Heilmann, Peter K.S., deputy-headmaster, Nuuk
6. Josefsen, Albrecht, fisherman, Maniitsoq
7. Olsen, Jørgen F.C., senior telegraphist, Sisimiut
8. Reimer, Edvard, trading post manager, Kangaatsiaq
9. Skou, Karl, pastor, Aasiaat
10. Chemnitz, Lars, headmaster, Ilulissat (Bugten)
11. Broberg, David, fisherman, Qeqertarsuaq (Disko)
12. Johansen, Elisabeth, midwife, Uummannaq
13. Kristiansen, Knud, catechist, Upernavik
14. Kristiansen, Qissunguaq, hunter, Thule
15. Davidsen, Aron, cathecist, Ammassalik (not 1968)
15. Jonathansen, Erinarteq, hunter, Ammassalik (1968 subst.)
16. Simonsen, Jakob, trading post manager, Ittoqqortoormiit(not Autumn 1969)
17. Narup, Kaj, merchant, Nuuk (supplementary seat, Inuit Party until summer 1969)
18. Nielsen, Peter, interpreter, Nuuk (from autumn 1969 suppl. seat, Inuit Party)

#### 1971-1974

Sessions: 4-17 May 1971; 15 September-2 November 1971; 21 March-1 May 1972; 15 September-20 October 1972; 6 March-4 April 1973; 21 September-24 October

1973: 8 March-2 April 1974; 20 September-24 October 1974.

1. Abelsen, Marius, headmaster, Nanortalik (died 1972)
1. Poulsen, Jørgen, teacher, Tasiusaq (from Autumn 1972, died 1973)
1. Nielsen, Hendrik, fisherman, Alluitsup Paa, (from spring 1974)
2. Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Qaqortoq (vice-chairman)
3. Knudsen, Johan, merchant, Narsaq (died 1973)
3. Godtfredsen, Lars, restaurant keeper, Narsaq (from spring 1974)
4. Berglund, Ole, teacher, Paamiut (until 1973)
4. Tobiassen, Mathæus, senior catechist, Paamiut (from spring 1974)
5. Johansen, Lars Emil, teacher, Nuuk
6. Josefsen, Albrecht, fisherman, Maniitsoq
7. Olsen, Jørgen F.C., senior telegraphist, Sisimiut
8. Karlsen, Nikolaj, fisherman, Aqigsserniaq, Kangaatsiaq
9. Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Aasiaat
10. Chemnitz, Lars, headmaster, Ilulissat (Bugten) (chairman)
11. Broberg, David, fisherman, Qeqertarsuaq (Disko)
12. Johansen, Elisabeth, midwife, Uummannaq
13. Kristiansen, Knud, catechist, Upernavik
14. Kristiansen, Qissunguaq, hunter, Thule
15. Jonathansen, Erinarteq, hunter, Ammassalik
16. Sanimuinaq, Andreas, master painter, Ittoqqortoormiit
17. Heilmann, Niels Carlo, fisherman, Maniitsoq (suppl. seat for KNAPP)

## 1975-1978

Sessions: 2-14 May 1975; 26 September-31 October 1975; 9 March-5 April 1976; 10 September-8 October 1976; 4-29 March 1977; 9 September-11 October 1977; 4-20 April 1978; 19 September-24 October 1978.

Political party: [A] = Atassut, [S] = Siumut

1. Nielsen, Hendrik, fisherman, Nanortalik [S]
2. Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Qaqortoq (vice-chairman) [S]
3. Godtfredsen, Lars, restaurant keeper, Narsaq [A]
4. Møller, Lamik, fisherman, Paamiut [A]
5. Chemnitz, Lars, headmaster, Nuuk (chairman) [A]
6. Heilmann, Niels Carlo, fisherman, Maniitsoq [A]
7. Olsen, Jørgen F.C., senior telegraphist, Sisimiut
8. Karlsen, Nikolaj, fisherman, Kangaatsiaq [S]
9. Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Aasiaat [A]
10. Steenholdt, Konrad, teacher, Qasigianniguit (Bugten) [A]
11. Kristiansen, Knud, artist, Qeqertarsuaq
12. Johansen, Severin, town clerk, Uummannaq (not autumn 1976, spring 1977) [S]
12. Johansen, Hans, carrier, Uummannaq (Autumn 1976, Spring 1977)
13. Frederiksen, Bendt, hunter, Upernavik [S]
14. Sadorana, Asiajuk, hunter, Qaanaaq [S]
15. Andreassen, Anders, policeman, Ammassalik [S]
16. Arqe, Emil, ship's carpenter, Ittoqqortoormiit [A]
17. Olsen, Odaq, union president, Nuuk (suppl. seat for GAS)



# Home Rule Parliament 1979-2000

## (Grønlands Landsting)

Information appears in the following order: constituency, name, main occupation, residence (political party: A=Atassut, IA=Inuit Ataqatigiit, AP=Akulliit Partiat, IP=Issitup Partiia, S= Siumut, NP= non-party)

**1979-1983** elected 4 April 1979

18 constituency seats (South 4, Central 5, Disko 4, + 5 from outer districts) and up to 3 supplementary seats.

Southern:

Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Qaqortoq (chairman) (S)  
Nielsen, Hendrik, teacher, Alluitsup Paa (S)  
Nielsen, Niels, fisherman, Narsaq (S)  
Ostermann, Peter, policeman, Qaqortoq (A)

Central:

Chemnitz, Lars, headmaster, Nuuk (A)  
Christiansen, Thue, deputy-headmaster, Maniitsoq (S)  
Davidsen, Anguuteraq, foreman, Sisimiut (A)  
Heilmann, Niels Carlo, fisherman, Maniitsoq, (A)  
Johansen, Lars Emil, teacher, Nuuk (S)

Disko:

Lange, Preben, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (S)  
Rosbach, Frederik, director, Ilulissat (S)  
Steenholdt, Konrad, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (A)  
Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Aasiaat (A)

Uummannaq: Nielsen, Pavia, hunter, Uummannaq (S)

Upernavik: Frederiksen, Bendt, hunter, Upernavik (S)  
Thule: Joelsen, Sofus, town clerk, Qaanaaq (S)  
Ammassalik: Andreasen, Anders, policeman, Ammassalik

Scoresbysund: Hammeken, Aage, headmaster, Illoq-qortoormiut (S)

suppl. seat 1: Godtfredsen, Lars, restaurant keeper, Narsaq (A) (until 1/5-1981)

suppl. seat 1: Nielsen, Agnete, mayor, Narsaq, (A) (from 1981 autumn)

suppl. seat 2: Olsen, Moses, chief of secretariat, Sisimiut (S)

suppl. seat 3: Sivertsen, Jakob, trade manager, Kuummiut (A)

**1983-1984** elected: 12 April 1983

23 constituency seats (South 5, Central 8, Disko 5, + 5 from outer districts) and up to 3 supplementary seats

Southern:

Høegh, Ingvar, factory manager, Narsaq (A)  
Lund, Isak, sheep farmer, Narsaq (S)  
Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Nuuk (S)  
Nielsen, Hendrik, fisherman, Alluitsup Paa (S)  
Ostermann, Peter, policeman, Qaqortoq (A)

Central:

Chemnitz, Lars, consultant, Nuuk (A)  
Davidsen, Anguuteraq, foreman, Sisimiut (A)  
Heilmann, Niels Carlo, fisherman, Maniitsoq, (A)  
Jensen, Allan Idd, director, Nuuk (A)  
Johansen, Lars Emil, teacher, Nuuk (S)  
Lynge, Arqaluk, programme secretary, Nuuk (IA)  
Olsen, Moses, chief of secretariat, Nuuk (S)  
Rosing, Hans Pavia, president ICC, Nuuk (S)

Disko:

Iversen, Hans, fisherman, Ilulissat (S)  
Lange, Preben, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (S)  
Sivertsen, Holger, mayor, Ilulissat (A)  
Steenholdt, Konrad, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (A)  
Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Næstved (A)  
Uummannaq: Nielsen, Pavia, hunter, Uummannaq (S) (not Dec. 1983)

Upernavik: Frederiksen, Bendt, hunter, Upernavik (S) (not Dec. 1983)

Thule: Joelsen, Sofus, town clerk, Qaanaaq (S)

Ammassalik: Sivertsen, Jakob, trade manager, Kuumiut (A) Not Dec. 1983)

Scoresbysund: Hammeken, Aage, headmaster, Illoqqortoormiut (S)

suppl. seat 1: Geisler, Jens, headmaster, Aasiaat, (IA)

suppl. seat 2: Lynge, Torben Emil, headmaster, Narsaq (A)

suppl. seat 3: Petrussen, Amandus, pastor, Nanortalik (A)

**1984-1987** elected: 6 June 1984

23 constituency seats (South 5, Central 8, Disko 5, + 5 outer districts) and up to 3 supplementary seats.

Southern:

Høegh, Ingvar, factory leader, Narsaq (A)

Lund, Isak, sheep farmer, Narsaq (S)

Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Nuuk (S)

Nielsen, Hendrik, fisherman, Alluitsup Paa (S)

Ostermann, Peter, policeman, Qaqortoq (A)

Central:

Christoffersen, Jan Streit, physician, Nuuk (A)

Heilmann, Niels Carlo, fisherman, Maniitsoq, (A)

Johansen, Lars Emil, teacher, Nuuk (S) till May 1986

Lennert, Emile, clerk, Sisimiut (A)

Lybert, Jens, (S)

Lynge, Arqaluk, programme secretary, Nuuk (IA)

Olsen, Marius, fisherman, Sisimiut (S) from May 1986

Olsen, Moses, chief of secretariat, Nuuk (S)

Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Næstved (A)

Disko:

Iversen, Hans, fisherman, Ilulissat (S)

Lange, Preben, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (S)

Sivertsen, Holger, mayor, Ilulissat (A)

Steenholdt, Konrad, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (A)

Sørensen, Knud, trade manager, Aasiaat (A)

Uummannaq: Nielsen, Pavia, hunter, Uummannaq (S)

Upernavik: Frederiksen, Bendt, hunter, Upernavik (S)

Thule: Qujaukitsoq, Ussarqak, hunter, Qaanaaq (S)

Ammassalik: Sivertsen, Jakob, trade manager, Kuumiut (A)

Scoresbysund: Sanimuinaq, Andreas, master painter, Ittoqqortoormiut (A)

suppl. seat 1: Geisler, Jens, headmaster, Aasiaat (IA)

suppl. seat 2: Rasmussen, Henriette, teacher, Nuuk (IA)

**1987-1991** elected: 26 May 1987

23 constituency seats (South 5, Central 8, Disko 5, + 5 from outer districts) and up to 4 supplementary seats.

Southern:

Lynge, Torben Emil, headmaster, Narsaq (A)

Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Nuuk (S)

Motzfeldt, Josef, teacher, (IA) (until 12 April 1988)

Kanuthsen, Aqquilikasik, sheep farming consultant, Qaqortoq (IA) (from April 1988)

Nielsen, Hendrik, fisherman, Alluitsup Paa (S)

Ostermann, Peter, policeman, Qaqortoq (A)

Central:

Chemnitz, Lars, consultant, Nuuk (A)

Heilmann, Niels Carlo, fisherman, Maniitsoq, (A)

Lennert, Emile, clerk, Sisimiut (A)

Lyberth, Jens (S)

Lynge, Arqaluk, programme secretary, Nuuk (IA)

Johansen, Lars Emil, teacher, Nuuk (S)

Olsen, Moses, chief of secretariat, Nuuk (S)

Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Nuuk (A)

Disko:

Geisler, Jens, headmaster, Aasiaat, (IA) (resigns Summer 1990)

Iversen, Hans, fisherman, Ilulissat (S)

Lynge, Ole, ship carpenter, Aasiaat (IA) (from Summer 1990)

Lange, Preben, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (S)

Steenholdt, Konrad, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (A)

Sørensen, Knud, trade manager, Aasiaat (A)

Uummannaq: Petersen, Mikael, machinist, Uummannaq (S)

Upernavik: Frederiksen, Bendt, hunter, Upernavik (S)

Thule: Qujaukitsoq, Ussarqak, hunter, Qaanaaq (S)

Ammassalik: Sivertsen, Jakob, manager assistant, Ammassalik (A)

Scoresbysund: Danielsen, Jonas, hunter, Ittoqqortoormiut (S) (resigns Summer 1988)

Hammeken, Ane Sofie, teacher, Ittoqqortoormiut (S) (from Summer 1988)

suppl. seat 1: Rasmussen, Henriette, teacher, Nuuk, (IA)

suppl. seat 2: Sivertsen, Holger, mayor, Ilulissat (A)

suppl. seat 3: Jensen, Godmand, hunter, Upernavik (A)

suppl. seat 4: Heinrich, Nikolaj, fisherman, Nuuk (IP)

**1991-1995** elected: 5/3-91

23 constituency seats (South 5, Central 8, Disko 5, + 5 outer districts) and up to 4 supplementary seats.

South:

Egede, Kaj, sheep farming consultant, (S)

Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Nuuk (S)

Motzfeldt, Josef, teacher, Nuuk (IA)

Nielsen, Agnete, retired mayor, Narsaq (A)

Ostermann, Peter, policeman, Qaqartoq (A)

Central:

Abelsen, Emil, company director, Nuuk (S)

Chemnitz, Lars, consultant, Nuuk (A)

Johansen, Lars Emil, director, Nuuk (S)

Kreutzmann, Bjarne, policeman, Nuuk (AP)

Lynge, Aqqaluk, journalist, Nuuk (IA)

Olsen, Ove Rosing, physician, Nuuk, (S)

Rasmussen, Henriette, section leader, Nuuk (IA)

Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Nuuk (A)

Disko:

Iversen, Hans, fisherman, Ilulissat (S)

Lynge, Ole, ship carpenter, Aasiaat (IA)

Samuelsen, Peter Grønvold, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (S)

Steenholdt, Konrad, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (A)

Sørensen, Knud, mayor, Aasiaat (A)

Uummannaq: Nielsen, Pavia, hunter, Uummannaq (S)

Upernavik: Frederiksen, Bendt, hunter, Upernavik (S) (chairman)

Avernersuaq: Qujaukitsoq, Ussarqaq, hunter, Qaanaq (S)

Tasiilaq: Sivertsen, Jakob, mayor, Ammassalik (A)

Scoresbysund: Hammeken, Ane Sofie, teacher, Illoqqortoormiit (S)

suppl. seat 1: Lennert, Emilie, clerk, Sisimiut (A)

suppl. seat 2: Egede, Hans Pavia, director, Nuuk (AP)

suppl. seat 3: Olsen, Johan Lund, social adviser, Nuuk (IA)

suppl. seat 4: Heinrich, Nikolaj, fisherman, Nuuk (IP)

**1995-1999** elected: 4/3-95

26 constituency seats (South 6, Central 9, Disko 6, + 5 outer districts) and 5 supplementary seats.

Andreassen, Anders, policeman, Ammassalik (S)

Berthelsen, Manasse (IA) (from 1997)

Brøndlund, Evald, foreman, Ittoqqortoormiit (IA)

Davidson, Agnethe, mayor, Nuuk (S) (until 1997)

Enoksen, Hans, trade manager, Sisimiut (S)

Frederiksen, Anthon Thue, policeman, Ilulissat (NP candidates union)

Heilmann, Paaviaaraq, office head, Nuuk, (S) (from 1997)

Heilmann, Ruth Thomsen, senior teacher, Maniitsoq (S)

Heilmann, Siverth Karl, company director, Maniitsoq (A)

Jensen, Lars Karl, fisherman, Qeqertarsuaq (S)

Jensen, Marianne, teacher, Ilulissat (S)

Johansen, Lars Emil, Nuuk (S) (until 1997)

Karlsen, Finn, inspector, Narsaq (A)

Kleist, Kuupik, director of Home Rule Authority Foreign Relations, Nuuk (IA) (until 1996)

Kreutzmann, Bjarne, policeman, Nuuk (AP)

Lyberth, Karl, fisherman/hunter, (S)

Lynge, Laanguaq, librarian, Nuuk (S) (from 1997)

Mattaq, Johan Niels, porter, Upernavik (S)

Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Nuuk (S)

Motzfeldt, Josef, teacher, Nuuk (IA)

Mølgaard, Maliinannuaq Marcussen, journalist, Qeqertarsuaq (IA)

Nilsson, Anders, newspaper editor, Nuuk, (A)

Olsen, Johan Lund, social adviser, Nuuk (IA)

Ostermann, Peter, policeman, Qaqartoq (A)

Petersen, Mikael, machinist, Nuuk (S)

Petersen, Naimanngitsoq, hunter, Qaanaaq (A)

Raahauge, Kristine, office assistant, Nanortalik (S)

Samuelsen, Peter Grønvold, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (S)

Sivertsen, Jakob, trade manager, Ammassalik (A)

Skifte, Daniel, headmaster, Nuuk (A)

Steenholdt, Konrad, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (A)

Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Nuuk (A)

Sørensen, Knud, trade manager, Aasiaat (A)

Sørensen, Lars, office clerk, Paamiut (IA)

**1999 – 2001** elected: 16 February 1999

31 members (the whole of Greenland being one constituency)

Andreassen, Anders, policeman, Ammassalik (S)

Berthelsen, Per, teacher, Nuuk (S)

Enoksen, Hans, trade manager (S)

Frederiksen, Anthon Thue, policeman, Ilulissat (NP candidates union)

Grønvold, Mads Peter (NP candidates union)

Heilmann, Ruth Thomsen, senior teacher, Maniitsoq (S)

Heilmann, Sivert Karl, director, Maniitsoq (A)

Henriksen, Loritha (OP candidates union)

Jensen, Lars Karl, fisherman, Qeqertarsuaq (S)

Johansen, Jørgen Wæver, party secretary, Nuuk (S)

Karlsen, Finn, inspector, Narsaq (A)

Kleist, Mogens (OP candidates union)

Lynge, Ole, ship carpenter, Nuuk (IA)

Marø, Tommy, office leader, (S)

Mikaelsen, Vittus, hunter and mayor, Tasiilaq (S)

Motzfeldt, Jonathan, pastor, Nuuk (S)

Motzfeldt, Josef, teacher, Nuuk (IA)

Mølgaard, Malinannnguaq Marcussen, journalist, Qeqertarsuaq (IA)

Narup, Asii Chemnitz, (IA)

Nilsson, Anders, office clerk, (A)

Olsen, Johan Lund, social adviser, Nuuk (IA)

Olsen, Simon, Nuuk (S)

Petersen, Mikael, machinist, Nuuk (S)

Poulsen, Olga, (IA)

Rasmussen, Godmand, (A)

Rosing-Petersen, Per, pilot, Nuuk (S)

Salling, Augusta, teacher, Qeqertarsuaq (A)

Sivertsen, Jakob, manager assistant, Ammassalik (A)

Skifte, Daniel, headmaster, Nuuk (A)

Steenholdt, Otto, teacher, Qasigiannnguit (A)

Sørensen, Lars, office clerk, Paamiut (IA)

**Note:** The sources for this appendix are rather incomplete. The list is based on the Parliament's minutes and up to summer 1984 it is accurate, but minutes are missing 1985-1988 and publication ceased altogether to be published in 1993. The gaps are filled in from the newspapers A/G and Sermitsiaq when possible. From 1995 the main source is 'Kongelig Dansk Hof og Statskalenderen' (a Danish annual register of people in public office).

# Home Rule Government

Home Rule Government: landsstyre

Prime minister: landsstyreformand

Minister: landsstyremedlem.

Party in brackets: S = Siumut; A = Atassut; IA = Inuit  
Ataatigiit

### 1979

Motzfeldt, Jonathan (S) prime minister

Christiansen, Thue, (S) culture and education

Johansen, Lars Emil (S) trades and industries

Olsen, Moses (S) social welfare

Andreasen, Anders (S) settlements and outer districts

### 1983

Motzfeldt, Jonathan (S) prime minister

Johansen, Lars Emil (S) trades and industries

Olsen, Moses (S) economy and housing

Heilmann, Stephen (S) culture, church, and education

Davidsen, Agnethe (S) social welfare

Nielsen, Hendrik (S) settlements, labour market and  
youth issues

### 1984

Motzfeldt, Jonathan (S) prime minister

Lynge, Arqaluk, (IA) social welfare and housing

Johansen, Lars Emil (S) fishing and industry (until  
February 1986)

Olsen, Moses (S) economy until February 1986; fishing  
and industry

Rosing, Hans Pavia (S) economy (from February  
1986)

Motzfeldt, Josef (IA) trade and vocational training

Heilmann, Stephen (S) culture, church and education

Nielsen, Hendrik (S) settlements, labour market and  
youth issues

### 1987

Motzfeldt, Jonathan (S) prime minister

Lynge, Arqaluk, (IA) social welfare, housing, technical  
matters, and environment

Rosing, Hans Pavia (S) economy (until September  
1987)

Abelsen, Emil (S) economy (from September 1987)

Motzfeldt, Josef (IA) trade, traffic, and youth issues  
(until March 1988)

Petrussen, Johanne (IA) trade, traffic, and youth  
issues (from March 1988)

Lybert, Jens, (S) culture, education, and labour market

Egede, Kaj (S) settlements and outer districts

### 1988

Motzfeldt, Jonathan (S) prime minister

Abelsen, Emil (S) economy, trade, and traffic

Olsen, Moses (S) social welfare and housing

Egede, Kaj (S) fishing, industry, and outer districts

Lyberth, Jens, (S) culture, education, and labour  
market

### 1991

Johansen, Lars Emil (S) prime minister

Kleist, Kuupik (IA) housing and technical matters  
(until May 1992; from same date public works  
and traffic)

Egede, Kaj (S) fishing, industry, and outer districts  
(until May 1992)

Iversen, Hans (S) fishing, hunting, and farming (from  
May 1992)

Abelsen, Emil (S) economy and housing

Rasmussen, Henriette (IA) social welfare (from May  
1992 also labour market)

Jensen, Marianne (S) culture, education, church,  
(and labour market until May 1992; from same  
date also research)

Olsen, Ove Rosing (S) health, environment, industry  
and trade

### 1995

Johansen, Lars Emil (S) prime minister (until May  
1997)

Motzfeldt, Jonathan (S) prime minister (from May 1997)

Skifte, Daniel (A) economy and housing

Samuelsen, Peter Grønvold (S) business, traffic, and supplies

Heilmann, Paaviaaraq (S) fishing, hunting, and farming

Steenholdt, Konrad (A) culture, education, and church

Thorsteinsson, Benedikte (S) social welfare and labour market (until May 1997)

Petersen, Mikael (S) social welfare and labour market (from May 1997)

Jensen, Marianne (S) health, environment, and research

## 1999

Motzfeldt, Jonathan (S) prime minister

Motzfeldt, Josef (IA) economy and trade

Olsen, Simon (S) business

Lynge, Steffen Ulrik (S) infrastructure and housing

Jacobsen, Alfred (IA) health, environment, and church

Petersen, Mikael (S) social welfare and labour market (until November 1999)

Johansen, Jørgen Wæver (S) social welfare and labour market (from November 1999)

Lennert, Lise Skifte (S) culture, education, and research



# Members of the Permanent Greenland Committee, 1925-1963

The committee existed as a joint committee from the two chambers until 1953 when the Danish first chamber was abolished. In Danish the name was 'Rigsdagens Grønlandsudvalg' til 1953, and after 'Folketingets Grønlandsudvalg'.

### Danish members

Vanggaard, J.S. (Liberal Left) 1925-45  
Degnbol, M. (Liberal Left) 1925-39  
Olufson, J.P. (Social Democrat) 1925-34  
Kammersgaard, P. (Social Democrat) 1925-35  
Pürschel, V. (Conservative) 1925-39  
Ellinger, H.O. (Conservative) 1925-45  
Zahle, C. Th. (Radical Left) 1925-29, 1935-37  
Povlsen, Th. (Radical Left) 1925-42  
Steen, Oluf (Radical Left) 1929-35, 1937-63  
Rasmussen, Hans (Social Democrat) 1934-45  
Rasmussen, V. (Social Democrat) 1935-37  
Hauberg, Th. (Social Democrat) 1937-50, 1953-54  
Hendriksen, Halfdan (Conservative) 1939-40, 1945-57  
Stegger Nielsen, S. (Liberal Left) 1939-53  
Westermann, C.A. (Conservative) 1940-47  
Nygaard, Kr. (Liberal Left) 1943-45  
Buhl, V. (Social Democrat) 1945-47  
Jensen-Broby, J. Chr. (Liberal Left) 1946-47  
Hindsgaul, Lisbeth (Conservative) 1946-63  
Larsen, Aksel, (Communists) 1945-50  
Bomholt, Julius (Social Democrat) 1947-50

Kristensen, Knud (Liberal Left) 1947-48  
From, Simon (Liberal Left) 1948-63  
Gram, Victor, (Social Democrat) 1950-62  
Hedtoft, Hans (Social Democrat) 1950-53  
Hansen, Hans (Social Democrat) 1950-53  
Jensen, Carl P. (Social Democrat) 1953-60  
Eriksen, Erik (Liberal Left) 1953-63  
Nielsen, Peter (Liberal Left) 1954-63  
Ninn-Hansen, Erik (Conservative) 1957-63  
Dupont, W. (Social Democrat) 1960-63  
Nielsen, Axel K. (Social Democrat) 1962-63

### Greenlandic members (appointed by the Provincial Council)

Nielsen, Peter 1950-51  
Chemnitz, Jørgen 1950-51  
Lyng, Frederik 1952-53  
Lyng, Augo 1952-53

### Greenlandic members (as members of Parliament)

Lyng, Frederik 1953-57  
Lyng, Augo 1953-59  
Lauf, Elias 1957-60  
Rosing, Nikolaj 1959-63  
Gam, Mikael 1960-63 (Gam was a Dane elected in Greenland. Neither he nor his substitute ever participated in the meetings)

## Appendix 6

# Members of the Greenland Council, 1964-1979 (Grønlandsrådet)

The Greenland Council is a joint committee of Danish and Greenlandic members. Chairman appointed by the King, 5 appointed by the parties in Parliament, the two MPs from Greenland, 3 appointed by the provincial council.

### Chairmen

Kock, H.H. 1964-74

Nørregaard-Rasmussen, P. 1975-79

### Members

Groes, Lis (Social Democrat) 1964-67

Kirkegaard, Jacob (Radical Left) 1964-66, 1969

Ninn-Hansen, Erik (Conservative) 1964-67

From, Simon (Liberal Left) 1964-67

Vivike, Holger (Folk Socialist) 1964-70

Hertling, Knud (MP for Greenland) 1964-71

Rosing, Nikolaj (MP for Greenland) 1964-71, 1974-76

Heilmann, Peter K.S. (provincial council) 1964-70

Egede, Erik (provincial council) 1964-67

Christensen, N.O. (provincial council (Greenland governor)) 1964-67

Normann, A.C. (Radical Left) 1967

Abelsen, Marius (provincial council) 1967-70

Høegh, Erling (provincial council) 1967-70

Lembourn, H.J. (Conservative) 1968-74

Hansen, Holger (Liberal Left) 1968-73

Haugaard, Svend (Radical Left) 1968-77

Jensen, Carl P. (Social Democrat) 1968-70

Ree, Eva (Liberal Left) 1968

Due, Gunhild (Folk Socialist) 1970

Chemnitz, Lars (provincial council) 1971-79

Johansen, Lars Emil (provincial council) 1971-73, MP for Greenland 1974-79) 1971-79

Motzfeldt, Jonathan (provincial council) 1971-79

Olsen, Moses (MP for Greenland) 1972-73

Dam, Poul (Folk Socialist) 1972-73

Hansen, Jørgen Peder (Social Democrat) 1972-74

Svendsen, Niels (substitute for K. Hertling) 1972-73

Olsen, Jørgen C.F. (provincial council) 1974, 1977-79

Brixtofte, Peter (Liberal Left) 1974-77

Dohrmann, H. (Progressive Party) 1974-79

Jørgensen, Søren B. (Social Democrat) 1975-79

Steenholdt, Otto (provincial council) 1975-77, MP for Greenland 1977-79) 1975-79

Bugdorf, Johs. (Conservative) 1976-79

Berglund, Ole (MP for Greenland) 1976-77

Kjærulff-Schmidt, Steffen (Progressive Party) 1976

Nielsen, Hendrik (provincial council) 1976

Maisted, Ole (Progressive Party) 1977

Pedersen, Aksel (Social Democrat) 1977-78

Prehn, Ernst (Centre Democrat) 1977

Glensgaard, Leif (Progressive Party) 1978

Andersen, Yvonne Herløv (Centre Democrat) 1979

Rasmussen, Anders Fogh (Liberal Left) 1979

## Appendix 7

# Members of the Danish Parliament elected by Greenland

Party in brackets: S = Siumut; A = Atassut. No brackets = non-party

1953-57: Augo Lynge and Frederik Lynge

1957-59: Elias Lauf and Augo Lynge

1959-60: Elias Lauf and Nikolaj Rosing

1960-63: Mikael Gam<sup>492</sup> and Nikolaj Rosing

1964-71: Knud Hertling and Nikolaj Rosing

1971-73: Knud Hertling and Moses Olsen (S)

1973-76: Lars Emil Johansen (S) and Nikolaj Rosing

1976-77: Lars Emil Johansen (S) and Ole Berglund (A)

1977-79: Lars Emil Johansen (S) and Otto Steenholdt (A)

1979-88: Preben Lange (S) and Otto Steenholdt (A)

1988-98: Hans Pavia Rosing (S) and Otto Steenholdt (A)

1998-2001: Hans Pavia Rosing (S) and Ellen Kristensen (A)

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492. Mikael Gam was a Dane, the only one elected in Greenland ever.

# Ministers for Greenland

Prior to the establishment of the Ministry for Greenland in 1955 the ministers listed here are those who took responsibility for Greenland in the ministry.

### *Ministers of the Interior*

Bramsen, L. (Right Party) . . . . .	1900-01
Sørensen, Enevold (Liberal left) . . . . .	1901-05
Berg, Sigurd (Liberal Left) . . . . .	1905-08, 1920-22
Berntsen, Klaus (Liberal Left) . . . . .	1908-09
Munch, Peter R. (Radical Left) . . . . .	1909-10
Jensen-Sønderup, Jens (Liberal Left) . . . . .	1910-13
Rode, Ove (Radical Left) . . . . .	1913-20
Oxholm, W. (civil servant) . . . . .	10/3-5/4 1920
Vedel, H. (civil servant) . . . . .	5/1-5/5 1920
Kragh O.C. (Liberal Left) . . . . .	1922-24, 1926-29
Hauge, C.N. (Social Democrat) . . . . .	1924-26

### *Prime Ministers*

Stauning, Thorvald <sup>493</sup> (Social Democrat) . . . .	1929-42
Scavenius, Erik J.C. (Radical Left) . . . . .	1942-43

Buhl, V. (Social Democrat) . . . . .	1945
Kristensen, Knud (Liberal Left) . . . . .	1945-47
Hedtoft, Hans (Social Democrat) . . . .	1947-50, 1953-55
Eriksen, Erik (Liberal Left) . . . . .	1950-53

### *Minister for Greenland*

Kjærboel, Johannes (Social Democrat) . . . . .	1955-57
Lindberg, Kaj (Social Democrat) . . . . .	1957-60
Gam, Mikael (non-party) . . . . .	1960-64
Jensen, Carl P. (Social Democrat) . . . . .	1964-68
Normann, A.C. (Radical Left) . . . . .	1968-71
Hertling, Knud (non-party) . . . . .	1971-73
Hansen, Holger (Liberal Left) . . . . .	1973-75
Hansen, Jørgen Peder (Social Democrat) . . . .	1975-81
Larsen, Tove Lindbo (Social Democrat) . . . . .	1981-82
Høyem, Tom (Centre Democrat) . . . . .	1982-87

The ministry was abolished 10 September 1987 when remaining responsibilities were passed to the prime minister.

493. 1929-33, in his capacity as Minister for Shipping and Fishery.

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