Danish pseudo-left lines up with European imperialism against US over Greenland

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5 April 2026

Opposition in Denmark and across Europe to the Trump administration's brutal persecution of immigrants and political opponents, aggressive "America first" militarism, and push to establish a dictatorship is widespread.

Large sections of the Danish population have expressed particular outrage at Trump's repeated threats to seize Greenland, an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark. Trump has made clear that controlling the world's largest island is part of his agenda to dominate the Western hemisphere in preparations for world war with China and other US rivals.

Denmark's pseudo-left organisations, the Unity List (known as the Red-Green Alliance in English) and Socialist People's Party (SF), are working overtime to ensure that this opposition to imperialist aggression is channelled into support for Danish and European militarism. SF openly backs the Danish government's rearmament programme, which aims to spend 3.5 percent of the GDP on war by 2030 and includes an expanded military presence in the Arctic. For its part, the RGA attempts to strike a more radical pose, the better to tie leftward-moving workers and young people to a programme aimed at finding new imperialist patrons for Danish capitalist interests after the breakdown of its decades-long alliance with the United States.

Responding to the Danish government's attempt to negotiate an arrangement with Trump on the basis of a major increase in the presence of NATO military forces in Greenland and the entire Arctic region, RGA leader Pelle Dragsted stated in January, "This applies both between Denmark and Greenland, but also among the parties here in Christiansborg [the Danish parliament building]. It is a very serious situation and it is therefore important that we all back the government."

Support for European imperialism

The RGA's support for Denmark's Social Democrat-led government, which has endorsed Washington's war of extermination against Iran, is above all a wholehearted endorsement of European imperialism against the US in the conflict over Greenland and the Arctic region more broadly. This was laid bare in a statement published in January by the Socialist Workers Party (SAP), a faction within the RGA associated with the Pabloite United Secretariat. Titled "Defend Greenland against the US's raid - without any illusions in the Kingdom of Denmark and the EU," the statement takes an ostensibly more "left-wing" position than the RGA leadership, but winds up justifying Europe's rearmament drive.

SAP begins its statement with the declaration:

> The Trump regime is still engaged in a fierce offensive for an imperialist American takeover of Greenland. All means have been used: political, economic and even military threats. In this situation, the Greenlandic self-government, a united Inatsisartut [Greenland Parliament], has quite understandably chosen to seek refuge in a tactical alliance with the former colonial power (Denmark), the EU and the European NATO countries. At best, this alliance can stop Trump's plans to formally take over power in Greenland here and now. However, neither the powers that be in Denmark nor the EU are reliable champions of the Greenlandic people's right to self-determination – quite the contrary!

Having legitimised the NATO build-up in the Arctic as a "quite understandable" response by the Greenlandic government, which has apparently freely "chosen to seek refuge in a tactical alliance with the former colonial power," the SAP expands on its endorsement of a European imperialist presence:

> It is clear that right now it is a matter of creating as strong a front as possible against Trump's threats, for the respect of Greenland's borders and the Greenlandic people's right to self-determination.
>
> And, of course, it is entirely up to the Greenlanders to decide what they are ultimately willing to accept here and now in order to achieve a negotiated solution, in a situation where they face overwhelming threats from the US – and false promises from all sides.
>
> But that does not mean that we, including the Red-Green Alliance, should cheer for a "solution" that essentially cements imperialist interests – neither those of the US nor those of Denmark and the EU.

These comments are both a falsification of the present political situation and a damning exposure of the SAP and RGA's hostility to the working class in Denmark, Europe, and internationally playing any independent role in political life.

Firstly, nobody can seriously claim that the Greenlandic government, which administers a €500 million annual block grant issued by the Danish government to a population of around 57,000 people, has the freedom to "decide" anything. Even the Danish government found itself largely sidelined in January when Trump and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte met at the World Economic Forum in Davos to hammer out a deal to expand the presence of American and European imperialism in the Arctic. To give the impression that any democratic decision-making was involved here would be to offer an apologia for a world order characterised by increasing lawlessness and violence.

Secondly, to state that the most immediate task is "creating as strong a

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front as possible against Trump's threats, for the respect of Greenland's borders and the Greenlandic people's right to self-determination," and at the same time that "this alliance [between Denmark, the European imperialists, and the Greenlandic government] can stop Trump's plans to formally take over power in Greenland here and now," is to paint the European imperialists in the brightest colours. The SAP statement works to cover this up with correct statements noting that the European imperialists have just as predatory interests in the Arctic as their US rivals. These include control over the region's vast untapped energy resources, trade routes that would significantly shorten trans-continental shipping travel, and key strategic positions for detecting ballistic missiles and carrying out satellite surveillance of rival powers. But SAP's formal declarations are worthless coming from an organisation that justifies alliances with these very imperialists in the "here and now."

Entirely absent from the SAP statement is any suggestion that the working class has any role to play in resolving the fate of Greenland and, more broadly, the world capitalist crisis that finds expression in the breakdown of the Transatlantic alliance and escalation of imperialist war. It was written in January, as the beginnings of mass opposition to Trump's drive to establish a dictatorship in the US were demonstrated by calls for a general strike in Minneapolis to oppose cold-blooded murders by his Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) fascist thugs. Moreover, the escalation of the class struggle in Europe, illustrated by such recent events as the large protests and strikes against French President Macron's agenda of austerity and war last September, or the multi-million-strong general strikes in Italy driven by opposition to the Gaza genocide and war, are nowhere to be found.

These are not careless omissions by the SAP, but a reflection of their Pabloite, anti-socialist politics. As far as they are concerned, the "here and now" consists of invincible imperialist powers competing for a dominant position. The only things the "left" can do is to apply pressure through protest to persuade the imperialists to moderate their policies or back one group of imperialist gangsters against the other. The fight to unify workers in the United States and Europe against imperialist war and the financial oligarchy that dominates social and political life on both sides of the Atlantic is not in their vocabulary.

The SAP and RGA as a whole are representatives of pseudo-left politics. They speak on behalf of a privileged section of the middle class who fall within the top 10 percent of society when it comes to income and wealth, and whose relatively comfortable social position is bound up with the defence of capitalist property relations. Their "left" talking points reflect a desire to orchestrate a modest redistribution of wealth and power within the top 10 percent of society to the benefit of trade union bureaucrats, well-paid academics, and other petty-bourgeois forces.

Pabloism and the RGA

The SAP statement on Greenland is a typical example of Pabloite politics, which emerged in the early 1950s as a direct repudiation of orthodox Trotskyism. Responding impressionistically and from the standpoint of the petty-bourgeoisie to the temporary stabilisation of capitalism after World War II, the Pabloites wrote off the working class as the central revolutionary force in capitalist society. Instead, they argued that sections of the Stalinist bureaucracy, the trade union bureaucracies in the advanced capitalist countries, and bourgeois nationalist forces in the colonial world could serve as substitutes for the working class to transform society. Since the working class would, in their view, no longer have any independent role to play, they advocated the liquidation of the Fourth International's sections into the "mass movement."

Pabloism spoke for a rapidly growing petty-bourgeoisie bound up with the expansion of the welfare state, universities, and international institutions and NGOs following World War II. They believed that the temporary concessions forced on the ruling class by the revolutionary-minded workers across Europe in the aftermath of World War II had produced a "new reality" that made the class struggle led by the working class under a socialist programme obsolete.

Pabloite politics had a devastating impact in Denmark, one of the Nordic countries that undertook some of the most wide-ranging social reforms in the post-war period. The followers of the Fourth International, following the liquidationist line developed by Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel, adapted wholesale to a right-wing split from the Communist Party after the Soviet Union's suppression of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Led by Aksel Larsen, a long-time Stalinist, those who broke from the Communist Party of Denmark went on to form SF in 1958. Larsen, who was the leader of the Communist Party throughout the Moscow Trials and Great Terror of the late 1930s--during which the Stalinist bureaucracy murdered hundreds of thousands of Trotskyists, old Bolsheviks, and other oppositionists--responded to the brutal suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by claiming to advocate a middle course between the Soviet Union and US imperialism, without being subordinated to either.

The reality was quite different. Like all the right-wing splits from Stalinism that developed in this period, SF retained the Stalinists' bitter hostility to the independent political role of the working class and swiftly accommodated itself to American imperialism. Less than a decade after its founding, SF agreed to support a Social Democrat government. In the post-war period, the Social Democrats were ardent champions of Denmark's membership in NATO and Cold War alliance with Washington, which went so far as permitting the US military to use Greenland as a testing ground for weaponry and even a storage site for nuclear weapons. SF has repeatedly performed the function of helping the Social Democrats to secure a parliamentary majority up to the present day and appears set to do so again following March's parliamentary election.

A breakaway group from SF opposed to collaborating with the Social Democrats, which included the Danish Pabloites and various "New Left" currents, emerged in 1967 under the name Left Socialists (VS). It was only in 1980 that the Pabloites established the SAP.

The key political constant for the Pabloites throughout all these organisational transformations was the blocking of a revolutionary socialist programme for the working class. This was illustrated by the founding of the RGA in 1989, which was conceived of initially as an electoral alliance between the SAP, the remnants of the Stalinist DKP, and VS to secure representation in the Danish parliament (Folketing), for which parties or electoral alliances must gain more than 2 percent of the national vote. Although the RGA was subsequently formalised as a political party that members could join, its founding factions continued their organisational autonomy within the party, as the SAP does to the present day.

Working alongside the Stalinists of the DKP, the SAP claims to be seeking a "revolutionary regroupment" within the RGA, which the SAP openly acknowledges is not a socialist party. In a 1999 perspectives resolution, the SAP declared:

> Red-Green Alliance is not a revolutionary party in the classical Leninist sense (based on democratic centralism, with a developed program for a socialist revolution, etc.), and we do not consider it desirable to try to enforce a development in this direction. Neither the subjective, nor the objective conditions for such a development are present at the moment.

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The document continued:

> At this stage of development of the Red-Green Alliance we can merely note that there is no pre-set limit as to how far the Red-Green Alliance might develop towards an actual revolutionary party. But, on the other hand, the work of SAP inside the Red-Green Alliance has such a policy as its guiding line.

What the history of the RGA has in fact demonstrated is that there is "no pre-set limit" to how far it can integrate itself into bourgeois, pro-imperialist politics, and no limits to how far the Pabloites are prepared to accompany this process with "left" and revolutionary-sounding rhetoric.

From 2011, the RGA helped secure a majority for the right-wing Social Democrat government led by Helle Thorning-Schmidt, which carried out attacks on workers following the 2008 economic crisis. In 2014, the RGA joined the government in backing Danish support for the bombardment of Islamic State positions in Syria by American imperialism, which took place within the framework of Washington's "regime change" operation to bring to power a pro-Western puppet in Damascus. After Russia's US-provoked invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the RGA emerged as a champion of the US-NATO war, which it dressed up as a struggle for Ukraine's "self-determination."

The RGA and the defence of "the Danish Realm"

Following the outbreak of the Ukraine war, the RGA performed a sharp turn to the right. This culminated at its 2025 national congress in the acceptance by the party of the need to defend the Kingdom of Denmark's existing borders, which marked a shift from the party's formal opposition to militarism and war. The Kingdom includes Greenland, the world's largest island, in the Arctic, and the Faroe Islands in the North Atlantic, which occupy a strategically important location north of Britain and to the southeast of Iceland for controlling Russian naval access to the open sea.

While the RGA's previous programme did not stop it from embracing US imperialist-led wars of aggression, the 2025 congress and the debates leading up to it involved a more explicit championing of European imperialist aggression. In a document summarising the debate in the RGA on "defence" and security policy and advancing some conclusions, the party's executive committee wrote in 2024:

> The RGA was born in a period marked by the end of the Cold War, where the hope was for a peaceful existence between east and west. It was a period where most took peace in Europe for granted, and that we should never again experience war in Europe. The fact that this was an illusion became clear two years ago, when Russia attacked Ukraine.

The pseudo-left forces in the RGA apparently did not consider the 30 years of uninterrupted US wars of aggression, the vast majority of which were supported by the European imperialists, to have any influence on the present world situation. This is because wars of aggression and plunder are perfectly acceptable to political forces like the RGA when they suit the interests of the imperialist powers with which they are aligned. Revealing is how the RGA has abandoned its traditional opposition to NATO since the outbreak of the US-NATO war on Russia. Instead of calling for Denmark's immediate withdrawal, the party now states that withdrawal is an ultimate goal, but that "alternative security structures" must first be created.

These "alternative structures" are to be based on a more aggressive assertion of European imperialist interests independently of and if necessary against the US. This is underlined by the statement put out by SAP asserting that the Greenlandic government *can* freely chose to sanction a massive expansion of European military forces in the Arctic, and that these forces can, at least in the short term, act as an effective counterweight to Trump's threats.

At the party's 2025 national meeting, the executive committee's proposal on "defence" and security policy was adopted by a substantial majority of delegates. Using the language European imperialist powers like Germany have employed to justify a massive rearmament drive, the document declared that policy changes were necessary for a "new era." It continued, "To be able to stand on our own two feet, we must strengthen our defensive capabilities with an effective territorial defence, which must be able to enforce the sovereignty of Denmark and the Danish Realm and protect the population and our infrastructure."

The SAP faction of the RGA formally cast a vote against this change at the congress. However, the bogus character of such posturing is underscored by the statement put out on Greenland, which presents European imperialism as a more progressive alternative to the US in the "here and now."

The full significance of the RGA's embrace of Danish and European militarism is now on display, as the European imperialists endorse Trump's criminal war of extermination against Iran, epitomised by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's declaration that the precepts of international law are to be irrelevant when judging the conflict.

As for the Danish government, which deserved unconditional backing over Greenland according to the RGA because it was defending Greenlanders' right to "self-determination" and "international law," Social Democrat Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen asserted on the first day of the war that it was "too early to say" whether the US/Israeli bombardment of Iran was a good or bad thing, and that she would support regime change in Tehran. Denmark then voted in the UN Security Council together with the US, Britain, and France to endorse a resolution condemning Iran's retaliatory attacks on Israel and the Gulf states but saying nothing about Washington and Tel Aviv's war of extermination on Iran.

Opposition to imperialist war and plunder can only come from the international working class. Workers in Europe and the United States have no interest in backing one or another contending party in the imperialist redivision of the world now underway. While differences between the predators flare up from time to time, these always revolve around the question of who will control the distribution of the spoils of imperialist conquest. However, all of the European and North American imperialist powers are determined to deploy the most brutal forms of violence to secure their interests.

Workers in Denmark and throughout Europe require the programme of world socialist revolution and political independence from all factions of the ruling class to put an end to imperialist war and the capitalist system that gives rise to it. The only political movement with a decades-long record of struggle in defence of these principles and against all anti-Trotskyist tendencies, like the Pabloites, who have repudiated them is the International Committee of the Fourth International. This is the movement that workers and young people ready to fight the resurgence of imperialist war and barbarism must now build in Denmark and internationally.

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