

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

SECRETTO : BNA
Mr. Robert M. Brandin

DATE: August 7, 1959

FROM : Mr. Kerrigan *hnd*

GR/ORG- memo

SUBJECT: Addendum to Briefing Notes
On GreenlandPurchase of Greenland

We have had several inquiries in recent years about feasibility of purchasing Greenland from the Danes. The most recent of these was an inquiry from Admiral Radford, the then Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, addressed I think to Mr. Murphy, asking for the Department's views upon a proposed purchase agreement. There was also some thinking, never committed to informal inquiry, in Joint Chiefs, about possible purchase of northern half of Greenland.

Our response to Radford, which you will find in the files, was along the general lines that it was our view that the time was long past when such a plan would be feasible, although it might have been practical enough in the early thirties. We went on to point out that Greenland is, under the Constitution of 1954, an integral part of Denmark, just as much as the State of New Jersey is an integral part of the United States of America. Apart from any other considerations, this change in status from that of a colony to an integral part of a Kingdom created a nearly insoluble Constitutional problem as regards the sale.

The response then went on to stress the psychological importance of Greenland to Denmark and general Danish sensitivity to threats to its sovereignty in Greenland.

The final point as I recall was that any overt action in the direction of attempted purchase of Greenland could be extremely dangerous for the retention of our activities there, and could hardly improve our status, since we are permitted to do almost anything, literally, that we want to in Greenland.

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