

EIR questions Kuupik Kleist, Greenland's premier, on arctic geopolitics and bank separation

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(EIR question starts at about 38 minutes)

Greenland's Premier responds to EIR questions about arctic geopolitics and bank separation

COPENHAGEN, Jan. 14, 2012(EIRNS) ? Kuupik Kleist, the Premier of Greenland's home rule government, answered questions today about Greenland's increasing role in foreign policy, and the increasing international interest in Greenland, at the International Press Center here, run by the Danish Foreign Ministry. During his initial remarks, and answers to other questions, he stressed the crucial role that he hopes future mineral, and gas and oil development will play to increase the standard of living of the poor society in Greenland -- to enable them to build infrastructure, provide jobs and expand the economy, which is now based on fishing, and the block grant from the Danish state[Greenland is part of the Kingdom of Denmark].

Kleist addressed the scare stories circulating that thousands of Chinese workers would swamp Greenland's society. There are actually only two applications for big raw materials projects, because the biggest problem, he said, is that almost none of the great foreign investor projects that are on the drawing boards have secured financing, because of the financial crisis. Kleist denounced the hypocrisy of the Danish government promoting Danish companies trying to arrange Chinese investment, but warning against Greenland doing the same. He chided Europe for outsourcing their industries, and dispelled the idea that tourism, for example, could be the road to the future for Greenland.

EIR reporter Michelle Rasmussen was able to ask two questions (the video will soon be at: www.schillerinstitut.dk [1]). (The full transcript is below.)

EIR stated that our magazine, as well as many people in the world, are looking at arctic development as the new frontier, and asked if he saw that Greenland could act as a bridge to help expand the cooperation between the great powers, U.S., Russia and China, at a time when the tensions are increasing because of the Mideast, the missile defense, etc.?

In addition, in terms of the problem with financing for the great projects, you had signed a statement critical of the financial world in the financial crisis, about a year ago. Would you support the idea of separating the banks, so we could write off the speculative debt, and have more emphasis in the financial world on actually financing productive development?

In response to the second questions Kuupik Kleist said, ?The last question is a hard one. I think I will leave that by just saying that we are fully aware of the debate on those issues. My government does not have an official view on whether the financing sector should be subject to more political influence, but we are following the debate closely.?

As for the first question, Kuupik Kleist said, "With respect to the arctic as the new frontier, and Greenland bridging "we usually say we are bridging Europe to North America. Early on, during the years of the Cold War, we were kind of, not really a bridge, maybe a wall between the western world, and the communistic world. Today, the world, and the balance of powers are changing rapidly, and the geopolitical role of Greenland is now, becoming more and more the question of Greenland playing a role with regard to strategic minerals, which, in my view at least, is quite similar to the situation during the Cold War," using as an example that Europe is "asking to Greenland break the Chinese monopoly on rare earth elements."

He attacked the fact that "the EU parliamentarians have been asking Greenland to exclude some countries [from investing in Greenland]. My answer to that is that we are not in a situation to exclude investors from any country, unless, of course, some specific situation might arise. But Greenland is open to investments from the whole world, taking into account that the investors accept the regulations and requirements from Greenland in doing so." Anyway, it is actually very hard to determine where a company is from, in the days of cyberspace, and foreign ownership of companies around the world. "I don't think it's fair to ask Greenland to play that kind of significant role in balancing the powers, to protect others' interests more than protecting, for instance, Chinese interests."

Afterwards, he, and the delegation from Greenland, were given material on our arctic development program, as well as Glass-Steagall.

Full transcript

EIR: Our magazine, as well as many people in the world, are looking at arctic development as the new frontier, and the question is, do you see that Greenland could act as a bridge to help expand the cooperation between the great powers, U.S., Russia and China, which, right now, there are a lot of tensions building up, because of the Mideast, the missile defense, and other things?

And then the other question is, in terms of the problem with financing for the great projects, I know that you had signed a statement critical of the financial world in the financial crisis, about a year ago. Would you support the idea of separating the banks, so we could write off the speculative debt, and have more emphasis in the financial world on actually financing productive development?

Kuupik Kleist: The last question is a hard one. I think I will leave that by just saying that we are fully aware of the debate on those issues. My government does not have an official view on whether the financing sector should be subject to more political influence, but we are following the debate closely. So I will limit myself by saying that.

With respect to the arctic as the new frontier, and Greenland bridging "we usually would say we are bridging Europe to North America. Early on, during the years of the Cold War, we were kind of, not really a bridge, maybe a wall between the western world, and the communistic world. Today, the world, and the balance of powers are changing rapidly, and the geopolitical role of Greenland is now, becoming more and more the question of Greenland playing a role with regard to strategic minerals, which, in my view at least, is quite similar to the situation during the Cold War. But, then again, one should be careful in addressing the kind of issues, when Europe, or the U.S. are asking Greenland to break the Chinese monopoly on rare earth elements, for instance, how would the EU, especially the EU, act if the situation should arise, that Greenland would be blocking any investments from countries which the Europeans don't like? And that's a very, very big question, which cannot be [snaps his fingers] answered like this. Me, myself, I have to balance my official statements on this. That goes without saying.

But what I can say is that actually the EU parliament was asking those questions to me. To be more direct, the EU parliamentarians have been asking Greenland to exclude some countries. My answer to that is that we are not in a situation to exclude investors from any country, unless, of course, some specific situation might arise. But Greenland is open to investments from the whole world, taking into account that the

investors accept the regulations and requirements from Greenland in doing so.

Also, I want to add that, when you look at the big international companies that dealing with minerals and big industries, it's really hard to tell where they come from. Would you be able to identify any kind of capital floating around in cyberspace? Would you be able to name a U.S. university, that it is actually an American university, if it is owned by Chinese investors? Would you go to Australia, and name one of the thousands of mineral companies, that they are Australian, actually, if they're funded by capital from anywhere else?

On the one hand, we are, of course, strictly aware of the responsibility that goes with dealing with that kind of issues. On the other hand, I don't think it's fair to ask Greenland to play that kind of significant role in balancing the powers, to protect others' interests more than protecting, for instance, Chinese interests.?

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[1] <http://www.schillerinstitut.dk/>