

Danish Security Policy over the last 50 Years – Long-Term Essential Security Priorities

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INTRODUCTION

This article is about the general priorities of Danish security policy over the last 50 years. But what exactly is security policy – and how should one perceive priorities?

First a few remarks on semantics. The term security policy is new. From 1949 Denmark only gradually used the term security policy, rather than defence policy and foreign policy. In 1945 the United Nation's Security Council had been established. It was to act on behalf of the Member States when international peace and security were threatened. In 1947 the National Security Council was established in the United States. The Council was evidently intended to take care of the US' national security. With the introduction of these vital institutions the step was taken towards using the terms "international" and "national security policy". In general the term "security policy" became common in the beginning of the 1960s. Minister for Foreign Affairs Per Hækkerup talks about security policy in his book on Danish Foreign Policy from 1965. Furthermore the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1967 could publish the first book on Danish security policy.¹

In fact Denmark has conducted security policy from time immemorial. Only the term has not been used.² The usage of this language reflects the situation after World War II. As perceived by the winners, World War II was caused by aggression based on racism and hyper-nationalism. It had to be prevented at all costs. The world community had to be able to defend itself. Therefore disarmament was not the first priority, as it had been in the League of Nations. In this new international setting, talking about international as well as national

¹ Hækkerup, P. (1965), *Danmarks Udenrigspolitik*, Fremad, Copenhagen; Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1968) *Dansk Sikkerhedspolitik 1948-1966*, Copenhagen.

² See: Villaume, P. (1995), *Allieret med forbehold: Danmark, NATO og den kolde krig. En studie i dansk sikkerhedspolitik 1949 - 1961*, Eirene, Copenhagen.

security became especially relevant. Security Policy was perceived as policy dealing with war and peace. It concerned "high politics", not the routinely economic and diplomatic relations between states.

It is significant that the concept of "security policy" was launched with considerable political weight and grounded in fundamental, existential relations. It could thus easily be expanded and take over other areas, where its fundamental, existential content could spill over. The territory of the term "security policy" was, so to speak, born to expand. Already McNamara, when US Minister for Defence, could state - with a sidelong glance at the Vietnam War - that "development is security". Our own Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kjeld Olesen, used the same device when, speaking in the early 1980s, he stressed that comprehensive Danish development aid should be viewed primarily as part of Danish security policy.³ In this way Denmark could be allowed to spend less on defence as such than the average for members of NATO.

So when we look in this article at the general approaches to, and priorities of Danish security policy, security policy is that part of foreign policy, of defence policy, and of domestic policy that broadly speaking deals with essential threats to the survival of the political entity called Denmark. Seen in this light, it is obvious that the concept of security undergoes expansions and contractions all the time, depending on the international environment. The basic question is, then: What is threatening Denmark?

SECURITY PRIORITIES

Did Denmark have general and stable priorities for security policy during the last 50 years? Given the fundamental changes Denmark underwent due to dramatically new conditions in the international system, one could doubt it. Denmark chose sides in the global system of alliances in 1949 and thus gave up a long-lasting, almost dogmatic policy of neutrality. Denmark was a frontline state during all of the Cold War and then, in 1989-91, Denmark faced a completely new

³ See: Heurlin, Bertel (1990), *Danmark, Europa, NATO*, SNU, Copenhagen.

world order in which it had to navigate. Do there exist long-term, essential security priorities that can span these turbulent years?⁴

Long-term, essential security priorities presuppose a basic security policy aim. From an analytical point of view, one could claim that there do exist common security-policy aims, which apply to all states. From these general aims specific national priorities will emerge. The primary and fundamental aim would be continued existence – neither to be destroyed physically nor cease to function as a sovereign state: i.e. to prevent the destruction of Denmark by a nuclear attack or by becoming a region of a Greater Germany, a Soviet Empire, or in a Federal Europe.

The principle secondary aim would be to maintain domestic autonomy (self-determination regarding internal politics) - an aim that was, for example, challenged during the German occupation in World War II. A second aim would be to maintain external autonomy (self-determination regarding foreign policy): i.e. to avoid a situation such as that of Czechoslovakia during the Cold War, which, roughly speaking, adhered slavishly to the foreign policy of USSR at all times except in 1968. A third aim would be to maintain geographical integrity: in other words to maintain Denmark in its current geographical shape following the 1920 settlement. A fourth aim would be to maintain demographic integrity: i.e. an integrated society based on Danish identity. Fifth, one should mention attempts to maintain the greatest possible prosperity and finally the aim to provide a peaceful and stable regional and international environment.

Thus we have established an analytical scheme of general security aims which in principle apply to all states. These aims are illustrated by analytical examples from Denmark. However, the aims outlined have a clear anchor in the empirical as well. They can be identified in official Danish declarations. In order to fulfil aims, it is necessary to make priorities. Long-term, essential security priorities can be formulated and analysed in many ways. As against the aims above, they are not general. On the contrary, they are uniquely valid for Denmark. I choose to operate with two types of priority as the point of departure of this analysis: 1. General politically oriented long-term essential security priorities and 2. Geographically-regionally oriented priorities.

⁴ See a.o.: Seidenfaden-rapporten (1970), *Problemer omkring dansk sikkerhedspolitik*, Copenhagen, SNU (1993), *Danmark efter den kolde krig*, Copenhagen; SNU (1995), *Dansk og europæisk sikkerhed*, Copenhagen; Branner, H. (1995), *Danmark i en større verden. Udenrigspolitikken efter 1945*.

The general Danish long-term essential security priorities – i.e. priorities aiming at promoting Danish security – concern three dimensions: firstly, the priority of promoting an international legal system based on universal values, including human rights i.e. support “law and order” and political norms for behaviour at an international level. Denmark is a small state with very limited resources – not least militarily – and thus without the possibility of backing its own conception of the political game in the international system with force. As a small state with global trade and transport interests, Denmark attempts to sustain a fixed set of rules, anchored in an international legal system. This priority has existed for a long time: for instance, Denmark was very active in establishing an international arbitration to solve interstate conflicts in the late 19th century. Likewise international disarmament has been on the Danish agenda since 1900. Furthermore, this was a key issue for Denmark during the Cold War. An international legal system, the law of nations, is a clear priority for Danish security policy.⁵

A second security-policy priority is to promote co-operation and integration. Co-operative relations, as opposed to conflictual ones, are seen as positive. Even though the USSR was perceived in many ways as a threat to Danish security, the priorities included co-operation with the Warsaw Pact countries and the USSR. Détente policy concerning Europe and the Nordic Countries was also part of this co-operation priority. The priority of integration is an elaboration of co-operative relations. As for the other priorities, it applies to the whole period. Already in 1945 Denmark became a member of the United Nations – the wartime alliance becoming a peacetime organisation based on narrow integrative co-operation, e.g. in relation to the Security Council. Like the other UN Member States, Denmark entrusted a vital part of its external autonomy to the Council in cases involving international peace and security. Later Denmark accepted military-political integration in NATO, an integration – organised, tested, and trained in peacetime – that would expand to full effect in times of war. A remarkable example of deep military-political integration was the establishment of the joint command in 1961.⁶ Within the BALTAP an ideal co-operation between German and Danish officers in a multinational framework evolved. However, the most significant entrusting of sovereignty – including internal as well as external auton-

⁵ See: DUPI (1999), *Humanitarian intervention*, Copenhagen.

⁶ See: Heurlin (1990) & Villaume (1995), chapter 4.

omy – occurred in connection with the development of EC/EU. Primarily it was in the economic field, namely Denmark's accession to the EC in 1972 and to the Internal Market in 1986. But in addition the political and, most recently, the security-policy fields were touched upon in connection with accession to the Maastricht Treaty, with the Danish opt-outs in 1993 and with the Amsterdam Treaty in 1998. In the priorities for co-operation and integration lies the wish for predictability, stability in the environment and maximise influence on this environment on equal terms with the co-operating states.

Thirdly, we have security priorities which address Danish aims by building up and promoting a military defence of the country. This is to happen through co-operation with like-minded states, i.e. states with the same general priorities. Due to the fact that for geographical and geostrategic reasons alone she is extremely difficult to defend, Denmark has – after 1949 – chosen a defence priority which aims at territorial defence in relation to a military alliance based on mutual reinforcement and military integration. Denmark is militarily vulnerable to an extreme extent: flat, directly accessible to air, naval, and land forces. In the inter-war period, given how difficult it was externally and domestically to enter into alliances, this had the effect that Denmark pursued a very low-key defence policy. For instance, in 1924 the Danish Government suggested that the armed forces should be abolished and replaced by a state navy and a gendarmerie corps. In its way, to give this priority to avoiding military provocation was rational in the given situation.

After World War II the defence dimension – seen in the light of the possibility of establishing an international front against possible aggressors – was an important part of long-term essential security priorities. The starting point was reliance on the United Nations, but very soon thereafter a Euro-Atlantic alliance, NATO, took over. After the end of the Cold War, this priority was continued in a significantly new shape. Defence now became a very much wider term. From being primarily a consumer of security (cf. the bilateral and multilateral plans about allied reinforcement of Denmark in crisis and wartime) Denmark now became primarily a producer of security.⁷ This particular long-term essential security priority gave rise to the term "the militarisation" of Danish foreign and security policy – "militarisation" meaning that the military forces came to play an increasing role in

⁷ See: Heurlin, B. (1997), "Dansk forsvarspolitik. En ny verden – en ny forsvarspolitik". In: *FOKUS*, 5, 1997, DUPI, Copenhagen.

foreign and security policy. Now defence became not only territorial defence and a part in the mutual NATO deterrence. It was also a means to ensure stability, counter chaos, hyper-nationalism, ethnic cleansing, and genocide both in the European region and globally. Denmark was particularly active in the attempt to establish, by way of military integration and co-operation, functioning, democratic societies in the new and re-established states after the Cold War, especially the Central and Eastern European States.⁸

These three long-term, essential security priorities dealing with legal order, co-operation, and defence have been continued and significantly pursued throughout the last 50 years. It is true for all the priorities that fundamental changes took place around the end of the Cold War. Here is a distinct dividing line. In the field of the legal order, where the priority had been to apply the law of nations (i.e. use international law to promote Danish security), the bipolar world-order meant that the international system of law and norms was divided into two competing parts. In this priority, Denmark attempted to straddle the two parts - subject, however, to the limits derived from having been solidly anchored in the Western part during the period of bipolarity. At that time, it was hardly possible to talk about a coherent international community that could act in support of international law. But after the Cold War, with only one superpower, the situation changed significantly: the signs appeared that now only one and not two international systems of justice including norms and values existed. This is a state of affairs, which Denmark has supported, usually whole-heartedly. To Denmark, however, it is a problem that the United States, the only remaining superpower and Denmark's closest ally, in several areas pursues a policy standing against or outside established international law.

Likewise, the security priority of co-operation and integration underwent crucial changes through the years 1989-91. Whereas the security priority of co-operation during the Cold War was often difficult and problematic, and at times expressed in unilateral initiatives opposed to close allies, this security priority was upgraded to a priority of integration after the Cold War. The Central and Eastern European countries were now included in the renewed Danish security priorities, with the aim of promoting their integration in the European and Atlantic institutions, which Denmark itself had benefited from, EU

⁸ See: *Fremtidens Forsvar: Beretning fra Forsvarskommissionen af 1997.*

and NATO. The new structural conditions made possible a clear intensification of the security priority of co-operation and integration.

The same applies to the priority of defence. As mentioned above, the transition from bi- to unipolarity marked a clearly widened use of the general Danish priority of defence. Now Danish security was promoted openly – with the full support of the population – by use of military force, even with means as far-reaching as participation in actual war and warlike operations, as was the case in Bosnia and Kosovo.

GEOGRAPHICALLY CONDITIONED SECURITY PRIORITIES

The three long-term essential security priorities discussed above – law, order, and norms, co-operation/integration, and defence – are general in relation to the geographically conditioned Danish priorities. Those general priorities are closely connected to Danish positions and possibilities, but they are also valid for many other states.

The geographically conditioned security priorities are, however, for obvious reasons highly specific to Denmark. Many states will, like Denmark, have priorities that are specifically aimed at different global, regional and sub-regional relations and areas. Needless to say, all states' priorities differ. However, Denmark is unique in quite a few ways, not least in her geographical relations. Thus one can see that, during the 50 years in question, Denmark has had no less than five long-term essential security priorities based on geographical-regional relations: a universal, an Atlantic, a Western European, an all-European, and a Nordic. These priorities are particularly connected with precisely the 50 years in question. Apart from the regionally defined security priorities, Denmark can also be said to have country-specific security priorities: in respect of Britain, Germany, the United States, and USSR/Russia. In this article, these priorities will be included in the five geographically conditioned security priorities outlined.

The Universal Long-term Essential Security Priorities

It does not seem obvious to think along universal lines regarding national security. National security seems best dealt with in relation to the immediate environment. But that is not necessarily so for all states. Denmark has special conditions that justify universal security

priorities. During the entire period, Denmark is one of the countries of the world, which has the largest international trade and transport activities per inhabitant. Even though the majority of the trade takes place with EU Member States, Danish trade and investment interests in the rest of the world are considerable. Despite its modest size, Denmark is present globally to a high degree. With Denmark economically and militarily very vulnerable and extremely dependent on a stable and benign international environment, it makes sense to think of security through a universal priority.

This security priority has specifically been demonstrated in a string of vital areas. From 1945-48 Denmark has seen its general security handled politically through the UN. It was important to Denmark from the very start to join the universal organisation based on the anti-axis wartime alliance. Likewise an efficient Security Council which could counter aggressions like that of Nazi Germany was important to Denmark.

When the UN Security Council could not function as anticipated due to the Cold War, it became important to Denmark that the UN Treaty accepted collective defence organisations (par. 51). Denmark could thus join NATO without weakening UN. The one time during the Cold War where the UN acted militarily – in the Korean War – due to a temporary Soviet boycott of the Security Council – Denmark participated with a hospital ship. Since then Denmark has taken part in most of the many military UN operations which took place under chapter 6. After the Cold War, this universal security priority has continued, not only based on the UN but also on other international organisations that handle relations concerning broad security policy. The most crucial example is Denmark's participation in NATO's military intervention in Kosovo in 1999.

The universal security priority is strikingly demonstrated through aid to developing countries. Denmark is one of the few countries which exceeded the United Nations' aim of 0.7 per cent of GNP to developing countries. Already during the Cold War, the Danish Parliament decided to take the figure to 1 per cent of GNP. Tied to GNP, this aid is continuously growing. In 1997, Parliament furthermore decided that an additional 1/2 per cent of GNP should be used in what is today called MI-FRESTA, i.e. international efforts firstly to protect and preserve the environment, and secondly to maintain and establish peace and stability regionally as well as globally.

As an internationally and globally highly dependent small state, universal security priorities make sense. Strengthening global and international security will in the final analysis promote national Danish security.

This applies not least after the end of the Cold War which has brought on growing globalisation; globalisation furthered by the rapid development of the postmodern society – nationally as well as internationally – which thrives in the new structure of the international system: unipolarity. During the bipolarity of the Cold War, it was essential as far as possible to build bridges at an international level spanning East-West conflict. The main aim was to avoid the worst case for both national and international security: the outbreak of a world war that could involve the use of nuclear arms. After the end of the Cold War, the present expectations under the universal security priorities are quite different. In the current international system the threat of a global nuclear war is practically zero. The security priorities are now aimed at taking joint responsibility for the extended, soft global security threats. These threats also existed during the Cold War but were for various reasons not a high priority. The priority then was mostly hard security. This fact manifested itself not least due to the continuous arms race and nuclear rearmament, and, on the other hand, due to intensive negotiations about their opposite: arms control and disarmament.

After the Cold War, soft security has returned in a new and greatly extended form. It is precisely global and transnational threats that are topical. These threats recognise national boundaries only to a limited degree: flows of refugees, international crime, pollution, natural disasters, and global epidemics. But hard security also touches new dimensions. World wars and wars between superpowers are very unlikely. But what creates insecurity is civil wars, ethnic conflicts, and striking violations of human rights in a broad sense: genocide, ethnic cleansing, humanitarian catastrophes.⁹ This has given the Danish universal security priorities brand new dimensions, which are reflected in actual politics in an increased Danish emphasis on international undertakings that involve the economic, organisational, political and not least military level.

The Atlantic Long-term Essential Security Priorities

⁹ See Heurlin, B. (2000), *Global, Regional and National Security*, DUPI, Copenhagen.

Denmark has chosen an Atlantic security priority for three important reasons. Firstly, Denmark is the only European country that has possessions on the North American continent: Greenland. Any Danish security priority thus must include an Atlantic dimension. For security policy reasons, Greenland played a substantial role during the Cold War – a role that lately seems to have been made topical again by the American missile shield project.¹⁰ Secondly, Denmark has to promote security vis-à-vis Germany. For the period in question, Germany has to be looked upon as Denmark's closest partner. So why does this country get into the picture here? To Denmark it has been essential that Germany is embedded in a military alliance which promotes military integration and has the United States as its most important partner and undisputed leader. In relation to Germany, the substantial engagement of the United States is fundamental to Danish security. However, thirdly, it is also this engagement, manifested through NATO, which has been, and is the most important general factor in Danish security policy. The priority of strengthening Danish security by an Atlantic dimension, it must be said, implies great advantages to Denmark. First, the United States is the country which guarantees Danish security – and thus has great influence on Denmark – at the same time is located reasonably far away from Denmark in the geographical sense, so that Denmark is not in a Canada-like relation of dependence on the superpower. Thus the possibility of "entrapment" is minimised. Secondly, the United States is a substantially military presence in Europe as "Europe's pacifier," which is why Denmark is also secured against "abandonment".

In a way, the Danish situation in respect of the Atlantic security priority was almost the best of all possible worlds for Denmark in the bipolar world order. Denmark was geostrategically placed as a front-line state, quite close to the iron curtain and in a position attributed a certain importance – as "the cork" of the Baltic Sea. With this position, Denmark would under all circumstances be covered by the American nuclear guarantee and the guarantee of territorial defence. Thus Denmark could pursue a particular "Danish" policy within NATO, a policy with reservations. Denmark made reservations concerning the presence of nuclear arms on its territory, "under the present conditions", i.e. in peacetime. Likewise there was a reservation about stationing foreign troops, and also a disputed, unilaterally de-

¹⁰ DUPI (1997), *Grønland under den kolde krig. Dansk og amerikansk sikkerhedspolitik 1945-68*. Volumes 1 and 2.

clared reservation as to Bornholm was accepted. This special policy, promoted by Denmark, was a consequence of the security priority of co-operation – which in this connection implied that Denmark was not to be perceived as a territory from which offensive warfare against the USSR could originate. In principle Denmark claimed to possess weapons of defence only. The policy based on this priority can be characterised as a "policy of non-provocation" towards USSR.

During the so-called second Cold War of the early 1980s – the period following the short period of détente (from the early 1970s until the mid-late 1970s) – a situation arose where the Atlantic priority was toned down. Now Danish security was to be promoted by a policy based on the priority of co-operation. It was a policy – the so-called "footnote policy" – that for a few years led to the appearance of the concept "Denmarkisation". It was a kind of match to the older term "Finlandization". This term had indicated extreme adaptation to a neighbouring superpower through partial, voluntary surrender of internal and external autonomy in order to ensure survival as a state.¹¹ "Denmarkisation" became the term for a country which free-rides in an alliance: i.e. a country, which does not wish to share mutual burdens but still enjoys full protection and guarantees. The starting point was the new, "second Cold War" American security priorities, which were seen as confrontational, based on marked nuclear rearmament, abandonment of arms control and heightened demands on the USSR on the arms-control negotiation front. In this situation, the Government chose to pursue a policy in NATO, which expressed Danish reservations towards the general NATO policy on nuclear arms in East-West negotiations. Instead of resigning, the Government – a Conservative-Liberal minority Government – chose to run a foreign policy, which it was itself opposed to. This could be explained as a manifestation of the Government's conviction that the footnote-policy was something Denmark could allow itself without threatening basic Danish security. Although a case of "high politics", Government as well as opposition allowed domestic policy concerns to overshadow the concerns of security policy.

Seemingly the Atlantic security priorities played a weaker role during this period, but behind the spectacular political differences, the basic, practical day-to-day Denmark-NATO co-operation continued. Denmark was in the last analysis still a true Atlantic country.

¹¹ See: Heurlin, B. (ed.) (1984), "Nordiske sikkerhedsproblemer", chapter 4, *Danmarks sikkerhedspolitik*, SNU, Copenhagen.

This priority changed fundamentally, however, after the end of the Cold War. Denmark had now become a small state equal to other small states. There was no position as a frontline state to lean on. Denmark was not threatened militarily by anyone. Security in all of Europe, not only in the Western part, was now handled by the sole superpower, the United States. The threat was now destabilisation or actual chaos in exposed parts of Europe. In this situation, Denmark chose to rely on the Atlantic security priority in order to meet its new security needs. And it was a choice that decisively influenced Danish foreign and security policy.

First, NATO became the organisation, which in the new European order could most efficiently promote security for Denmark. Denmark emphasised NATO's fundamental new role as a kind of collective-security institution. Collective defence and territorial defence naturally were still core functions, but the focus was on new stability-initiating interventions outside the area of the old NATO. Denmark, actively and without reservations, took part in a series of such actions, the latest in Kosovo. The new policy was also reflected in the attitudes of the population: the war effort in Kosovo was backed unreservedly – more than in any other country. NATO was supported by 82 per cent of the population. This should be compared to a backing as low as around 50 per cent during the Cold War.

Secondly, it became relevant to rely on the Atlantic security priority in the widened Danish salient environment: the Baltic Sea was no longer split between East and West but was a co-operating whole – with the United States playing a growing role. The United States now for the first time in history became not only an all-European but also a Northern European power. The United States established agreements on co-operation with the revived Baltic countries through "The Baltic Charter". The United States engaged in the Northern European area through the Northern European Initiative (NEI), and intensified its relations with Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. To Denmark, the American political presence in the new Danish salient environment, where Denmark was following a highly active policy towards the Baltic countries, provided a further incentive to lean on the Atlantic security priority. Denmark was by far the most eager and most efficient advocate of the quick admission of the Baltic countries to NATO. Thus, Denmark also became an advocate for parts of the

American political establishment and a kind of promoter for a general Northern European American security priority.¹²

Thirdly, Denmark saw its advantage in staying close to the United States in the New World Order. The Atlantic security priority gained influence. Denmark deliberately aimed at a position as one of the closest allies of the United States. Denmark could promote this security priority through its very active policy regarding defence and security in the Baltic Countries and in the Balkans. Possible negative effects of the Atlantic security priority could be a weakening of the European priorities and a reputation as the lapdog of the United States. Furthermore problems appeared in connection with the American plans on National Missile Defence, NMD (later MD, Missile Defence), the missile shield. Here Greenland plays a central role. Denmark will, however, under all circumstances, in the future as in the past, rely significantly on the Atlantic security priority. Nothing at the moment decisively indicates that Danish policy will be changed towards one of distancing itself from the United States.

The Western European Long-term Essential Security Priorities

The security priority in relation to Western Europe was marked by the perception that Western Europe could not be seen as a unit of security policy. It was important that no de-coupling from the United States, as the fundamental guardian of Western European security during the Cold War, took place. This priority was probably motivated by geostrategic conditions: problems concerning partly Greenland and partly Germany. It was reflected in non-participation of the Western European Union (WEU) and in a decision to stay out of the European Coal and Steel Community and the EDC - the European Defence Community, which was signed in 1952 but never implemented since in 1954 France was unable to ratify the Treaty. Denmark's membership of the European Community in 1973 can be interpreted as part of the Western European security priority. Denmark continued to seek its security primarily through the Atlantic security priority. The Western European priority was to rely on Western Europe first and foremost as a unit for integration in the economic field, with nonetheless some broad security aspects - not least the involvement of Germany in a narrow European project and the binding together of France and Germany.

¹² See Bonvicini, G., Vaahtoranta, T. & Wessels, W. (eds.) (2000): *The Northern EU: National Views on the Emerging Security Dimension*. Finnish Institute of Foreign Affairs, Helsinki.

The perception of the European Community as a primarily economic project was confirmed by the Single European Act of 1987, where it is significant that the Social Democratic Party and the Social Liberal Party recommended a 'No' in the referendum. This was due, amongst other reasons, to opposition towards an institutionalisation of co-operation in the field of foreign policy and, partially, in the area of security policy. Nonetheless, the Single European Act was adopted after a consultative referendum where the main theme had been the economy. The distinct Western European security priorities were significant with regard to the revitalisation of the WEU, in 1983-84. Indeed, Denmark had by then been granted status as an observer in the organisation and could even act as chairman of the new transatlantic forum of WEU. Primarily, though, this was based on a wish not to miss the possibility of influencing the political process and obtaining as much information as possible. Denmark was still of the opinion that the Western European security priorities lay in securing EC co-operation – primarily in the economic field in a broad sense.¹³

The end of the Cold War meant also the end of the Western European security priorities. Europe was united by the fall of the iron curtain. Thus a brand new picture of security policy was created, where Europe now formed a single region. Now two centres of security policy in Europe emerged: Brussels, representing soft security, and Washington, representing hard security in the old-fashioned sense and the expanded hard security in the framework of "the New NATO". Western Europe still worked as an entity where most countries had a double protection in the EC and NATO. At the same time, however, attempts were made to expand the two organisations in various ways: for NATO, for instance, through new institutions (such as PfP, NACC, EACP) and, for the EC, through preliminary agreements aiming at expanding membership.

To Denmark this development implied that the Western European security priorities were continued in a broader all-European scheme. That meant adherence to task-sharing between the EC and NATO. The development of the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI), provided it was not given full autonomy and would be dependant on NATO, was a support to Danish security priorities. On the other hand, the wording of the Maastricht and the Amsterdam Treaties could restrain continuation of the special Danish Western

¹³ Branner, Hans and Kelstrup, Morten (eds.) (2000), *Denmarks Policy Towards Europe after 1945*, Odense.

European strategy: firstly with regard to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and secondly with regard to the coming European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). In this regard, the decisions made in the European Council in Cologne and Helsinki in 1999 are vital. Thus Denmark is evidently facing a choice of changing security priorities.¹⁴

The all-European Long-term Essential Security Priorities

The all-European security priority for Denmark can basically be seen as balancing the Atlantic security priority, which in turn placed itself firmly in the Western scale of the bipolar conflict. This conflict was highly pronounced in Europe and clearly manifested in the largely impenetrable iron curtain. This security priority aimed precisely at making the dividing line in Europe less categorical. Political, cultural, economic, and military (with regard to arms control) co-operative relations between East and West were to be established.¹⁵ The all-European security priority appears not least in Denmark's support to the Rapacki plan. This political expression was furthermore manifest in active support to the Harmel Report, the intention of which was likewise to make NATO appear as an instrument of co-operation and rapprochement between the two blocs. In addition came Denmark's active policy regarding the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), originally a Soviet initiative, one of the purposes of which was to obtain formal recognition of the new borders in Europe after World War II. For many reasons, the Western powers were hesitant - not least the United States, which until the last moment could not accept the Helsinki Treaty of 1975. Their acceptance was to a considerable degree due to the fact that human rights were included as "the third basket" - an area which Denmark was given a special coordinating task.

During the brief period of détente in the 1970s clear dilemmas arose. On the one hand, Denmark supported American-Soviet arms control activities; on the other hand, the all-European security priorities of co-operative relations with the Eastern European countries, a policy which may not have been fully in accordance that led by the United States, continued and was expressed in the heretical Sonnenfeldt doctrine. To fully understand the Danish all-European security

¹⁴ See: DUPI (2000), *Udviklingen i EU siden 1992 på de områder, der er omfattet af de danske forbehold*, Copenhagen.

¹⁵ The security priority was moderated, though, by Denmark's being one of the NATO-countries, which most loyally went along with the non-recognition policy towards the DDR.

priorities it must be added that Denmark never followed a priority which tied itself to the normally weak opposition groupings in the Eastern European countries. The protests against the oppression in the DDR in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 were brief. And (unlike the United States, which, on principle, marked it clearly on its official maps of Europe) the seizure of the Baltic States by the USSR during World War II was never questioned and there was no indication of anything similar to the American non-recognition of the Soviet take-over in Danish foreign policy.

The big change obviously occurred in connection with the end of the Cold War. In place of an Atlantic-Western European regionalisation, a new Atlantic-all-European regionalisation was established: in the sense that in the New World Order the United States now became "the pacifier-state" for all of Europe. Institutionalisation for all of Europe, popularly labelled "from Vancouver to Vladivostok", indeed existed by way of the Helsinki process that was continued in the subsequent CSCE process. However, it never gained great influence due to the second Cold War. Denmark did what it could to keep it alive. On one point, however, the CSCE gained growing influence in the international policy. That was in the field of disarmament, promoted intensively by Denmark. Negotiations on conventional disarmament in Europe took place, drastically influenced by changed structural conditions, which were accentuated by a hitherto unheard-of Soviet political adjustment to Western conditions. In fact, the USSR finally accepted that it should reduce its conventional forces up to five times more than the West.

The all-European security priorities were strongly supported at first through CSCE, which in 1994 was transformed into an international organisation, OSCE. But soon NATO and EC/EU were the real all-European security organisations. The former socialist Eastern European states became new democratic, market-oriented Central European states. The Soviet Union dissolved and new states swarmed into being - amongst them the re-emerged Baltic States. Here Denmark could put forward its all-European security priorities: the whole of Europe should become one. Therefore Denmark was among the first countries which recognised the Baltic States and supported the admission of these countries to the new all-European architecture of security. Here the OSCE was not enough. Efficient organisations like NATO, which was changed into being "the new NATO" with more emphasis on peacemaking than on defence, and the EU, which

after the Cold War intensified integration, took over. They became security-policy magnets and political-economic magnets respectively to those states that were now liberated from the Soviet Empire. This situation was utilised by Denmark. No other countries have supported and promoted the expansion processes of NATO and the EC as Denmark has. To Denmark this could not happen soon enough.

In addition came the deep conflicts in the middle of Europe in connection with the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Denmark supported universal efforts (through the UN), as well as the Atlantic ones (through NATO), Western European ones (through the EU), and the all-European ones (through OSCE). But the Atlantic security priority proved the crucial one in the conflicts. NATO put in place extensive military actions followed by support from all the other institutions. To Denmark this meant that for the first time the universal, the Atlantic, the Western European, and the all-European security priorities merged, but with the Atlantic one as the *primus inter pares*, the first among equals. *Per se* this development can be seen as quite logical in the light of the new unipolar world order.¹⁶

The Nordic Long-term Essential Security Priorities

The Nordic Countries as a security priority has long historical roots. Even though for the last 100 years the Nordic Countries have been characterised by disintegration – the establishment of fully independent states, Norway, Finland, Iceland, and special autonomy for the Åland Islands, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands – an integral co-operation is working in the political, organisational, and cultural fields. One can speak of the Nordic Countries as a "security community" in Karl Deutsch's sense. Disregarding the deep dividing lines during World War II and during the Cold War, a certain Nordic identity was preserved. Two fundamental facts had been clearly realised by the Nordic Countries, as small states: first, the importance of adhering to the "security community"; i.e. not going to war against or taking a confrontational stance vis-à-vis each other; secondly, that a common, isolated Nordic security alliance was (and is) utopian.

In different contexts, an attempt was made to create such an alliance. For instance the common Nordic rules of neutrality from 1912, which were effective due to their very limited scope. In addition, there were the attempts to establish a Nordic defence co-operation in

¹⁶ See: Hansen, B. and Heurlin, B. (eds.) (2000), *The New World Order, Contrasting Theories*, Macmillan, London.

1947-48, which failed because the countries, due to their geostrategic position, necessarily had to react differently to the increasingly severe splitting of Europe. With an all-European and a universalistic priority as a guiding star, Denmark wished "not to be attached to any bloc at all"¹⁷ and relied on the Nordic Countries till the end. But the final outcome was to follow a new Atlantic security priority made necessary by the fact that the United States was establishing itself as a European power.

The Nordic security priority was not abandoned by the attachment to NATO. Partly, it was demonstrated by Iceland, Norway, and Denmark all becoming members on limited terms. Iceland had no armed forces, while Norway and Denmark developed doctrines for security policy not "under the present circumstances," which allowed them not to have foreign troops stationed or nuclear arms located on their territories. As already mentioned, it was crucial to signal that Norway and Denmark could not be seen as bases from where attacks against the Soviet Union could be launched. This could be characterised as a sort of "non-provocation policy" towards the Soviet superpower, whose empire was so alarmingly close to both nations. The NATO reservations did not mean that Denmark and Norway had reservations towards overall political and military integration in NATO. Here both countries were loyal members.

The Nordic security priority was also demonstrated in the fact that an implicit – in many cases a highly implicit – sub-priority regarding "the Nordic balance" was established. Put briefly, this was about the Nordic Countries' functioning to a certain degree as a security policy entity: in the sense that there was coherence – in the form of a kind of balance – in the degree of attachment which the individual Nordic Countries had to the respective superpowers. The Nordic Countries were special and differed from the rest of Europe. Finland was not a people's democracy like the Eastern European countries, but was attached to the USSR by a special treaty, the VBS Treaty. Finland regarded itself as neutral. Norway and Denmark were not NATO central-front powers but states with specific national membership conditions in NATO. There was the idea that Soviet political pressure on Finland could be avoided by the implicit possibility of Denmark and Norway changing, or removing their nuclear and troop-stationing reservations. A more controversial fact was Sweden's relationship

¹⁷ Hans Hedtoft 1 January 1948, cited in *Dansk Sikkerhedspolitik 1948-66*, p. 22.

with NATO, which during the Cold War in principle did not exist. Sweden was a sort of "moral superpower", highly critical towards the United States. None the less, important military relations existed between the Swedish and American military authorities during the entire Cold War period.

A third area where the Nordic security priority functioned was the adherence to a conception of "The Nordic Countries as an area of low tension". Despite the fact that the USSR had considerable military presence in the Baltic Sea, the situation in the Nordic Countries was generally regarded as relatively low-tension, not least due to the fact that there was no direct confrontation between the two superpowers in the area. Thus it was important to Denmark to maintain a security priority aimed at having the Nordic Countries considered a low-tension area.

After the end of the Cold War everything suddenly looked differently. The Soviet superpower disappeared. The Baltic Sea thereafter changed from being dominated by the USSR to being dominated by the Nordic Countries, with Poland and the new Germany. The peculiarity of the Nordic security policy disappeared like morning dew. All of a sudden, the Nordic security priority was irrelevant. The idea of the Nordic Countries as an entity was further challenged by the admission of Sweden and Finland to the EU. With this, it was clear to all the Nordic Countries - even to Norway, which became a member of EU's Common Market without any real influence,¹⁸ that the centres of security policy, in a traditional and an extended sense, were now Brussels, as the central decision-making and negotiating site, and Washington as the centre of the "new NATO". Now no special Nordic security priority for Denmark was needed. It was replaced by a Baltic security priority, which again was considered part of the Atlantic security priority. As already pointed out the United States for the first time in history had located itself as a Northern European power - cautiously but distinctively through, for instance, the Baltic Charter and through the so-called NEI.

But do policies such as the common strategy of the EC towards Russia from 1999 - the first common priority after the introduction of the concept in the Amsterdam Treaty - or the new EC policy regarding the Northern Dimension - urged on efficiently and cleverly by Finland - mean that Denmark will benefit from a renewal of the

¹⁸ Cf. Steen, Reilulf (2000), *Norge - et hemmeligt EU-medlem*, Tænk tanken Ja til Europa, Copenhagen.

Nordic security priority? Far from it. Everything indicates rather that the Nordic Countries in the new European order will pursue mutual competition for influence in Brussels and Washington. In addition there will be competition in the salient area – i.e. the Baltic Sea and the new sub-region Northern Europe. This is the area covered by the Northern Dimension of the EU.

Generally it can be claimed that the Nordic security priority is part of a more coherent Atlantic-European security priority, where emphasis is still put on the universal priority.

CONCLUSION

We have claimed that long-term essential security priorities for Denmark can be identified. They were categorised as general security priorities and as geographical security priorities. In both cases, there is a significant shift in the priorities in connection with the end of the Cold War. That is to say that Danish overall security policy seems to be more dependent on structural changes in the international environment than on changes and variations in the domestic Danish political system. This may not be so strange since the priorities are based on references to changes in the international structure. Priorities are decided by the Danish Government and the Danish Parliament, balancing politically what is beneficial to the Danish people and the survival of the Danish State. A choice has to be made between several possibilities. These choices are made through a political system which for the 50 years in question has not changed structurally in any decisive way.

There are changes, however. First, a democratisation of foreign and security policy has taken place. Secondly, foreign policy has become domestic policy and, conversely, domestic policy has become foreign policy. Thirdly, a change has taken place in Danish society, taking it from an industrialised society to a postmodern, postindustrial society increasingly characterised by integration in the form of globalisation, regionalisation, and information technology. These developments are, however, not specific to Denmark. They have also taken place in the countries with which Denmark normally compares itself.

One can even claim that the thesis that foreign policy and democracy are in principle incompatible no longer holds – in any case, not as

far as countries like Denmark are concerned. This should be viewed as a consequence of the increasing democratisation in modern and postmodern societies. If this democratisation has happened, it follows that changes in the international system, in its processes and not least in its structure, have a direct influence on the individual citizen. So the individual citizen – and hence also the individual Danish citizen – has become to a greater degree an international actor.

So, looking back over the last 50 years, one can claim that developments in the direction of democratising security policy - i.e. foreign policy becoming domestic policy - has gone hand-in-hand with the growing strength of the individual Dane as an actor of foreign policy, i.e. domestic policy becoming foreign policy. But, interestingly enough, this development has not led to less consensus over security policy. Quite the contrary. From 1949 and during most of the Cold War, there has been a relatively solid domestic policy agreement on the security policy priorities. The more western-oriented centre-right has been tied to the more détente- and neutrality-oriented centre-left. Controversies and deep tensions have occurred, but they never led to a fundamental break. Even the hard-pressed Schlüter Government chose to maintain power instead of resigning and administered a security policy that in a few decisive points it was opposed to.

The big problem is the European policy, which, not least after the Cold War, points to an increasing split between population and Parliament.

At the same time, it must be added that in the field of strict security policy, a kind of truce by and large prevailed, expressed in firm multi-annual defence agreements. It is interesting to be able to state that the geographically derived security priorities have also had full support across, roughly speaking, all parts of the political spectrum in Denmark, except for the most extreme right and left wings. The same applies to the three-tracked general long-term essential security priorities, though that has also been transformed.

Thus we can state that general security priorities - 1. An international legal system based on common norms, 2. Cooperation/integration, and 3. Joint defence with like-minded states – have been of prevailing and fundamental importance to Danish security policy. These priorities are not surprising and can be explained rationally by Denmark's general and specific geopolitical and social-economic position. However, it is characteristic that all three strands

have gone through distinctive changes, changes that have generally strengthened the fundamental ideas behind the security priorities.

As regards the five strands of the geographically-regionally defined security priorities (the universal, the Atlantic, the Western European, the all-European, and the Nordic), the conclusions are as follows. During the Cold War the five security priorities partly excluded each other and functioned as more or less independent priorities split geographically. This changed fundamentally after the end of the Cold War. As was pointed out, the underlying new security policy environment implied that the Danish geographical security priorities converged. What is now left is, roughly speaking, only one priority, which is an all-European-Atlantic line with an emphasis on the universal dimension. Most recently, these new converging security priorities have fundamental problems, primarily because of the new European policy of crisis management starting with the establishment of an ESDP, a European Security and Defence Policy.

Here Denmark faces a new phenomenon that is a clear challenge to the new converging geographically oriented security priorities. After years with a Danish security and defence policy flying under the colours of "international activism" and "Denmark as lead country of internationalism", the prospects for the coming years seem bleak.

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