

INTERVIEW: PROFESSOR JAN OBERG

# Truth Must Be Told: On the Danish-U.S. Security Agreement Negotiations and Allegations of Xinjiang Genocide

*This is a portion of an edited transcript of an interview conducted January 21, 2022 by Michelle Rasmussen, Vice President of the Schiller Institute in Denmark, with peace and future researcher and art photographer, Jan Oberg. Prof. Oberg was born in Denmark and lives in Sweden. He has a PhD in sociology and has been a visiting professor in peace and conflict studies in Japan, Spain, Austria, and Switzerland, part time over the years. Jan Oberg has written thousands of pages of published articles and several books. He is the co-founder and director of the independent TFF, the Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, in Lund, Sweden since 1985, and has been nominated over several years for the Nobel Peace Prize.*

*We have omitted the first part of this interview due to limitations of space. That first part is a very rich discussion of the causes of the conflict between NATO and Russia, in which Prof. Oberg details the “three lies” presented by western governments and media:*

1. The West’s leaders never promised Mikhail Gorbachev and his Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, not to expand NATO eastward. They also did not state that they would take seriously Soviet/Russian security interests around its borders. And, therefore, each of the former Warsaw Pact countries has a right to join NATO, if they decide to freely.

2. The Ukraine conflict was started by Putin’s out-of-the-blue aggression on Ukraine and then annexation of Crimea.



Professor Jan Oberg

CGTN

3. NATO always has an open door to new members. It never tries to invite or drag them in, doesn’t seek expansion. It just happens because Eastern European countries since 1989-90 have wanted to join without any pressure from NATO’s side. That also applies to Ukraine.

The full interview with this first part included is [available](#) in video and transcript on the Schiller Institute website.

**Michelle Rasmussen:** The second part of this interview will address your criticism of Denmark starting negotiations with the United States on a bilateral security agreement, which could mean permanent stationing of U.S. soldiers and armaments on Danish soil.

And finally, your criticism of a major report which alleged that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang province.

## The U.S.-Denmark Defense Cooperation Agreement

**Rasmussen:** I want to go into the other two subjects. First, the negotiations between Denmark and the United States in the context of the political, military and media statements of recent years, alleging that Russia has aggressive intentions against Europe and the United States. The Danish Social Democratic government announced on Feb. 10 that the U.S. had requested negotiations on a Defense Cooperation Agreement a year ago, and that Denmark was now ready to start these negotiations. The government announced that it could mean permanent stationing of U.S. troops and ar-

maments on Danish soil. This would be against the decades-long policy of the Danish government not to allow foreign troops or armaments to be permanently stationed in Denmark. You wrote an article two days later criticizing these negotiations. Why are you against this?

**Prof. Oberg:** I'm against it because it's a break of 70 years of sensible policies. We do not accept foreign weapons and we do not accept foreign troops, and we do not accept nuclear weapons stationed on Danish soil. I sat, for ten years, all throughout the 1980s, in the Danish Government's Commission for Security and Disarmament as an expert. Nobody in the '80s would have mentioned anything like this.

I guess the whole thing is something that had begun to go mad around 20 years ago, when Denmark engaged and became a *bomber nation* for the first time, in Yugoslavia. And then Afghanistan and Iraq. It means that you cannot say "No." This is an offer you can't refuse. You can't refuse it, among other things—it's my interpretation—because—you remember the story where President Trump suggested that he or the U.S. could buy Greenland, and the Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said, "Well, that is not something to be discussed. The question is absurd," after which he got very angry. He got personally very angry, and he said, "It's not a matter of speaking to me. You're speaking to the United States of America."

I think this offer to begin negotiations must have come relatively shortly after that, as "This offer is not something you should call absurd once again." I've no evidence for that. But if these negotiations started more than a year ago, we are back in the Trump administration.

Second, what kind of democracy is that? We do not know when that letter was written, or its contents, in which the Americans asked to have negotiations about this. But what we do hear, is that a little more than a year ago, we began some negotiations about this whole thing behind the back of Parliament, and behind

the back of the people, and then it is presented more or less as a *fait accompli*. There will be an agreement. The question is only nitty-gritty as to what will be in it.

In terms of substance, there is no doubt that any place where there would be American facilities, or weapons stored, will be the first targets in a war, seen as such in a war, under the best circumstances, seen by Russia. Russia's first targets will be to eliminate the American [military forces] everywhere they can in Europe, because those are the strongest and most dangerous forces.

Second, it is not true that there is a "no to nuclear



USAF/Trevor T. McBride

*"The new U.S.-Denmark Defense Cooperation Agreement would result in more nuclear weapons coming in to Denmark, undermining Danish principles." —Jan Oberg. Here a B-52 Stratofortress long-range heavy bomber of the U.S. Air Force Global Strike Command, capable of carrying nuclear ordnance.*

weapons" in other senses than Denmark will keep up the principle that we will not have them stationed permanently. But with such an agreement, where the Air Force, Navy and soldiers, military, shall more frequently work with, come in to visit, etc., there's no doubt that there will be more nuclear weapons coming in, for instance, on American vessels than before, because the cooperation would get closer and closer.

The only thing the Danish government will be able to do is, since they know that under the "neither confirm nor deny policy" of the U.S., they would not even ask the question, if they were asked by journalists, they would say, "Well, we take for granted that the Ameri-

cans honor, or understand and respect, that we do not have nuclear weapons on Danish territory, sea territory,” or whatever. Now the Americans are violating that in Japan even. So, this is nonsense. There would be more nuclear weapons. I’m not saying they would go off or anything like that. I’m just saying there would be more undermining of Danish principles.

The whole thing, of course, has to do with the fact that Denmark is placing—and that was something the present government under Mette Frederiksen’s leadership did before this was made public—110% of its eggs in the U.S. basket. This is the most foolish thing you can do, given how the world is changing. The best thing a small country can do is to uphold international law and the UN. Denmark doesn’t. It speaks like the U.S. for an international rules-based order, which is the opposite of, or very far away from the international law.

Third, in a world where you are going to want multipolarity, a stronger Asia, a stronger Africa, another Russia from the one we have known the last 30 years, etc., and a United States that is, in all indicators except the military, declining and will fall as the world leader. This is, in my view—be careful with my words—the most foolish thing you can do at the moment, if you are a leader of Denmark, or if you are leading the Danish security policies.

You should be open—I wrote an article about that in a small Danish book some six or seven years ago, and said, “Walk on two legs.” Remain friendly with the United States and NATO, and all that, but develop your other leg, so you can walk on two legs in the next 20, 30, 40 years. But there’s nobody that thinks so long-term in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and there’s nobody who thinks independently anymore in research institutes or ministries. It’s basically adapting to everything we think or are told by Washington we should do. That’s not foreign policy to me. There’s nothing to do with it.

A good foreign policy is one where you have a good capacity to analyze the world, make scenarios, discuss which way to go, pros and contras, and different types



White House/Shealah Craighead

*Denmark, a NATO member, has not until now accepted foreign weapons, troops, or nuclear weapons stationed permanently on its soil. This is changing under Social Democratic Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen. Here she meets with President Donald Trump, Dec. 4, 2019.*

of futures, and then make a decision in your parliament based on a public discussion. That was what we did earlier, in the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s. When you become a bomber nation, when you become a militaristic nation, when active foreign policy means nothing but militarily active, then, of course, you are getting closer and closer and closer down into the darkness of the hole, where suddenly you fall so deeply you cannot see the daylight.

I think it’s very sad. I find it tragic. I find it very dangerous. I find that Denmark will be a much less free country in the future by doing these kinds of things. I don’t look at this agreement as an isolated thing. It comes with all the things we’ve done, all the wars Denmark has participated in. Sorry, I said we, I don’t feel Danish anymore, so I should say Denmark or the Danes. And finally, I have a problem with democratically elected leaders who seem to be more loyal to a foreign government, than with their own people’s needs.

### China and Xinjiang

**Rasmussen:** You just mentioned the lack of independence of analysis. There’s not only an enemy image being painted against Russia, but also against China, with allegations of central government genocide against

the Muslim Uyghur minority in Xinjiang Province as a major point of contention.

On March 8, 2021, the Newlines Institute for Strategy and Policy in Washington published a [report](#), *The Uyghur Genocide: An Examination of China's Breaches of the 1948 Genocide Convention*, in cooperation with the Raoul Wallenberg Center for Human Rights in Montreal. The following month, on April 27, you and two others issued a [report](#) criticizing the Newlines Institute report. What is the basis of your criticism, and what do you think should be done to lessen tension with China?

And also, as a wrap-up question, if you wanted to say anything else about what has to be done to make a change from looking at Russia and China as the autocratic enemies of the West, and instead shift to a world in which there is cooperation between the major powers, which would give us the possibility of concentrating on such great tasks as economic development of the poorer parts of the world?

**Prof. Oberg:** Well, of course, that's something we could speak another hour about. Our tiny think tank, the Transnational Foundation for Peace & Future Research (TFF), by the way, is totally independent and people-financed and all volunteer. That's why we can say and do what we think should be said and done. Not politically in anybody's hands or pockets, we can say that the Newlines Institute's report and other similar reports do not hold water, would not pass as a paper for a master's degree in social science or political science.

We say that if you look into not only that report, but several other reports and researchers who contribute to this genocide discussion, if you look into their work, they are very often related to the military-industrial-media-academic complex. And they are paid for, have formerly had positions somewhere else in that system, or are known for having hawkish views on China, Russia, and everybody else outside the western sphere.

When we began to look into this, we also began to see a trend. And that's why we published shortly afterward a 150-page [report](#), *Behind the Smokescreen: An Analysis of the West's Destructive China Cold War Agenda and Why It Must Stop*, about the new Cold War on China. Xinjiang is part of a much larger orchestrated—and I'm not a conspiracy theorist, it's all documented, in contrast to media and other research reports. It's documented. You can see where we get our



DoS/Ron Przysucha

*Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's claim that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang has not been documented by the U.S. State Department "with as much as one piece of paper." —Jan Oberg*

knowledge from, and on which basis we draw conclusions.

### **Disappearance of Scholarship**

Whereas now, significantly, for Western scholarship and media, they don't deal with, are not interested in sources. I'll come back to that. It's part of a much larger, only-tell-negative-stories about China; don't be interested in China's new social model. Don't be interested in how in 30-40 years they did what nobody else in humankind has ever done: Uplifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and created a society that I can see the difference from when I visited China in 1983. I know what it looked like back then when they had just opened up, so to speak.

What we are saying is not that we know what happened and happens in Xinjiang, because we've not been there, and we are not a human rights organization. We are a conflict resolution and peace-proposal making, policy think tank. But what we do say is, if you cannot come up with better arguments and more decent documentation, then probably you are not honest. If there's nothing more you can show us to prove that there's a genocide going on at Xinjiang, you should perhaps do your homework before you make these assertions and accusations.

That's what we are saying, and we are also saying that it is peculiar that the last thing Mike Pompeo, Trump's Secretary of State, did in office, on Jan. 19, 2021 was to say, "I hereby declare that Xinjiang is a genocide." The State Department has still not published

as much as one A4 [letter-size paper] page with the documentation.

I feel sad on a completely different level, and that is, Western scholarship is disappearing in this field. And those who may really have different views and analyses, and question what we hear or uphold—a plurality of viewpoints and interpretations of the world—we're not listened to. I mean, I'm listened to elsewhere, but I'm not listened to in Western media, although I have 45 years of experience in these things, and I've traveled quite a lot and worked in quite a lot of conflict and war zones. I can live with that, but I think it's a pity for the Western world that we are now so far down the drain, that good scholarship is not what politics is built on anymore. If it ever was, I think it was at a distant point in time.

Also striking to me is the uniformity of the press. The day that the Newlines report that you referred to, was published, it was all over the place, including front pages of the leading Western newspapers, including the Danish Broadcasting website, etc.—all saying the same thing, quoting the same bits of parts.

The uniformity of this is just mind boggling. How come nobody said, "Hey, what is this Newlines Institute, by the way, that nobody had heard about before? Who are these people behind it? Who are the authors?" Anybody can sit in their chair and do quite a lot of research, which was impossible to do 20 years ago. If you are curious, if you are asked to be curious, if you are permitted to be curious, and do research in the media, in the editorial office where you are sitting, then you would find out lots of this here is BS. Sorry to say so, intellectually, it's BS.

And so, I made a little pastime. I wrote a very diplomatic letter to people at CNN, BBC, Reuters, etc. Danish and Norwegian and Swedish media, those who write this *opinion journalism* about Xinjiang, and a couple of other things, and I sent them all our report, which is online, so it's just a click away, and I said, "Kindly read this one, and I look forward to hearing from you." I've done this in about 50 or 60 cases, individually dug up their email addresses, etc. Not one has responded. The strategy when you lie, or when you deceive, or when you have a political person, is don't go into any dialogue with somebody who knows more or is critical of what you do.

That's very sad. Our *TFF Pressinfo* goes to 20 people at the BBC. They know everything we write

about Ukraine, about China, about Xinjiang, etc. Not one has ever called.

These are the kinds of things that make me scared as an intellectual. One thing is what happens out in the world. That's bad enough. But when I begin to find out how this is going on, how it is manipulated internally in editorial offices, close to foreign ministries, etc. or defense ministries, then I say, we are approaching the *Pravda moment*. The *Pravda moment* is not the present *Pravda* [newspaper], but the *Pravda* that went down with the Soviet Union. When I visited Russia (the Soviet Union at the time) for conferences, etc., I found out that very few people believed anything they saw in the media. Now, to me, it's a question of whether the Western media, so-called free media, want to save themselves, or do they want to become totally irrelevant, because at some point, as someone once said, "You cannot lie all the time to all of the people, you may get away with lying to some, to some people, for some of the time."

**Rasmussen:** President Lincoln.

**Prof. Oberg:** Yeah. The long story short, is that this is not good. This deceives people. And of course, some people, at some point, will be very upset about that. They have been lied to. And also, don't make reference anymore to the so-called difference between free and state media.

Viewers may like to hear it, may not like it, but should know this: the U.S. has just passed a law—they have three laws against China—intervening in all kinds of Chinese things, such as, for instance, trying to influence who will become the successor to Dalai Lama, and things like that. They are not finished at all about how to influence Taiwan, and all that—things they have nothing to do with, and which were decided between President Richard Nixon and Premier Zhou Enlai, that America accepted the One-China policy and would not mix themselves into Taiwanese issues. But that is another broken promise. These so-called free media are actually state media in the U.S.

Take Radio Free Europe and Radio Free Asia. They both, particularly the latter, have disseminated most of these Xinjiang genocide stories, which then bounce back to BBC, etc. These are state media. As an agency for that in Washington, it's financed by millions of dollars, of course, and it has the mandate to make

American foreign policy more understood, and promote U.S. foreign policy goals and views. Anybody can go to a website and see this. Again, I'm back to this, everybody can do what I've done.

That law that has just been passed says the U.S. sets aside \$1.5 billion in the next 5 years, to support education, training courses, whatever, for media people to write negative stories about China, particularly the Belt and Road Initiative. I look forward to *Politiken* [Danish newspaper] or *Dagens Nyheter* [Swedish newspaper] or whatever newspapers in the allied countries that would say, "This comes from a U.S. state media," when it actually does.

And so, my view is that there is a reason for calling it the military-industrial-media-academic complex, because it's one cluster of elites who are now running the deception, but also the wars that are built on deception. And that is very sad where, instead, we should cooperate. I would not even say we should morally cooperate. I would say we have no choice on this Earth but to cooperate, because if we have a new Cold War between China and the West, we cannot solve humanity's problems, whether it's the climate issue, environmental issues, poverty, justice, income differences or cleavages, or modern technological problems, whatever. All these things are, by definition, global. We have one former empire, a soon to be former empire, which does nothing but disseminate negative energy, criticize, demonize, running cold wars, basically isolating itself and going down.

### The U.S. Is Needed To Contribute to a Better World


We lack America doing good things. I've never been anti-American. I want to say that very clearly. I've never, ever been anti-American. I'm anti-empire and anti-militarism. We need the United States, with its creativity, with its possibilities, with what it already has given the world, to contribute constructively to a better world, together with the Russians, together with Europe, together with Africa, together with everybody else, and China, and stop this idea that we can only work with those who are like us, because if that's what you want to do, you will have fewer and fewer to work with.

The world is going toward diversity. Other cultures are coming up who have other ways of doing things. We may like it or not. The beauty of conflict resolution and peace is to do it with those who are different from

you. It is not to make peace with those who already love you, or are already completely identical with you. Conflict and peace illiteracy, unfortunately, has now completely overtaken the western world. Whereas, I see people thinking about peace, and I hear people mentioning the word peace, I do not hear Western politicians or media anymore mention the word peace. And when that word is not there, and the discussion and the discourse has disappeared about peace, we are very far out.

Combine that with lack of intellectualism and an analytical capacity, and you will end up in militarism and war. You cannot forget these things and avoid a war. In my view, there are reasons other than Russia, if you will, why we're in a dangerous situation, and that danger has to do with the way the West itself is operating at the moment. Nobody in the world is threatening the United States or the West. If it goes down, it's all of its own making. I think that's an important thing to say in these days when we always blame somebody else for our problems. That is not the truth.

**Rasmussen:** Thank you so much, Jan Oberg.



The image shows two items: a magazine cover for 'EIR Executive Intelligence Review' with the headline 'There Are No Limits to Growth' and a picture of Earth, and a document titled 'EIR Daily Alert Service' dated Sunday, December 21, 2020. The document lists various news items such as 'Schiller's Lullabye Principle of Statecraft', 'G20 Economic & Daily Agenda Meeting for January', and 'Parliament Votes Up Resolution To Join NATO'.

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