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UDK [327+327.51](98)(045)

NATO's actions in the Arctic and their influence on the Militarization of the region



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Abstract

This article describes the major years of militarization of the Arctic region at present and NATO's role in this process. In conclusion, we can say about a low probability

of military confrontation in the Arctic.

Keywords: *Arctic, militarization, NATO, Denmark, Norway, USA, Russia, Canada.*

The emergence of attractive prospects in the Arctic due to global warming caused the aggravation of the international relations between the circumpolar nations in the fight for the Arctic area. Especially active are showing their position-state properties of the Arctic: Canada, Denmark, Norway, USA and Russia. But other countries such as Sweden, Finland, Iceland, which are also part of the Arctic Council, every kind of way trying to defend its interests in the region. Do not forget about China, for which the Northern Sea Route is quite attractive as an alternative to the south aisle (the latter is longer than the SMP for a few thousand kilometers).

Each of the above mentioned States is trying to defend its national interests in the Arctic region, and take all possible measures to expand its influence in the area. Between states is a struggle for the acquisition of the most significant role in the Arctic. In addition to economic competition grows faster competition in military capabilities. Militarization has become one of the founders, Fundamental factors of power in the Arctic region.

Do not deny that Russia also has a fairly aggressive policy in the region, if you look at the situation through the eyes of other states. In 2007, the Russian polar explorer set the state flag at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean. The incident immediately caused the event of a mixed reaction in the area of interest which includes Arctic territory.¹. This event has not gone out of focus and an organization such as NATO. It should be noted that in many respects Russia's actions have prompted this military-political bloc to move to action, including the militarization of the Arctic. Increasingly, in the territories of the northern states, NATO members have carried out military exercises. For example, one of the largest NATO exercise was held in Sweden in 2009. These maneuvers are called «Loyal Arrow 2009» ("True Arrow 2009"). The exercises were involved in 10 countries [1], but it is worth noting that Russia was not among the participants.

¹ See article in this issue: Y.F. Lukin Arctic social phobia / / Arctic and the North. - 2012. - № 1 (5). URL: <http://narfu.ru/aan>.

In the past three years, Canada's leadership has repeatedly expressed concern about the situation in the Arctic, including Russia's military activity, the USA claims the Northwest Passage, and territorial disputes with Denmark. In this connection, intended to increase the number of rangers from 4.1 to 5 thousand people, Built in the center of dry-Resolute worthwhile to train troops fighting in arctic conditions [2]. However, these plans are not implemented.

Denmark is also taking steps to ensure its security in the Arctic began to modernize and expand the military base in Greenland, and to place a rapid reaction force to protect its interests in northern latitudes [3].

In 2008, Iceland had made an offer of Russia to the positioning of forces at a military base Keflavik, which previously belonged to the United States. The Russian side has politely refused the offer is so unexpected. Such a response of the Russian Federation can be explained by the fact that such actions could lead to further development of the militarization of the Arctic region. And from Iceland such actions were dictated by the difficult economic situation in the country because of the crisis. The small island nation was waiting with their nearest neighbors (Denmark and Sweden), but they were slow. As a result, the President of Iceland Olafur Ragnar Grimsson said the search for new allies. At the moment, a military base in question is the militarization of space, although the prospect of acquiring it remains as the NATO, and Russia.

Despite the real-life disputes between the U.S. and Canada and between Canada and Denmark, the three members of NATO in August last year took part in "Operation Nanook 2010", and it was a clear indication that they close ranks against the sole bidder, not a member of NATO - against Russia [4]. The paradox is that most countries have conflicts with each other. But Norway, Denmark, Canada and the USA somehow work together as members of one organization.

As a result, Canada has a special status of the representative of the interests of NATO in the Arctic and the main opponent of Russia. Under this strategy, the U.S. and Denmark have taken part in military maneuvers of the Canadian Navy in the Arctic, who every year are becoming a larger scale.

In early 2009, NATO held an unprecedented summit in Iceland, which was dedicated, it was reported that the prospects for security in the Far North. Then NATO openly acknowledged that it has strategic interests with respect to the Arctic region. Russia, in turn, has attended to gain military control over the water area belonging to it [5].

In March 2009, at the site of the Russian Security Council appeared the document "Principles of state policy in the Arctic for the period up to 2020 and beyond." According to him it was planned to create "actively functioning system of the Coast Guard Federal Security Service in the Arctic zone [6]. The document has been two years in limbo, and none of the tasks set before the state was not reached. Moreover, not every task involved in implementing the strategy.

To date, Russia denies the possibility of war in the Arctic. This was stated at the II International Arctic Forum "The Arctic - Territory of Dialogue", held in Arkhangelsk. According to Vladimir Putin, Russia is planning to spend on the development of the Arctic shelf in the next 30 years, nearly 10 trillion. rubles. In fact, it was a 180 degree turn, as early as 2009 plans voiced by some [7], are much more harsh and vivid desire to defend its interests in the Arctic.

In early 2011, the United Kingdom, Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania discussed the strengthening of cooperation and the establishment of the northern mini-NATO [8]. Some analysts believe that the main purpose of the organization of the future - keep an eye on Russia in the Arctic. In response, the Russian Defense Minister Serdyukov AE proposed to develop military cooperation between the Arctic states, to carry out collective activities, primarily to assist in crisis situations [9]. For example, in 2011 Russia and Denmark began planning joint naval exercises.

In addition, Russia and Norway have already conducted joint military exercises "Pomor-2011 in the Barents and Norwegian Seas. [10] Joint activities of Norway and Russia today in the framework of issues related to the Arctic region, in my opinion, is the most progressive. These states have already signed and ratified the 2011 "Treaty between the Russian Federation and the Kingdom of Norway on the delimitation of maritime areas and cooperation in the Barents Sea and Arctic Ocean."

But none of the countries listed have not yet led to major changes in the balance of power. The U.S. military presence, despite the fact that a significant portion of U.S. resources deployed to the south of the Arctic Circle, far superior to that of other members of the "Arctic Eight". Suffice it to mention the American military bases and missile defense systems, located in Alaska and Greenland. Nevertheless, Canada is considered by the state, which is most actively pursuing militarization in the Arctic.

Although the current situation in the Arctic has already been called "the last redistribution of the world", yet no armed conflict in the Arctic can not be. Already now there is information and diplomatic war, but no more. Militarization - this is only one element in a dispute over the Arctic, wearing a demonstrative character, which can play a major role later in the distribution of forces in the Arctic region. The thesis of the deployment of war in the Arctic is very questionable. No state currently will not wage a war for such unframed, poorly studied and difficult region.

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