

Chapter 11

The Changing Role of Military Power in the Arctic



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11.1 Introduction

In the Cold War era, military power was a coercive instrument in a global confrontation between two superpowers and capitalist and socialist systems. The Arctic region was part of this global confrontation; it was a home for strategic nuclear forces (especially Soviet ones) and an important area for significant military activities. Both the United States and the Soviet Union pursued containment strategies, with mutually assured destruction (MAD) doctrine at their cores.

In the post-Cold-War world, however, the roles of military power and the nature of military strategy have been radically transformed because of the global geopolitical changes and revolution in military affairs (RMA).

The recent international developments have repeatedly cast doubt on the efficacy of military force and the ability to achieve political objectives by military methods. The decision to use force has frequently been based on incorrect calculations or on ideological arguments (Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and the former Yugoslavia), which had nothing to do with the real national interests of the countries involved. There is a new phenomenon in international relations: present-day wars no longer aim to acquiring enemy's territory and wealth. Now we see wars unleashed with the aim of changing political regimes or under the banner of "human rights" protection (the doctrines of "humanitarian interventions" and "responsibility

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