

## PECULIARITIES OF NATIONAL INTERESTS INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN THE NORTH AMERICAN TRADITION: HISTORY AND MODERNITY

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** This article is devoted to the analysis of characteristics of national interests' institutionalization in the North American tradition, namely the evolution of their legal consolidation and the practice of implementation in modern conditions.

**Methodology:** The methodological basis of the present research is based on the application of various general scientific methods of scientific knowledge (analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction, system-structural, formal-logical approaches), as well as particular scientific methods, i.e. historical-legal, formal-legal, comparative-legal, and interpretative.

**Result:** The characteristics of the North American approach to the issues of strategic planning and the development of program documents in the field of ensuring national interests are established, systematized, and characterized by the content of US National Security Strategies of past decades, in terms of securing national interests in them and areas of their implementation.

**Applications:** This research can be used for universities and students in history.

**Novelty/Originality:** In this research, the model of national interests institutionalization in the North American tradition is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

**Keywords:** *national interest, institutionalization of national interests, national security, doctrine, strategy.*

### INTRODUCTION

Before proceeding to the analysis of the characteristics of the institutionalization of US national interests, it should be noted that the very concept of "national interest" has entered into the scientific circulation relatively recently; in 1935, it was first included in the Oxford Encyclopedia of Social Sciences. The priority in the development of concept of "national interests" is recognized by the American Protestant theologian R. Niebuhr [Beard, 1934] and the historian C. Bird [[Chacón, et al. 2018](#)].

In its expanded form, the concept of national interest was presented in the work of G. Morgentau titled "In Defense of National Interest", in which the author understood by the interest the "multi-year standard for assessing and directing political actions". As a representative of political realism, G. Morgentau perceived the national interests as an objective and universal category, defending, first of all, the sovereignty of the state within the framework of world politics and its advantageous position within the system of its relations [[Mann, 1973](#); [Morgenthau, 1951](#); [Rosenau, 1968](#); [Emam & Shajari, 2013](#)].

In general, the national interest is an abstract and subjective category, since its parameters are determined by the picture of the world and the value system prevailing in a given society and state. As noted by J. Rosenau, "the definition of national interest can be nothing more than a system of conclusions based on the analytical and value base of policy" [[Guzmán, et al. 2018](#)].

Moreover, in the Anglo-American and European political science, ethnic content is never invested in the content of the concept of national interest. For example, a citizen of the United States is recognized as any citizen who has an American passport and is no longer burdened with his original history, ethnic culture, and traditions of his ancestors. This concept was named "melting pot", according to which the formula of cultural and biological "fusion" and "mixing" of all people into a single American nation, and formation of American national identity took place. As stated by the American researcher, A. Mann, "the phrase" melting pot "has become a national symbol of this century" [[Jenaabadi & Shad, 2013](#)].

In this regard, it is time to appeal to the question of peculiarities of the institutionalization of national interests in the North American tradition, the analysis of which will allow a more conscious look at the relations between our countries, since following the realization of national interests is the main goal of any state.

### RESEARCH METHOD

The methodological basis of the present research is based on the application of various general scientific methods of scientific knowledge (analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction, system-structural, formal-logical approaches), as well as particular scientific methods, i.e. historical-legal, formal-legal, comparative-legal, and interpretative.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

While considering the peculiarities of the characteristics of the institutionalization of national interests in the North American tradition, it should be noted that the national interests of the United States are traditionally fixed in the doctrinal document of strategic management, i.e. the US National Security Strategy, which is usually adjusted once every 5-6 years. The national security strategy in this state is a kind of intellectual product, a set of interrelated ideas in the field of managing trends, real and predictable, to protect the permanent interests of society and the state [Putnam, R. D., Leonardi, R., & Nanetti, R. Y. \(1994\)](#).

In general, the doctrinal vision of national security has developed over 200 years, and accordingly, the national interests in the United States has the following structure: fundamental (permanent) national interests, ensuring the security, prosperity, and freedom of the American people and corresponding the mission of the country at this historical stage (subject to adjustment by each newly elected US president).

The fundamental basis for the formation of the US National Security Strategy is the American liberal value system enshrined in the doctrinal state-forming documents, such as the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights [Luo, et al. 2018](#).

National security strategy developed by the US National Security Council is designed for the highest level of public policy to solve global problems. It reflects the interests of the state and direction of its implementation.

The development of the first foreign national security doctrines began immediately after the end of the Second World War. Many countries tried to institutionalize their own national interests, providing them with all the required legal, economic, political and organizational tools. The first in this direction was the USA, wherein 1947, US Congress already passed the National Security Act of 1947 (National Security Act of 1947) [Mann, 1973](#).

Later, over a long period, the main direction of development of national security doctrines was conditioned by the confrontation between the two superpowers (USSR and the USA), and consisted of the priority of foreign policy and prevalence of the military-political approach to national security issues in most of the then-states [Paasi, A. \(1986\)](#).

This approach to the selection of key areas of ensuring the national security of Western foreign countries changed in the early 1990s, after the collapse of the USSR. As a result, the question of upholding Western values and opposing communism lost priority, and replaced by the spread of Western values and upholding its hegemony in the world [Mann, 1973](#). For example, in 1990s, United States announced the priority of the country's economic security and began to fight for the privileged position of American citizens and their companies throughout the world. Published in fall of 2002, the American National Security Strategy established the principle of a preemptive strike, according to which, in order to ensure self-defense, the United States had the right to attack enemy even in a situation where the place and time of his attacks on a country are obviously unknown [Olesova & Borisova, 2016](#).

In March 2006, the next version of the National Security Strategy was promulgated in the United States, in which terrorist activities, fueled by a hostile hateful ideology of violence, and moreover, the spread of dangerous weapons in the world was recognized as main threats. Regarding the role of the principles on which the analyzed National Security Strategy of the USA was obliged to rely, the following were recognized: upholding civil liberties, personal dignity and justice throughout the world, and historically predetermined primacy of the United States in growing community of democratic countries involved in the confrontation with global threats of our time [Olesova & Borisova, 2016](#).

It is interesting that in the 2006 Strategy, the US's point of view on Russia radically changed: 2002 document mentions some positive changes taking place in the Russian Federation, and it is called an ally in war on terrorism, but in the updated version of 2006, a rather skeptical position is indicated [Mann, M. \(1999\)](#).

In 2010, President B. Obama made a proposal for a complete rethinking of US strategic priorities, as expressed in the relevant Strategy. Thus, the 2010 Strategy described four unchanging national interests directly related to each other: prosperity, security, international order, and moral values. The document mentions that the main component of the administration's strategy is the intention to intensify the country's interaction with other important centers of influence, including China, the Russian Federation and India, and in addition, countries whose influence is increasing consisting of Brazil, Indonesia, and South Africa. Along with this, the above-mentioned transition from G8 to G20 is mentioned, in which the status of the main forum of international economic partnership is referred to [Zhukova, e al. 2018](#).

Following the chosen direction, in February 2015, the administration of US President B. Obama published a new version of the National Security Strategy, the statement of which was explained by the appearance of many new threats in the world that the response to which requires the US to maintain its leadership position in the international arena. Significant changes have occurred in the section of the document covering issue of US national interests and security. The list of the main goals of the United States includes strengthening national defense, building capacity for conflict-prevention, fighting terrorism, fighting climate change [Zhukova, e al. 2018](#), strengthening internal security, reinforcing global health care, preventing the proliferation and the use of weapons of mass destruction, and providing access to used spaces, including sea, air, space, and information [Mann, 1973](#).

A distinctive characteristic of the 2015 Strategy is a change in approach to international politics, specifically a turn towards the Asia-Pacific region, and in addition, the preservation of allied relations with European countries, peacekeeping in the Middle East and North Africa region, investments in African development, building security, and economic partnerships in the Americas. The updated version of Strategy records the changed approach to relations with the Russian Federation. For example, the Strategy mentions that the United States will continue to deter Russian aggression by imposing sanctions and other measures, including the creation of barriers to the spread of propaganda by Moscow. In accordance with the document, the United States will continue to vigilantly monitor the military potential of the Russian Federation, and provide long-term assistance to American allies so that they can successfully withstand Russian pressure [[Luo, et al. 2018](#)].

The latest valid (updated) version of the National Security Strategy (NSS) was announced by the administration of the US President Donald J. Trump on December 18, 2017 [[Luo, et al. 2018](#)]. Like before, this document is devoted to the analysis of existing and potential challenges to the country's security, as well as ways to counter the existing threats. The keynote of this document was reflected in words of the US President presenting the following strategy: "The primary duty of our state to the people is to serve its interests, ensure its security, defend its rights and protect its values" [[Olesova & Borisova, 2016](#)].

Four vital national interests (the so-called "fundamental pillars") are defined in the analysis of the Strategy: protection of the US territory, American citizens, and the American way of life, promotion of the prosperity of America, preservation of peace through power, and expansion of American influence. In addition, it outlines the main challenges and trends affecting the situation in the world, including revisionist powers (including China and Russia), regional dictators, and jihadist terrorists.

In addition to countering the external threats, considerable attention is paid to the development of American welfare in the analyzed document in order to maintain a strong economy that protects the American people, strengthens their lifestyle and supports American power. It also speaks of the need to improve the field of scientific research, technology and innovation, and the energy superiority of America [[Meyer, J. W., & Jepperson, R. L. \(2000\)](#)].

In general, it is possible to talk about preserving the continuity of the new US National Security Strategy in relation to the previous legal documents in this area and traditional American national values enshrined in the US Constitution [[Ramirez, F. O., & Boli, J. \(1987\)](#)].

## FINDINGS

As a result of studying the characteristics of the institutionalization of national interests in the North American tradition, we can draw the following conclusions [[Kellert, S. R., Mehta, J. N., Ebbin, S. A., & Lichtenfeld, L. L. \(2000\)](#)].

Questions of the realization of national interests and ensuring national security in the United States are prominent and vital, which is why significant efforts have been made by Presidents of this country throughout history to ensure the sovereignty and integrity of the military, economic, and political systems [[Gilroy, P. \(1993\)](#)].

US activities are aimed to realization of national interests and national security, protection against internal and external threats carried out in accordance with strategic legal documents which is called the National Security Strategy, and is developed (and adopted in the prescribed manner) in accordance with the characteristics of a particular historical period [[Stoler, A. L. \(2001\)](#)].

In the US state policy, considerable attention is paid to the domestic national interests, including the development of economic potential, scientific, technical and innovative progress, and energy problems. However, the significant issue remains the foreign policy, which is currently based on the perception of military power as the main means of ensuring national interests [[Freeman, G. P. \(1995\)](#)].

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author confirms that the data do not contain any conflict of interest.

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