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Evgeniy V. Bey

Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, Moscow,
Russian Federation

“Our Trip to the Island Should Be as Secure as Possible”: G. D. Krasinsky's Contribution to the
Establishment of the Sovereignty of the USSR over the Wrangel Island in 1921–26

Abstract

The article draws on archival documents to analyze events connected with the policies of a number of foreign states contesting the sovereignty of the Wrangel Island in the Arctic that belonged to the young Soviet state in 1921-26 and the role of the polar researcher Georgy Davidovich Krasinsky in prevention of these aggressive actions. Content analysis provides new information on this historical episode. The documents from the personal provenance fond of G. D. Krasinsky in the Russian State Archive of Economy demonstrate Krasinsky's active position

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and role in the development of the Arctic and in the establishment of Soviet frontiers, when he was appointed assistant to the head of Special hydrographic expedition to the Wrangel Island in 1924. The most interesting document in our opinion – the official address of G. D. Krasinsky to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of G. V. Chicherin concerning organization of the second expedition on the island - is published in the article with some abbreviation. This document provides insight into Krasinsky's plans on implementation of the final stage of suppression of active actions of foreign “aggressors.” He believed that only actual colonization of the Wrangel Island can provide effective response to the encroachments of the British and Americans, who naturally saw in it an important base for transpolar air traffics. Along with principle of historicism, the article uses method of biographic analysis, which allows to investigate in details Krasinsky's course of life and to give objective assessment of his professional ability to anticipate the future, that is, to work out his actions proactively. Thus, G. D. Krasinsky ideas were confirmed in the days of the Cold War, when military facilities of the Soviet Union were placed on the island, and it became an important outpost in monitoring the integrity of the Soviet frontiers in the Arctic. We still observe these same tendencies today, in the light of strengthening of the Russian military presence in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.



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Keywords

Historical sources, expedition to the Wrangel Island, Soviet sector of the Arctic, legal regime of the Arctic, G. D. Krasinsky, cannon boat “Red October,” colonization of the Wrangel Island.

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About the authors

Bey Evgeny Vasilievich, PhD in History, Military Academy of the General Staff of Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, Research Institute (of Military History), 1 research management department, 12 research department, doctoral candidate, Moscow, Russian Federation, +7-926-468-49-97, evgeniibey@yandex.ru

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