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Taking Cue From Trump, Russian Historian Suggests Renaming Gulf of Finland

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The Gulf of Finland. **kishjar (CC BY 2.0)**

A researcher from Russia's presidential historical society has proposed renaming the Gulf of Finland to the "Gulf of St. Petersburg," citing U.S. President Donald Trump's recent executive order to rename the Gulf of Mexico as precedent.

"Why do we call it the Gulf of Finland?" Mikhail Myagkov, research director at the Russian Military History Society, asked reporters Thursday. "St. Petersburg is the largest city on this gulf. A logical name for it would be the Gulf of St. Petersburg."

The Gulf of Finland borders Russia, Finland and Estonia and connects to the Baltic Sea. Amid heightened tensions over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Estonia's military said last fall that it was working with Finland on contingency plans to close the gulf to Russian ships in the event of security threats.

Myagkov's proposal was met with skepticism, even from some Russian officials.

"Why do we need to copy Trump? We're serious people, after all," State Duma lawmaker Yelena Drapeko told the news website Podyom, suggesting that Myagkov's remarks were made in jest.

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Trump, shortly after his inauguration, signed executive orders renaming the Gulf of Mexico to the "Gulf of America" and restoring the name of North America's highest peak, Denali, to Mount McKinley.

The Russian Military History Society was established by presidential decree in 2012 and is chaired by former Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky. A vocal supporter of Russia's war in Ukraine, Medinsky has authored history textbooks promoting revised interpretations of key historical events.

Myagkov's remarks came during a presentation of his work on "Swedish and Finnish Russophobia."

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