ABSTRACT

TITLE:	American Realpolitik and the Evolution of the Russo-Finnish Winter War, 1939-1940.
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ABSTRACT: My work centers on the Russo-Finnish Winter War that started on November 30, 1939 and ended with the Moscow Peace Treaty on March 13, 1940. Contextually this conflict fits into the early part of World War II. After the invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in September 1939, the Soviets turned their territorial interests to the Baltic States and Finland. The popular narrative asserts that the United States, under legal restrictions from the Neutrality Laws enacted by Congress in the 1930's, was obliged to watch the Finnish Republic stand up to the substantially larger Red Army of Stalin and the Soviet Union. While neutrality was a huge factor in America's lack of involvement, my research suggests that the United States had an agenda. Using memoranda of conversations and other correspondences from the U.S. State Department's publication of Foreign Relations of the United States: 1939 vol. 1 and 1940 vol. 1, I have found evidence that suggests the United States purposefully failed to provide aid to Finland in an attempt to stay on good relations with the Soviet Union in hopes of aligning them with the Allies against Nazi Germany. Using the Neutrality Law of 1939, which was signed twenty-six days before the outbreak of the Winter War, I argue that legal neutrality was not relevant during the Winter War. My research suggests, rather, the United States was using realpolitik to control power in Europe at the expense of Finland.