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The following essay is a summary of US Finnish relations from its independence through the end of World War II. I chose to stop at the end of World War II simply because Finland's policy of neutrality during the Cold War, or later described by the West as "Finlandization" deserves its own write up. I tried to include the major notable events/facts in this essay, and while some more knowledgeable readers will wonder, "what about this? or what about that?" I tried to keep this write up as short as possible for ease of reading for the readers that are not well versed in history.

The establishment of a US-Finnish diplomatic relationship began in 1850, with the United States establishing a consulate in Helsinki and Reynold Frenckall being appointed Consul, the United States and what became Finland after 1917 enjoyed friendly relations.<sup>1</sup> Finland from the beginning had an interest in closely aligning themselves with the United States, however this feeling wasn't initially mutual. In the days leading up to their declaration of independence, the Finnish food commissioner Von Wendt had been in contact with the American Minister in Sweden requesting that food be sent to Finland, as their people were facing a dire situation. Von Wendt told the Americans that his people were optimistic that America could give the Finns the aid that was needed, but warned them that if they were unable to fill the void, that they would accept German aid, which without a doubt would align them in the German corner.<sup>2</sup> On December 4, 1917 the president of the Finnish Senate proclaimed Finnish independence before the Diet, and the same body ratified the independence two days later. Also on December 4, the President of the Senate appealed to Thornwell Haynes, the American Consul at Helsinki, for American recognition of Finland.<sup>3</sup> The Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, cabled the Russian Ambassador telling him to relay to the Finnish Consul that there was no objection to the Finns sending a delegation to state the Finnish case for recognition, but that the United States was not ready to make a decision regarding the recognition of Finland.<sup>4</sup>

The United States had also not made a decision relating to the supply of food that was badly needed in Finland, where the citizens were living on half-rations in most areas, and as a result of the hesitation on the part of the Americans it was the basis of communist propaganda.<sup>5</sup> On January 24, 1918, Thornwell Haynes made a desperate plea to the Secretary of State imploring him to push forward the immediate recognition of Finland. In his plea, he implied that the United States was sacrificing Finland for war gains, and expressed his dissatisfaction with the current policy. He argued that if the United States were to recognize Finland, it would strengthen the American position in the region, and open up numerous avenues of trade. Of Finland he wrote, "No other small nation clamoring for recognition offers such historical worthiness nor such geographical trade advantages."<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, American recognition of Finland was still to be delayed. Haynes continued to advocate for the establishment of American-Finnish trade, claiming that there was no more important of a country in Europe to the United States than

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<sup>1</sup> Golden, *The United States and Finland: An Enduring Relationship 1919-1989*, (Washington DC: Department of State), 21.

<sup>2</sup> The Minister in Sweden (Morris) to the Secretary of State, 3 December 1917, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1918*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), II: 733 (hereafter *FRUS*).

<sup>3</sup> The Consul at Helsingfors (Haynes) to the Secretary of State, 4 December 1917, *FRUS*, 1918, II: 733-734.

<sup>4</sup> The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Russia (Francis), 14 December 1917, *FRUS*, 1918, II: 736.

<sup>5</sup> The Minister in Sweden (Morris) to the Secretary of State, 20 December 1917, *FRUS*, 1918, II: 738.

<sup>6</sup> The Consul at Helsingfors (Haynes) to the Secretary of State, 24 January 1918, *FRUS*, 1918, II: 743-744.

Finland. He argued that by opening trade with Finland, the United States would have an opportunity for post-war trade with Russia through Finland and that such trade would help the United States spread its influence economically to a country that was quickly becoming our political adversary.<sup>7</sup>

Herbert Hoover, now the Director of European Relief and the United States Food Administrator soon took up the cause of providing food relief to Finland, among other European nations. In the case of Finland he stated, “The food is practically exhausted in the cities. While many of the peasants have some bread, other sections are mixing large amounts of straw. They are exhausted of fats, meats, and sugar, and need help to prevent renewed rise of Bolshevism.”<sup>8</sup> On April 26, 1919 Hoover penned a letter to President Wilson imploring him to formally recognize Finland. He also went on to praise the Finns for their ability to build themselves up without taking a dime from the US, but warned that without our recognition that they would either fail, or become dependent on our charity for the long term. He concluded his letter to the President by underlying the development of Finnish democracy, meeting every criteria set forth to them by the world, despite the “sinister shadow” that had been looming over them.<sup>9</sup>

Hoover also defied the Allied food blockade by sending ships laden with food to Finland under the protection of the US Navy, and tapped into a \$5 million dollar fund controlled by President Wilson in order to provide free meals to millions of Finnish children.<sup>10</sup> Finally, after many months of delay, American recognition of Finland finally came on May 7, 1919.<sup>11</sup>

Hoover and his food administration also set up a program that provided free meals to children. In total, this program gave 35,000,000 free meals to Finnish children, not only causing a great appreciation towards Hoover and the United States for the charity, but also leading to the children thanking the United States through prayer. In total, Hoover helped Finland attain 170,275 tons of food, 336 tons of clothing, medical supplies, and other miscellaneous items, along with \$9,872,171 in loans from the United States. The Finns also received \$932,780 in charity from the United States.

When President Wilson received the Finnish Minister to the United States, Armas Herman Saastamoinen, on August 21, 1919, the latter stated that Finland sought to “establish and maintain the friendliest and most cordial relations with the United States and that no effort will be spared to win the confidence and sympathy of your country.”<sup>12</sup>

The efforts of men like Thornwell Haynes, who was literally a thorn in the side of the State Department, and Herbert Hoover, who seized the initiative and the lack of oversight in his position to do what he felt was right- feed a hungry nation. So grateful were the Finnish people that they coined the word *huuvere*, which translates to “charity” or “loving all men as

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<sup>7</sup> The Consul at Helsingfors (Haynes) to the Secretary of State, 15 July 1918, *FRUS, 1918*, II: 801.

<sup>8</sup> *New York Times*, “Hoover Issues Call to Feed Peoples,” January 8, 1919, accessed February 17, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> *New York Times*, “Finland’s Creation Helped By Hoover”, Published December 21, 1939, accessed February 24, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Glen Jeansonne, *Herbert Hoover*, (New York: New American Library, 2016), 127-128.

<sup>11</sup> The Secretary of State to the Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs (Holsti), 7 May 1919, *FRUS, 1919*, II: 215.

<sup>12</sup> Remarks of the Finnish Minister (Saastamoinen) on the Occasion of His Reception by President Wilson, 21 August 1919, *FRUS, 1919*, II: 221-222.

brothers.”<sup>13</sup> How many influential Americans can say that they’ve had a word created about them in a foreign language that has a positive meaning? Not too many.

Finland faithfully paid its debt obligations to the United States, and continued to do so even after the Stock Market crashed in 1929 and during the subsequent Great Depression. The exception to this was in 1931, when the U.S. president ordered the postponement of debts that were due for one year, by order of the President.<sup>14</sup> Once the payments resumed, Finland was one of the only foreign debtors to repay the United States on schedule, and as a result President Roosevelt wanted to reward the Finns for their punctuality by proposing a new repayment plan. Under the president’s plan, the interest rate that would be charged to Finland would be drastically reduced, in turn allowing for a substantial reduction in the amount of money owed by Finland.<sup>15</sup>

President Roosevelt submitted his proposed debt repayment plan for Finland to the State Department on December 22, 1933.<sup>16</sup> This plan was forwarded to the Finnish Legation on January 6, 1934 and five days later, the Finnish Legation replied back to the Department of State that the Finnish government was prepared to accept the thirty-year, zero interest plan.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately for Finland, this agreement was never submitted for Congressional approval, as Roosevelt did not feel that he was in a situation politically to get the approval of Congress, largely due to the concerns that other debtors may complain about favoritism shown towards the Finns. Because traditional allies, such as Great Britain, were likely to complain about not receiving a restructured deal and because Roosevelt did not want to prolong the Congressional session, he opted out of submitting the new Finnish debt deal.<sup>18</sup>

On February 13, 1934, the United States and Finland signed a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Consular Rights. The purpose of this treaty was to replace the current *modus vivendi* (temporary agreement) with a treaty that established permanent economic and commercial relations, in addition to the regulation of consular relations and other non-commercial relations between the two countries.<sup>19</sup> The United States was motivated to enter into this treaty in part because of a favorable balance of trade between the United States and Finland (in addition to the influence of Finnish-Americans) and most importantly, Finland’s punctuality in repaying its debt obligations. The United States was impressed by the Finnish resolve to break with what the US government perceived as a “united front” of the debtor countries and continue

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<sup>13</sup> Jeansonne, *Herbert Hoover*, 128.

<sup>14</sup> The Finnish Minister (Astrom) to the Secretary of State, 8 October 1931, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1931*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), I, 203-204.

<sup>15</sup> Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State, 13 November 1933, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1933*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), I, 864

<sup>16</sup> Roosevelt’s proposal, put together by the Treasury Department, included three separate payment options, spanning between thirty and fifty years. The thirty-year plan was a zero-interest plan, with an annual payment of \$195,163.44; the forty-year plan was at 1% interest, with an annual payment of \$178,333.77; and the fifty-year plan was at 1.5% interest, with an annual payment of \$167,285.30. Roosevelt hoped that Finland would take the thirty-year option, as it reduced the amount of debt Finland owed from \$8,429,000 to \$5,854,903.25. The other two proposed plans would have reduced the Finnish debt obligation to \$7,132,550.80 and \$8,364,264 respectively.

<sup>17</sup> President Roosevelt to the Acting Secretary of State, 22 December 1933, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1934*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), I: 559-560 (hereby *FRUS*); The Finnish Legation to the Department of State, 11 January 1934, *FRUS, 1934*, I: 563.

<sup>18</sup> Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Phillips), 29 March 1934, *FRUS, 1934*, I: 564.

<sup>19</sup> The Minister in Finland (Pearson) to the Secretary of State, 3 February 1927, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1934*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), II: 134-135 (Hereby *FRUS*).

to repay their debts, all while risking criticism from internal political opponents.<sup>20</sup> Both countries ratified the treaty, and the ratifications were exchanged on July 11, 1934, with the effective date of the treaty being August 10, 1934.<sup>21</sup>

The American public and press shared the same level of outrage at the Soviet invasion of Finland on November 30, 1939, starting what would become known as the Winter War (Talvisota). This outrage strengthened the sympathies and favorable view of the Finns in the eyes of ordinary Americans. One popular quip, repeated in newspapers across the country said, “The Nobel peace prize award for 1939 will not be made this year, dispelling rumors that the award would be given to Joe Stalin for his heroic stand against Finland’s threat to Russia.”<sup>22</sup> When the press found out that the bombing raids carried out by the Soviets targeted Helsinki indiscriminately, rather than strictly military targets, there was a strong sense of outrage that the Soviets would bomb children. In a Gallup poll taken in mid-December, 88% of those surveyed expressed sympathies with Finland, while only 1% expressed any sympathy for Russia.<sup>23</sup>

The Finnish Relief Fund, founded by former President Herbert Hoover, quickly became the most popular relief organization to which the American public donated. By Christmas 1939, the Finnish Relief Fund had raised \$200,000, which Hoover sent to Helsinki for the purposes of civilian aid.<sup>24</sup> In total, the Finnish Relief Fund raised almost \$3 million for the humanitarian support of Finland. This is a shocking number when one considers that the total money raised in 2025 dollars equates to almost \$142.58 million in a matter of three months.<sup>25</sup>

Ultimately Finland would make peace with the Soviet Union on March 13, 1940. American policymakers had also taken note of the peace terms, with some members of the US Government calling the treaty a “holdup” of Finland, while others, such as Senator George Norris said, “It is another victory for tyranny and dictatorship and another defeat for the cause of democratic government.” Americans valued their friendship with Finland and realized the injustice that Finland suffered with the peace deal at the end of the Winter War.

When the Continuation War began, the United States was the only allied nation that did not declare war on Finland, as the government saw Finland’s war with the Soviet Union as a separate war, outside of the global conflict. The Finnish government, despite being in a full-blown war, continued to make its debt payments to the United States. This was not only appreciated by the American public and government, but it was a sign of goodwill that demonstrated that Finland wished to maintain its close relationship with the United States.

Finland was the only country in Europe that shares a land border with Soviet Union (Russia) to retain its independence at the end of World War II, and the United States

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<sup>20</sup> Memorandum by the Assistant Chief of the Division of Eastern European Affairs (Packer), 14 August 1933, *FRUS, 1934*, II: 138-139; Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Phillips), 22 January 1934, *FRUS, 1934*, II: 140.

<sup>21</sup> Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Consular Rights, 49 Stat. 2659; “Treaty Series 868”, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/b-fi-ust000007-0718.pdf>, 718.

<sup>22</sup> *The Bakersfield Californian*, “Pen Shafts,” Bakersfield, California, Vol. 52, No. 117, December 14, 1939, 28.

<sup>23</sup> Gallup Survey #179, Question #4a, 31 December 1939, <http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/Gallup/Gallup.pdf>, 197, accessed November 13, 2019.

<sup>24</sup> Jacobs, *America and the Winter War, 1939-1940*, 82.

<sup>25</sup> Jacobs, *America and the Winter War, 1939-1940*, 87.; “Purchasing Power Today of a US Dollar Transaction in the Past,” MeasuringWorth, 2025. [www.measuringworth.com/ppowerus/](http://www.measuringworth.com/ppowerus/). This number was attained as the Relative Value in Consumption, as it covers goods and services such as food, shelter, clothing, etc.

acknowledged that the Finnish campaign against the Soviet Union was a separate war, not a part of the larger global conflict. On June 26, 1941, in a memorandum of conversation, the U.S. Acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles noted that the Minister of Finland informed him that the Finns had been forced into taking defensive measures against the Soviets and the Minister told him off the record that he had hoped his country's policy would be one of neutrality with the Germans and the British.<sup>26</sup> *Life* published in its July 7, 1941 issue that "Finland would be foolish to refuse Nazi aid to get back what Russia took last year."<sup>27</sup> This shows that not only did the US government believe that the Finns were fighting a separate war, but there was sympathy among the American press with the Finnish cause and no anger that they were seeking to reclaim territory that they had lost.

Unlike the end of the Finnish Civil War, the United States was in no position to send food supplies and credits to Finland due to the predation of its shipping by German U-boats. Despite this, the United States never stopped searching for a solution to bring peace to Finland once again. A little over two weeks after the breaking of diplomatic ties between Britain and Finland, the Finnish ambassador to the United States (Procope) called upon Under Secretary of State Welles for a meeting. In his memorandum of conversation, the Under Secretary noted that he relayed a desire from the Soviet government to make a separate peace with Finland to give territorial concessions. He noted that in this conversation he relayed that every indication the Americans had from the Soviets was that they were doing just fine militarily, and expected to soon gain the upper hand against the Germans.<sup>28</sup>

In his Memorandum of Conversation dated September 8, 1941, Secretary Hull spoke at length with the Procope, elaborating U.S. support for Finland, even going so far as to congratulate Finland on regaining the territory lost in 1940.<sup>29</sup> Welles told Procope that once Hitler was stopped, the United States would take a greater interest in Finland than it had at any time previously.<sup>30</sup> This conversation showed that despite the lack of a U.S. state of war with Germany, the United States was clearly making preparations to enter the war in the very near future, and that after dealing with Germany it was making future preparations to resist the spread of communism.

Germany's declaration of war on the United States placed Finland in a precarious position. The United States was now officially at war with a Finnish ally. It meant that US public opinion and favor of Finland could soon turn sour. The United States still sought to get Finland out of the war, but economic aid was still a deciding factor in Finland's decision to continue the fight. Foreign Minister Witting attempted to liken Finland's position to that of Iceland and claimed an inability to do anything about the German presence, much like the Icelandic government couldn't do anything about the Allied presence in its country. Schoenfeld relayed that this analogy was untrue, as Finland was actively engaged in the war.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State, 26 June 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, I: 43.

<sup>27</sup> "War in Russia," *Life*, 7 July 1941, 40.

<sup>28</sup> Memorandum of Conversation by the Under Secretary of State (Welles), 18 August 1941, *FRUS 1941*, I: 56.

<sup>29</sup> Memorandum of Conversation by the Secretary of State, 8 September 1941, *FRUS 1941*, I: 62.

<sup>30</sup> Memorandum of Conversation by the Secretary of State, 8 September 1941, *FRUS 1941*, I: 63.

<sup>31</sup> The Minister in Finland (Schoenfeld) to the Secretary of State, 3 February 1942, *FRUS 1942*, II: 34-35; The Minister in Finland (Schoenfeld) to the Secretary of State, 4 February 1942, *FRUS 1942*, II: 35-36.

Despite increased American political pressure to cease the hostilities between Finland and Soviet Russia, the Finnish government maintained its position that it was acting defensively in this conflict. The Finns were not ready to cease hostilities, due largely to the military situation that they viewed out of their control, which hints at a fear of German reprisal. The Finns also pointed, again, to the fact that Finland was almost entirely dependent on Germany for economic survival.<sup>32</sup>

The American declaration of war on Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria on June 5, 1942 caused a great deal of concern for the Finnish government, which immediately asked the US whether Finland would soon find itself facing a declaration of war. Under Secretary of State Welles answered the Finnish concerns by saying that the American attitude towards Finland had been made very clear, meaning the Americans had no intention, or desire, to declare war with Finland, but instead to ensure that they were able to maintain favorable ties with the Finnish government and people. Welles did warn the Finns that if they were to give open and direct aid to Germany that the American position would drastically change.<sup>33</sup> This is important because it shows that the Americans were more than willing to look the other way in Finland's fight against their "ally" Soviet Russia, as long as Finland did not openly aid Germany in its fight, such as cooperating in joint offensives against Soviet forces.

The United States soon put pressure upon the Finnish government in an attempt to get the Finns out of the war by reducing their economic access to US markets. The United States ordered the withdrawal of its consuls from Finland (July 1942), and requested that Finland withdraw its consuls from the United States, a move that had a great impact on Finland, especially with the loss of its consulate in New York, on which it relied on for advancing Finnish economic interests.

The US move seemed to be an effective one, as Schoenfeld reported that the Finnish public had hoped that there would be no break in diplomatic relations between the US and Finland. Schoenfeld noted that the Finnish government had refused to move its troops from their current lines, which, according to Schoenfeld's informant, prevented Germany from extending its lines. Schoenfeld's informant also expressed that the Finnish people's belief in their "sisu" was still very high and the Finnish people appeared to have no fear of the Germans.<sup>34</sup>

The United States spent much of early 1943 attempting to bring about a peace between Finland and the Soviet Union but was unable to accomplish that goal. While the United States recognized that Finland was held at the mercy of the Germans, the US government was still hopeful that a solution could be found that would save Finland's autonomy, and appease the Soviet Union. In April 1943, Secretary of State Hull recommended to President Roosevelt that the United States sever diplomatic relations with Finland, due to the pressure exerted on Finland by the Germans. Prior to making this recommendation, the United States did consult with the Soviet Union, who agreed that this move would be advantageous to both the Soviets and the

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<sup>32</sup> The Minister in Finland (Schoenfeld) to the Secretary of State, 16 February 1942, *FRUS 1942*, II: 41-43.

<sup>33</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Welles), 5 June 1942, *FRUS 1942*, II: 63-64.

<sup>34</sup> The Minister in Finland (Schoenfeld) to the Secretary of State, 31 August 1942, *FRUS 1942*, II: 79-80.

United States, because it would put immense pressure upon the Finnish government.<sup>35</sup> The decision to break relations was postponed for almost a year, until the United States finally broke diplomatic relations with Finland on June 30, 1944.<sup>36</sup> The cause for the delay was the hope among American officials that they could mediate a peace between Finland and the Soviet Union, but after it became clear to the United States that the Germans exerted an unshakeable control of Finland's political leadership, US officials felt there was no other option; Switzerland was left to manage the interests of the United States in Finland.<sup>37</sup>

Despite the diplomatic break, the United States was very aware of the image that Finland still maintained among the US public, both for its debt repayment and its governmental form. This favorability among the American public, and by the United States as a lender, was a crucial reason why despite the lack of formal diplomatic relations, Finland was still viewed as important by the United States. Discussions amongst members of the Treasury Department and the State Department recognized this predicament, and they were able to work out an agreement that would prevent Finland from defaulting on its loan debt.<sup>38</sup>

The reversal of fortunes for the Germans in the war, coupled with the Americans severing of diplomatic ties, pushed Finland into seeking a peace deal with the Soviets in 1944. The efforts of the US State Department to push Finland out of the war seemed to have worked, though the weakening of the German military strength due to losses on both the eastern and western fronts also allowed Finland to seek a break from its "occupiers." The United States observed intently, and its Ambassadors and other officials kept the government in the loop with the progress of the negotiations, which concluded on September 19, 1944. This no doubt was a cause for concern among American officials, who acted quickly to reestablish diplomatic relations, appointing Maxwell Hamilton as the United States Representative in Finland on November 14, 1944.<sup>39</sup> It would be nearly a year before relations were normalized, as the United States and Finland formally re-established diplomatic relations on August 31, 1945.<sup>40</sup>

A statement made by Foreign Minister Molotov decades after the war in which he said, "People are very stubborn there [in Finland], very stubborn. We were smart not to annex Finland. It would have been a festering wound."<sup>41</sup> Having secured Finland's survival at the Tehran Conference in 1943 also helps explain why the United States was willing to break diplomatic ties with Finland in 1944 as a means of getting Finland out of the war. On the last day of the Tehran

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<sup>35</sup> The Secretary of State to President Roosevelt, 19 April 1943, *Foreign Relations Papers of the United States 1943* (hereafter *FRUS*), (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), III: 269, accessed October 30, 2016, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1943v03>.

<sup>36</sup> Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Roosevelt, 28 June 1944, *Foreign Relations Papers of the United States 1944* (hereafter *FRUS*), (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), III: 606, accessed October 30, 2016, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1944v03>.

<sup>37</sup> The Secretary of State to the Finnish Chargé (Thesleff), 30 June 1944, *FRUS 1944*, III: 608.

<sup>38</sup> Berry, *American Foreign Policy and the Finnish Exception*, 230-231.

<sup>39</sup> The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kennan), 14 November 1944, *FRUS 1944*, III: 626.

<sup>40</sup> The Secretary of State to the United States Representative in Finland (Hamilton), 22 August 1945, *Foreign Relations Papers of the United States 1945* (hereafter *FRUS*), (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), IV: 654, accessed October 30, 2016, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1945v04>.

<sup>41</sup> Max Jakobson, *Finland in the New Europe* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1998), 62.

Conference in 1943, Roosevelt approached Stalin requesting that Finland escape harsh punishment at the conclusion of the war, and that they were to stay free and independent. At first Stalin objected, but when Churchill backed up Roosevelt, Stalin backed off his objections and agreed.<sup>42</sup>

The United States knew that the peace between Finland and the Soviet Union would be harsh towards the Finns, and the US government formulated plans to assist. Chief among these plans was economic assistance by means of loans and trade deals. The peace treaty's economic impact on Finland was immense, especially with Finland having to withdraw to their 1940 borders. As a result, Finland lost 20% of its sawn timber woodworking industry, 23% of its plywood industry, and 25% of its wood pulp board and chemical wood pulp industries. By losing control of the Saima Canal, Finland lost transport facilities accounting for 13% of its sawn timber exports, and 13.5% of their pit props and pulpwood exports. The loss of other ports led to between 6.5% and 31% of various other timber industry related exports, which was Finland's primary industry and income source.<sup>43</sup>

In a meeting with Prime Minister Paasikivi on March 9, 1945, Hamilton reported that the Finnish looked to the United States to furnish them with items, such as metals, as they believed the United States to be the only country that could meet their needs. In return they offered to supply the United States with certain wood products for which there was a high demand in the United States.<sup>44</sup> Other officials in Finland, such as the Chargé in Finland (Hulley) recognized Finland's ability to prioritize its economy, and no doubt remembered Finland's track record of repaying loans in the interwar period, recommending that the United States extend credits to Finland because they were the most likely to repay their obligations should they remain sovereign.<sup>45</sup> On December 14, 1945 the Export-Import Bank extended a \$35 million credit to Finland (in addition to the \$25 million outstanding balance) totaling \$60 million in general credit. In addition, the bank approved \$5 million for cotton credit that would allow for 40,000 bales of cotton to be shipped to Finland.<sup>46</sup>

While Finland ended up paying a heavy cost in material and manpower to secure their independence and recognition of neutrality, it would not have been done without the backing of the United States. Finland's ability to repay its debts to the United States, especially when others would not, struck a chord with the American public, one that they would not forget. Finland's status as a Constitutional Republic was also very relatable in the eyes of the US public, and the media's ability to paint Finland as a defender of Western values and democracy against the Soviets ensured that the American public would put pressure on their leaders to not abandon Finland.

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<sup>42</sup> Bohlen Minutes- Tripartite Luncheon Meeting, 1 P.M. Roosevelt's Quarters, Soviet Embassy, 1 December 1943, *Foreign Relations Papers of the United States The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran 1943* (hereafter *FRUS*), (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961): 590-593. Accessed October 30, 2016, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1943CairoTehran>.

<sup>43</sup> The Chargé in Finland (Gullion) to the Secretary of State, 7 March 1944, *FRUS 1944*, III: 572.

<sup>44</sup> The United States Representative in Finland (Hamilton) to the Secretary of State, 10 March 1945, *FRUS 1945*, IV: 641-642.

<sup>45</sup> The Acting Secretary of State to the Chargé in Finland (Hulley), 12 December 1945, *FRUS 1945*, IV: 659.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

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Finally, Finnish “sisu” was a national motto that Finland survived as an independent nation. Had the outnumbered and outgunned Finns not bloodied the Soviets so badly during the Winter War, and during the Continuation War, Finland surely would have ended up like its Baltic neighbors - no longer an independent state.