

## Otto Aura: Planning the Finnish *arbetsplikt* 1920–1939

In this paper, I analyze how the Finnish *arbetsplikt* (law on obligatory work, or duty to work) was planned and discussed in Finland. It all began with the Finnish state realizing it had to do something to prepare its economy for the potential future war. This was learned through other countries experiences regarding the First World War.

The planning was started in the 1920s as two separate committees of war economy was set in 1924 and 1926. Both of these committees worked for about two years and saw that the question of distributing labour should be determined by means of coercive legislation. Both committees handed over classified reports on labour market during a crisis.

Then, the Economic War Council was founded in 1929 and it planned the basis of the distribution of labour during a crisis. Its focus had two sides, war industry and agriculture. The draft of law on obligatory work was written in the early 1930s. It was seen perhaps too coercive to be presented in the time of peace. The draft was kept in the drawer to be formalized if needed. In this paper, I firstly examine these reports and seek questions regarding the State and dilemma of free/unfree labour.

Something had happened and in late 1938 the Finnish Government started to work the law on obligatory work for the good of national defence. In this paper, I will examine the parliamentary discussion and how the question of state and free/unfree labour was discussed or was it a discussion at all? The main point of this paper will be the examination of state and free/unfree labour in the planning and legislative processes that led to *arbetsplikt* to be confirmed in summer 1939.