

**AGRARIAN LAW**

1. Read the excerpts from sources below and answer the questions on the task sheet of Part 2.

**Source A****A Baltic-German historian on the Agrarian Law**

It was pointed out already at the first reading of the law /.../ that its purpose is to deprive the German aristocracy of their economic and political power.

The German delegates /.../ had particularly hard time in June-July 1919. The suggestion to give a third of the baronies' agricultural land for a remunerative price to the state to form homesteads was not even taken into consideration. The suggestion of Estonian moderate parties to minimise the landed estate by gradually decreasing it was also rejected. /.../ Debates resulted in the law of dispossession on October 10, 1919, that was passed with 63 votes in favour, 9 against and 1 impartial vote, after the members of Estonian People's Party and Christian People's Party had left the room to indicate their protest. The expropriation of the manors was the state's firm intervention into ownership, which can even be viewed as a revolutionary step.

*Georg von Rauch. Balti riikide ajalugu 1918-1940. Tln, 1995. p. 48.*

**Source B****Agrarian Law**

Provision No 1. In order to create a national land reserve all manors and land within the borders of Estonia that have been listed in the provision No 597 of the Baltic Private Law will be dispossessed as the property of state together with all their belongings and useful agricultural inventory, notwithstanding whether they belong to the owner, keeper or landholder of the manor.

Provision No 16. The land will be given to those who shall till the land alone or together with others, who shall maintain themselves of tilling the land only or do it as a sideline.

Provision No 21. The land will be given in priority to: 1) citizens, who have demonstrated peculiar spirit in the War of Independence of Estonia; 2) soldiers, who were hurt in the battles of the independence war; 3) families of the soldiers who were killed in the independence war; 4) soldiers who took part in operations against the enemy in the independence war, depending on the duration of the operation.

*Riigi Teataja, 1919. Nr. 79/80. p. 625-626.*

**Source C****Excerpts of Otto Strandman's speech at the reading of the Agrarian Law in the Constituent Assembly on 29 July 1919**

The first task at building the Estonian Republic is to /---/ cast the ruling feudal regime. /---/ At first, we must do it economically. /---/ There is a lack of land in Estonia and there has been a lack of land for decades, if not for centuries. /---/ The lack of land must disappear. In the future, all land supplies must be for the people to be used. Everyone, who has got a wish, courage and workforce to own and till land, has to be given an opportunity to do so. /---/

Even politically we are forced to abolish landed property. /---/ When we take a look at which part the landowners have played in the lives of the people, we have no other way /---/ 5,000-6,000 inhabitants must not rule over the whole country and nation. They must not have such economic power that they /---/ can create in the whole country the kind of order and power that satisfies their interests. This power has to be taken away from them and given to the people.

*The second term of the Constituent Assembly. Minutes No 28-97. Tallinn, 1920. Columns 430-435.*

# GERMANY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

## 1. Using the map.

