

when the mass drainage campaign began, the majority of the forests belonged to peasants. It was therefore easy for the organizers of the campaign to enlist the support of the interested parties: the peasantry, the country's forest complex, the Ministry of Agriculture and the forest science community, and then to "hammer out" of the government some major investments for drainage. The fact that in the early seventies even an international bank gave Finland a loan for these purposes was an important boost to the organizers' morale.

Since there was little control over the rational use of public funds, the assault on the swamps was widely ineffective. Some economists and protectors of nature raised their voices in protest, however the improvers and individual scientists refuted the criticisms and the assault was continued.

What was the end result of the campaign? Officials representing forestry and science acknowledge that 5 percent of the drained areas do not meet economic criteria and that in the overwhelming majority of cases, improvements works are justified by the need to ensure full employment. But all those who have even a very superficial idea of the problem have difficulty accepting this line of reasoning. Studies conducted by geographers and botanists give an entirely different picture. For instance, data for Pokhymaa Province indicate that 35 percent of all the drainages gave no yield at all. Botanists from the university are determining the usefulness of such marginal amelioration work.

Of course, clearing the swamps in Finland will be conducive to an increase in forest resources and eventually, in the amount of timber extracted. But even successful drainage is still no guarantee of an increase in the amount of timber hauled, because the numerous technical and economic problems associated with maintaining and exploiting forests grown at the sites of the swamps have not yet been resolved.