

SOURCE 6

Report from Lord Derby to the Cabinet on problems with recruiting, December 1915

(PRO ref: CAB 37/139/26)

HOW TO USE THIS SOURCE TO HELP YOU ANSWER THE BIG QUESTION :

Look carefully at this source and consider what it tells you about why conscription was introduced and how people were affected by it. You should consider:

ASK YOURSELF:

- What was wrong with the system of starrng?
- Why were professional and commercial men not joining up?
- What was wrong with the system of recruiting?
- What kind of lucrative employment was available?
- Do you get the impression that men did not want to go to war, or that they simply wanted a fairer and better organised system of recruitment?

SOURCE 6

Many difficulties have been met with, but the chief difficulty has been the unreliability of the starrng as distinguishing between those who should and those who should not be taken for the Army. Instead of starrng being of assistance, it has been a distinct hindrance to the canvass. More especially is this so in rural and

Many men also who would willingly serve find themselves barred from doing so by domestic, financial, and business obligations. This especially applies to professional and commercial men who find difficulties in meeting such obligations as payment of rent, insurance premium, interest on loans connected with their business, and provision for their family, due to the fact that their income is entirely dependent on their individual efforts, and ceases when they join the colours—separation and dependant's allowances being quite inadequate in such cases to meet these obligations. This applies not only to married men, but also to single men in many cases.

Another obstacle to recruiting has been the unequal treatment of individuals. Parents and relations especially cannot understand why their sons, husbands, or brothers should join while other young men hold back and secure lucrative employment at home.

Apart from the number of men who have actually enlisted and attested there are many who have promised to enlist when "so and so" has also promised to go. There may, of course, be a number of men who make this answer as an excuse. But that it is genuine in a very large number of cases, and is accentuated by bad starrng, there is no reason to doubt.

The canvass shows very distinctly that it is not want of courage that is keeping men back, nor is there the slightest sign but that the country as a whole is as determined to support the Prime Minister in his pledge made at Guildhall on the 9th November, 1914, as it was when that pledge was made. There is abundant evidence of a determination to see the war through to a successful conclusion.