

## SOURCE 8

Extract from the report of the Committee on Labour Troubles, published in April 1918

(PRO ref: NATS 1/232)

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

Look carefully at this source and consider what it tells you about how workers were affected by the war and how they contributed to the war effort. You should consider:

### ASK YOURSELF:

- Why was the government so concerned about a strike by the ETU?
- What plans was it making in case there was a strike?
- Do you get the impression the government was keen to have a confrontation or keen to avoid one?
- Do you get the impression that industrial relations were generally bad at this time?

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In case of a strike of the E.T.U., it may be necessary in the interests of public safety to employ soldiers and sailors to work some of the Power Stations - particularly those which are necessary for the maintenance of cold storage of meat, for the working of searchlights, and for the working of munition works and of tramways carrying munition workers.

In other towns, where the maintenance of electric supply affects the national safety, it may be necessary for the same course to be taken, and arrangements for this purpose should be concerted between the Police, the Naval and Military Authorities, and the Managers of the Works involved. It is, however, very undesirable that any general instructions on this subject should be issued. We think that the Ministry of Munitions should indicate those places - as few in number as possible - where interests of vital importance are involved, and the local Naval or Military Authorities and the Police should receive instructions to work out the necessary arrangements with the Managers of the Works under conditions of absolute secrecy. There is no doubt that public opinion would support such action when it was known that the supply of food or the protection of the town against enemy attack was in danger, but if the proposal to employ soldiers and sailors in place of workmen were to leak out before the absolute necessity for such action and its narrow limits were realised, serious trouble might result.