

2006 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Modern History

Section I (continued)

Question 3 (10 marks)

Assess how useful Sources C and D would be for an historian studying the impact of total war on the home fronts during World War I.

In your answer, consider the perspectives provided by the TWO sources and the reliability of each one.

Source C is a primary, literary source. It was written in 1917 by a British man who lived in Germany for four years, presumably during the war although the dates of his time in Germany is not stated. The extract is written about the desperation of resources in Germany during WWI and what the Germans had to do to survive the war. The extract reveals that the effect of total war on the Germans had led to incredible social societal changes. The lack of men because they were fighting meant that the women had to do the jobs that the men usually did. Labouring on railroads and streets. Food had become extremely scarce and those that could afford to buy luxurious meals such as geese had to purchase it at ridiculous prices. This source in areas is

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Question 3 (continued)

reliable because it was written during the time when the events were happening. They are not an assumption of how these times were lived in. The factor that reduces the reliability is that because this was written and published during the war from a British perspective on the German lifestyle things may be ~~over~~ exaggerated to inspire morale in the British to see Germany living just as bad, if not worse than they did. Source D is a primary, photographic source. It is a propaganda poster from the British Ministry of Food, printed in 1917. It is encouraging the British people at home to ration their bread so that resources can be saved to help the soldiers defeat the Germans and the U-boats. The poster itself is not a completely reliable source to understand the impact of total war on the home front for an historian. Even though the poster is primary, it is propaganda which means it has been exaggerated to make people believe that a simple thing such as saving bread will sink a German U-boat. It portrays the idea that saving food will help win the war, it doesn't portray the fact that the British might be short of food or in any desperate times.

End of Question 3