

GREAT DEBATES: ARGUMENTS AGAINST CONSCRIPTION

CHARACTER PROFILE

2

Archbishop Daniel **Mannix**



Great Debates: Conscription

© Commonwealth of Australia 2015

This work is copyright.

Permission is given by the Commonwealth for this publication to be copied royalty free within Australia solely for educational purposes. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced for commercial purposes.

To the best of DVA's knowledge, copyright permission has been obtained for any non-Commonwealth material used in this book and for the use of such material for education purposes. The Commonwealth shall not be responsible for any actions resulting from any errors or omissions contained in this book. If you believe there has been an error or omission in any of the material, please contact DVA at education@dva.gov.au.

For enquiries about reproduction or other uses of this publication, contact:

Department of Veterans' Affairs
Commemorations Branch
GPO Box 9998
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6289 1111

Website: www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au

Email: education@dva.gov.au

P03075

Published by the Department of Veterans' Affairs
Designed by Fivefold Creative
January 2016



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Source Analysis Worksheet

Source	What is the source? Who created it?	What information does the source provide?	What argument does this provide your character?	What questions are you left asking?

Biography

Archbishop Daniel **Mannix**



“Every man, woman and child should throw themselves into the fight in the next few weeks against conscription.”

AWM P01383.001

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P01383.001/>

It is November 1917. Daniel Mannix was appointed Archbishop of Melbourne in May. In the same month, Billy Hughes was re-elected Prime Minister of Australia. During the election campaign, Mannix claimed Hughes would try to introduce **conscription** if re-elected. This has turned out to be true. Hughes has announced another **referendum** for 20 December. Australians are to vote again on whether or not conscripts should be compelled to fight overseas.

This is the second time a referendum has been called on the issue of conscription. The first referendum was held on 28 October 1916. The referendum was defeated: 49% voted for the proposal, 51% were against. In the aftermath, Hughes split from the Labor Party. He partly blamed Irish-Catholics for the defeat, claiming later that ‘the Irish question is at the bottom of all our difficulties in Australia’.

There has been some underlying animosity between Australians of Irish and English descent. In 1916, the British Army violently suppressed a rebellion in Ireland, executing the leaders. This worsened an already difficult relationship. Mannix was outraged by the actions of the British and used the growing anti-British sentiment amongst the Irish-Catholic community to influence the vote against conscription.

Although Mannix opposes conscription, he supports the war effort and the troops who have volunteered for service. He is only against conscription. Australia has already contributed a substantial number of men through its volunteer system, especially considering the size of the nation. In Mannix’s view, contributing more would not be in the nation’s best interests.

Source 1.1

'If you think Australia demands you should vote for conscription, do so. If you think it would not be good for Australia, then my advice is you should vote against it. That is what I hope every one of you will do to those have unfortunately brought this question up again. But if you are going to keep Australia free from conscription, if you are going to keep this military slavery outside Australia, you must leave no stone unturned. Others have money, but you have votes. They will spend their money lavishly in order to carry this vote. If you are lethargic they will carry it against you. Every man, woman and child should throw themselves into the fight in the next few weeks against conscription.'

ARCHBISHOP MANNIX IN THE FRAY. (1917, November 16). *The Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser* (NSW: 1886 - 1942), p. 2. Retrieved September 8, 2015, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article125931449>

Source 1.2

'For a Catholic Archbishop to lead his flock along the paths of sedition is to disobey the clearest teachings of the Catholic Church. Obedience to, and loyal co-operation with, duly constituted authority and all its lawful commands (for there is of course a domain of conscience where no human laws can intrude) is by her most earnestly instilled. The political entity to which we belong is the Empire, of which we are a part as essentially as Victoria is a part of Australia, and as Melbourne is a part of Victoria, and as Archbishop Mannix is a part of Melbourne. The final issue of such teaching is that a man may put himself before his country and as such a man we call a traitor. He may do so, if he chooses, but let there be no mistake about it, the Catholic of the British Empire who tramples the Empire underfoot tramples upon the teachings of his Church with it.'

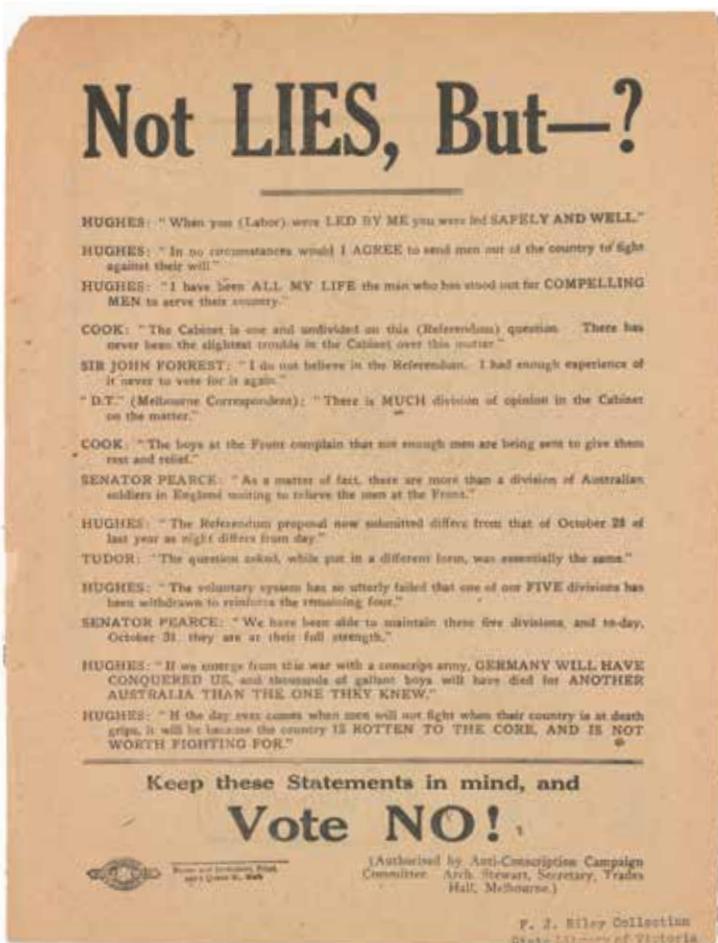
JUDGE HEYDON'S LETTER. (1917, November 23). *Daily Observer* (Tamworth, NSW: 1917 - 1920), p. 3. Retrieved September 8, 2015, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article103736638>

Source 1.3

'In no circumstances would I agree to send men out of this country to fight against their will. If the day ever comes when men will not fight when their country is at deathgrips, it will be because the country is rotten to the core, and not worth fighting for. If the enemy comes here it will not be a question of conscription at all, for every one, young and old, must take what comes to his hand, and die, if need be, in the attempt to defend the country.'

William Morris Hughes, Speech to the House of Representatives, 16 July 1915. Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates, [accessed 07 September 2015]
http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/genpdf/hansard80/hansardr80/1915-07-16/0141/hansard_frag.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf

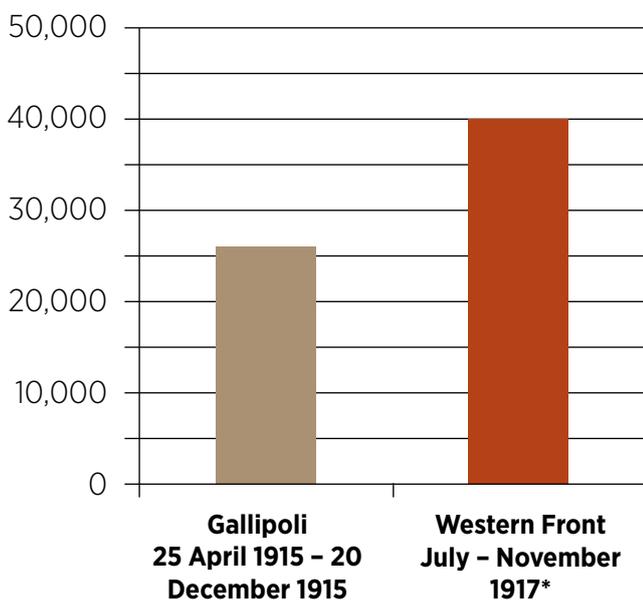
Source 1.4



Not lies, but—?, State Library of Victoria, accessed 2 September 2015, <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/165231>

Source 1.5

Casualties comparison*



The heaviest Australian casualties were suffered in the fighting on the Western Front.

Based on *Campaign casualty statistics – First World War (Australia)*, Australian War Memorial, accessed 2 September 2015, https://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/statistics_table.asp#casualty.

* Approximate only

Source 1.6

'But, for myself, it will take a good deal to convince me that conscription in Australia would not cause more evil than it would avert. (Applause.) I honestly believe that Australia has done her full share and more, and that she cannot reasonably be expected to bear the financial strain and the drain upon her manhood that conscription would involve. (Applause.) If conscription were adopted I should expect to find later on that many who are now its loudest advocates would be the first to rise up against the taxation necessary to redeem our obligations to the returned soldiers or to their widows or orphans or dependants in case the soldiers gave their lives on the battlefield...I think I can say that I have read most of the appeals that have been made for conscription in Australia. But in spite of these eloquent and impassioned appeals my common sense will not allow me to believe that the addition of 100,000 or 200,000 conscript Australians to the 15,000,000 of fighting men that the Allies have at their disposal could be a deciding factor or even a substantial factor in the issue of war.'

Address given by Daniel Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne, September 1916

ANTI-CONSCRIPTION. (1916, September 18). *The Argus* (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848 - 1957), p. 6. Retrieved June 10, 2015, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article1606798>

Glossary of terms

conscription

A policy that compels citizens of a nation into military service.

referendum

A public vote called by the government to approve a change to the Australian Constitution. The 1916 and 1917 referenda were in fact plebiscites. A plebiscite, also known as an advisory referendum, is used to decide a national question that does not affect the Constitution. It can be used to test whether the government has sufficient support from the people to go ahead with a proposed action.
