

4 Study Sources F and G.

Are you surprised by Source F? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [7]

Source F implies that the French were not fully supporting Britain and the League. This is implied by the mention of "their disloyalty and treachery". The extent of France's distance from Britain is portrayed as quite profound, with the words "treachery in its dirtiest and blackest form".

One generally assumes that in the 1930's Britain and France mostly supported each other as strong allies. However, Source F says that Britain and Italy may engage in war "brought about by the French". The reason given is the French "lack of cooperation". This probably refers to France's reluctance to take a firm stand against Italy, in order to avoid war.

This ^{impression} ~~news~~ is surprising, because Britain and France were main members of the League and should have taken action against Italy. Secondly, it is surprising, because Britain and France were allies.

Source G casts light on the motives for France's reluctance to support Britain. It seems that France had previously "made an uncertain verbal agreement" with Mussolini not to oppose the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, but to give Italy "some kind of free hand in Africa". Britain was not involved in this meeting.

In the light of source G one can see why the British government official in source F is of the opinion that France may be the cause of an "Anglo-Italian war": If France does not attempt to prevent Mussolini's actions in Africa, then Britain have 2 choices: go along with France (allowing Italy a "free hand in Africa"), or fighting Italy alone (i.e. without French support.).

Source F is surprising, as both Britain and France were expected to come to Abyssinia's defence, against Italian aggression.