

5 Study Source H.

Do you trust what Hoare says in this source? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [8]

From simply considering the provenance of Source H one can predict that Hoare may be very defensive in his address to the House of Commons. He says that the League was not really able to do much to help Abyssinia. ("I fear we might lead Abyssinia on to think that the League could do more than it could do".)

Hoare also says that it is only Britain that is prepared to take military action against Italy as "not a ship, not a machine, not a man has been moved by any other member state". He probably insinuate that Britain is the only country prepared to take action and therefore the decision as to what action should be taken lies with Britain. This is indirectly a defense of the Hoare-Laval plan in which Britain (and France) did precisely that: they decided on their own line of action against Italy, without <sup>any</sup> League contribution or acceptance.

Hoare also says that an oil ban <sup>may /</sup> would trigger conflict and that only Britain will face the consequences — "an oil embargo" will result in possible conflict, and only Britain has "taken these military precautions", with British fleets in Egypt, Malta and Aden.

In all likelihood, Britain was the only country ready to face military aggression from Italy. It is also a very real possibility that an oil ban might have provoked Mussolini. These points, made by Hoare, are, surprisingly, trustworthy. However, Hoare also implies that the League would not have been able to do anything to save Abyssinia's independence. (He mentions 'disillusionment' with the League and "Abyssinia would be destroyed altogether".) This argument is not that trustworthy, as there was the possibility of successful collective security being used against Italy, provided that all League members pulled together in defence of Abyssinia. No proof is given of League Members being reluctant to take action against Italy (with the possible exception of France). If Britain had taken a firm stand fellow League members might have followed her example in order to protect Abyssinia's independence.