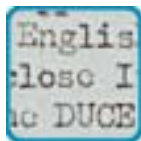


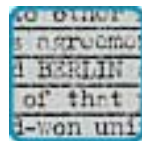


## Source 6

**Letter from Dino Grandi, Italian ambassador in London, to Galeazzo Ciano, Foreign Minister and Mussolini's son-in-law, 6 November 1936, on Italian-German relations** (Catalogue ref: FO 371/49934, copy of document found in Mussolini's villa by Allied troops in 1945.)



6a



6b

### Questions

1. According to this source, how have relations changed between Italy and Germany?
2. What is Britain's attitude to Italy?
3. Have Britain and France managed to maintain the balance of power in Europe? Give reasons to support your answer.
4. Does Grandi sound positive or negative towards closer relations between fascist Italy and Germany?
5. This letter was written in 1936. In 1943, both Grandi and Ciano were on the Grand Council that voted to depose Mussolini (Ciano was later executed for treason). What events between 1936 and 1943 might have changed Grandi's viewpoint?



# HEROES & VILLAINS

Mussolini & Abyssinia > League of Nations

## Source 6a

The problem of Anglo-German relations is particularly important for us because it has a direct repercussion on the problem of Anglo-Italian relations. You, dear GALEAZZO, have fully recognized that, and you posed the question admirably in your recent historic meeting with HITLER and NEURATH. British diplomacy, it is clear, wants to fight ITALY and GERMANY one at a time, at present on the field of diplomacy and politics, but we cannot exclude that tomorrow it will be on the field of battle. Just as the principal directive of British policy in 1935 was to break up the Italo-French agreement reached by the DUCE and LAVAL in January 1935, so there are signs that British policy in 1937 will aim at dividing ITALY and GERMANY. As I have already had occasion to tell you, your recent journey to BERLIN was an international event which ENGLAND followed with genuine apprehension, though their apprehension was cloaked under a show of that indifference with which the English always affect to follow events most closely concerning them. The close Italo-German understanding, which is the highest achievement of the DUCE's foreign policy in the year XIV (1936), is at present the subject of constant anxiety and thought among those who direct British policy. British policy is haunted by the nightmare of this 'block of iron' formed by the two great Fascist peoples, arbiters of EUROPE because, as BALDWIN sadly confessed in one of his speeches, "only they know how to fight for something more than the mere defence of their own frontiers".



# HEROES & VILLAINS

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## Source 6b

The unpleasant surprise with which the English heard of the Italo-Austro-German agreement of 11 July last has turned to open anxiety in face of the unexpected spectacle of unity and close solidarity presented by ITALY and GERMANY on the occasion of your mission to BERLIN - unity and solidarity which received the DUCE'S blessing in his MILAN speech. Many English are still under the illusion that the Austrian question may yet break out unexpectedly and split the two Fascist countries. But if ITALY and GERMANY make it increasingly plain to ENGLAND that they form together a compact block without flaws or dark corners, without one party trying to make capital of the others' difficulties and that they are resolved to follow a common directive and to present a common front to other Powers, then the British will be compelled to come to simultaneous agreements with ROME and BERLIN and to accept such conditions as ROME and BERLIN agree to dictate to LONDON for the guarantee and maintenance of that peace in EUROPE and the world which is indispensable for the hard-won unity and existence of the BRITISH EMPIRE. All this you have brought out in your conversation with the FÜHRER and NEURATH extremely effectively. It is, I think, the key to the successes which are still to be won in the immediate and the distant future by GERMANY and ITALY in their dealings with the BRITISH EMPIRE.