

EASTERN EUROPE 1939–1945: STALINGRAD**Extract from a British newsreel called Liberation of Stalingrad– Epic Report, March 1943**

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Courtesy of [ITN/Source](#), London.

Transcript of this source

The Russian ring closes round the 6th German Army at Stalingrad. The great liberation offensive bears down on 22 trapped Nazi divisions representing 330,000 doomed men. The end of 163 days of siege.

The history of warfare has never known such an encirclement and annihilation of so large a number of regular troops.

Hundreds of thousands of bodies lie frozen and in around the city. Almost as many died in the appalling conditions of the last few weeks. They rot in the land which they wanted to enslave.

Field Marshall Paulus's army has been eaten away by the Soviet forces and now nothing remains of it. The twisted, disordered relics of an army committed to destruction by Adolph Hitler.

Before the final surrender the advance line of this legion of lost men was strung out across the open spaces once the residential quarter of worker's settlement General Rokosovsky, Marshall Voronhov and General Batar.

Three names which will live in the immortal story of Stalingrad. Marshall Voronhov, representative of the High Command, figured prominently in the dramatic capture of Paulus.

Russian gunners firing point black over open sights at the remaining points of enemy resistance.

Amazing pictures which show the final hours of fighting in Stalingrad as the last strongholds are silenced.

The Nazis lay down their arms. The voice of the Moscow commentator who described these official newsreel pictures to Russian audiences is heard telling how whole detachments gave themselves up when the end came.

What is this source?

This is a newsreel clip from 1943 covering events in Stalingrad and the Eastern Front generally.

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It was broadcast on March 1st 1943 when footage from Russia would have been made available to make the broadcast.

What's the background to this source?

Hitler's main aim was to conquer a large empire in Eastern Europe. In June 1941 he attacked the USSR. At first his forces were successful and the USSR was close to collapse. In the spring of 1942 he attacked the southern USSR. Again his forces advanced at first but they were then held back at Stalingrad. In a bloody battle lasting several months German forces were gradually surrounded and then defeated. By early 1943 they were being driven back out of the USSR.

The Soviet winters of 1941 and 1942 proved to be key allies. Winter halted the German advance in 1941. In 1942 German troops were not prepared for winter conditions in the USSR. Many died from starvation and cold in Stalingrad. Many historians believe that this battle was the turning point of World War 2.

It's worth knowing that...

The German forces and their allies suffered an estimated 850,000 casualties at Stalingrad. Soviet casualties are estimated at around 1.1 million.

German forces also included Italian, Hungarian and Romanian troops. These were less well trained or equipped than German troops. In fact the main Soviet breakthroughs were gained by attacking these forces that were based on the wings of the German army.

How will you use this source?

1. What does this source tell historians about the type of fighting that took place at Stalingrad?
2. What differences can you observe between German and Soviet forces?
3. Do you think we get a full picture of the campaign from this clip?
4. How would you describe the tone of this newsreel?
5. What does the commentary on the newsreel tell historians about attitudes in Britain towards the USSR and Stalingrad in particular?
6. Is there any part of this source you would quote in your final report to the Prime Minister?