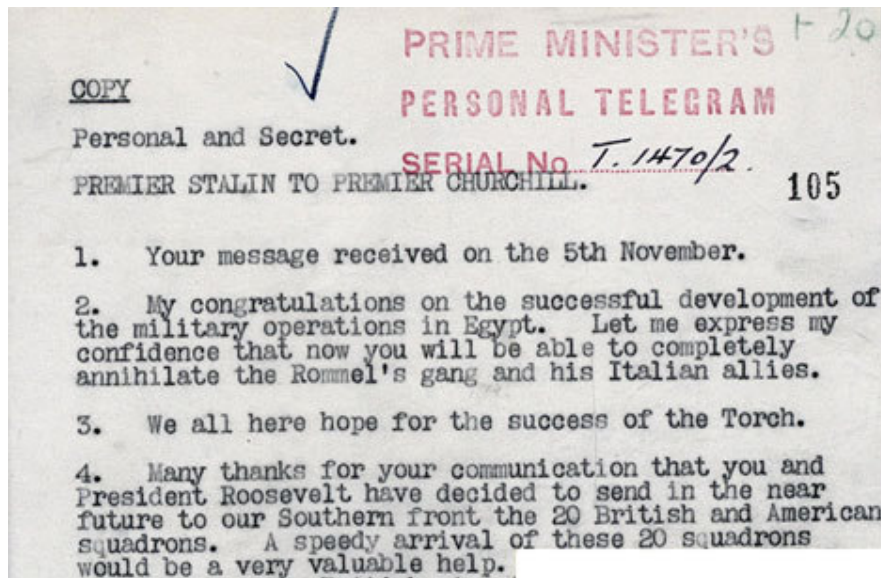


EASTERN EUROPE 1939-1945: UKRAINE

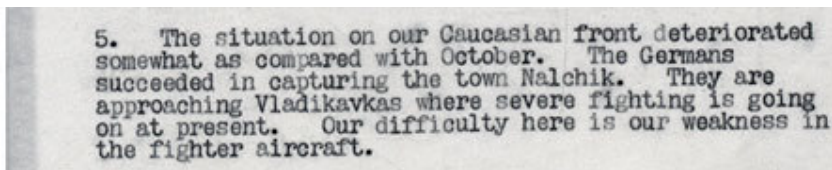
Extracts from a telegram sent by Soviet leader Josef Stalin to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, November 1942

Catalogue ref: CAB 65/28

Extract a



Extract b



What is this source?

This source is a telegram sent by Soviet leader Stalin to British leader Winston Churchill in November 1942.

Stalin and Churchill often communicated by telegram. It was fairly safe because the Germans had not broken allied codes. Also, telephone calls were not much use as neither Churchill nor Stalin spoke each other's language.

EASTERN EUROPE 1939–1945: UKRAINE**What's the background to this source?**

By May 1940 Hitler's forces had conquered Western Europe, apart from Britain. However, Hitler's main aim was to conquer a large empire in Eastern Europe. To do this he needed to defeat the USSR. In June 1941 he launched Operation Barbarossa. This was a devastating lightning attack on the USSR. The Soviet forces were taken by surprise and were driven back by heavy losses. The arrival of the Russian winter stopped the German advance. However, in the spring of 1942 the Germans launched another series of attacks.

The advances in 1942 were aimed primarily at southern and central USSR. The prime target was the Caucasus area. This was extremely rich in minerals but the key target was the oil fields in the area. Hitler wanted the oil for his own forces, but he also wanted to stop the Soviets from using it.

It's worth knowing that...

Britain and the USA shipped large amounts of material and equipment to the USSR during the war. Although the Soviet people took on the heaviest burden of the fighting against Hitler they were well supplied with arms and equipment.

Britain and the USA supplied the USSR through two routes. One was the northern route that led through the North Sea and then around northern Russia to the port of Archangel. This route was extremely dangerous because of terrible weather conditions and enemy action. The other supply route to the USSR was from the south through Iran.

How will you use this source?

1. What was going well for the Allies?
2. What help were Britain and the USA giving to Stalin?
3. What impression do you get of relations between Stalin and Churchill?
4. What worrying news did Stalin have to report?
5. Does this source support the opinion of Historian 1 or Historian 2?