

The Siege of Leningrad

Leningrad was besieged by German forces, largely cut off from the rest of the Soviet Union for more than two years, from August 1941 until January 1944.

Postal communication to residents of Leningrad became possible in the winter, when vehicles could cross the ice of frozen Lake Ladoga from the east. A November 28, 1941, 20-kopeck Soviet postal card from Omsk to Leningrad, received December 31. Officially, the 17-18,000 soldiers of the Spanish Blue Division, who fought alongside German forces outside Leningrad, expressed Spain's gratitude for the support to the Nationalist side that Germany's Condor Legion had provided in the civil war. In reality this force, officially sponsored by General Francisco Franco's Falange Española, was the smallest possible response to Adolf Hitler's demand for support, grudgingly provided. The November 6, 1942, air mail envelope from Mallorca, censored at Berlin en route to the Eastern Front, went to a Blue Division soldier.

