

Those documents deal with the Nazi invasion of France in June 1940. The first one is a cartoon published in an American magazine (the USA was still neutral). It shows the Allied armies encircled (trapped) in Dunkirk, from where they were evacuated (operation Dynamo).

Their Finest Hour

The second document is the famous speech by Churchill, the new British PM, in which he insisted that Britain should go on fighting. France was about to surrender and Britain was alone against Hitler.

① “Nazi trap closes”. Map published in *Time Magazine* (USA) on June 10, 1940.

The Allies were in a desperate situation, they had been overwhelmed by German armour and air power.

On June 17, Pétain had signed a ceasefire. The battle of France was over.

If names or facts are mentioned in both documents, say it.



② Winston Churchill's speech in the House of Commons, 18 June 1940

Churchill was an outstanding writer and orator. He was using rhetoric to boost the morale of the British.

Churchill gave to the British reasons to fight: for freedom, for survival..

Churchill was also speaking to the Americans.

What General Weygand called the Battle of France is over. I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilisation. Upon it depends our own British life, and the long continuity of our institutions and our Empire. The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of pervert science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will say, "This was their Finest Hour".

➤ Using the documents and your knowledge, describe the situation of Britain in 1940 and explain how Churchill reacted.