

INVASION: TASK INSTRUCTIONS

The key question: How worried was Britain about invasion 1940-41?

Your task

In this investigation your task is to study the sources in this box. Decide how worried you think the British government was at the time for each source. You can use a colour code to indicate the extent of the threat (the US government uses this scale today).

Use the table to record your views.

How worried was Britain about invasion 1940-41?

This drawing suggests Britain was confident that Hitler would never be able to invade. But was this just a brave front?

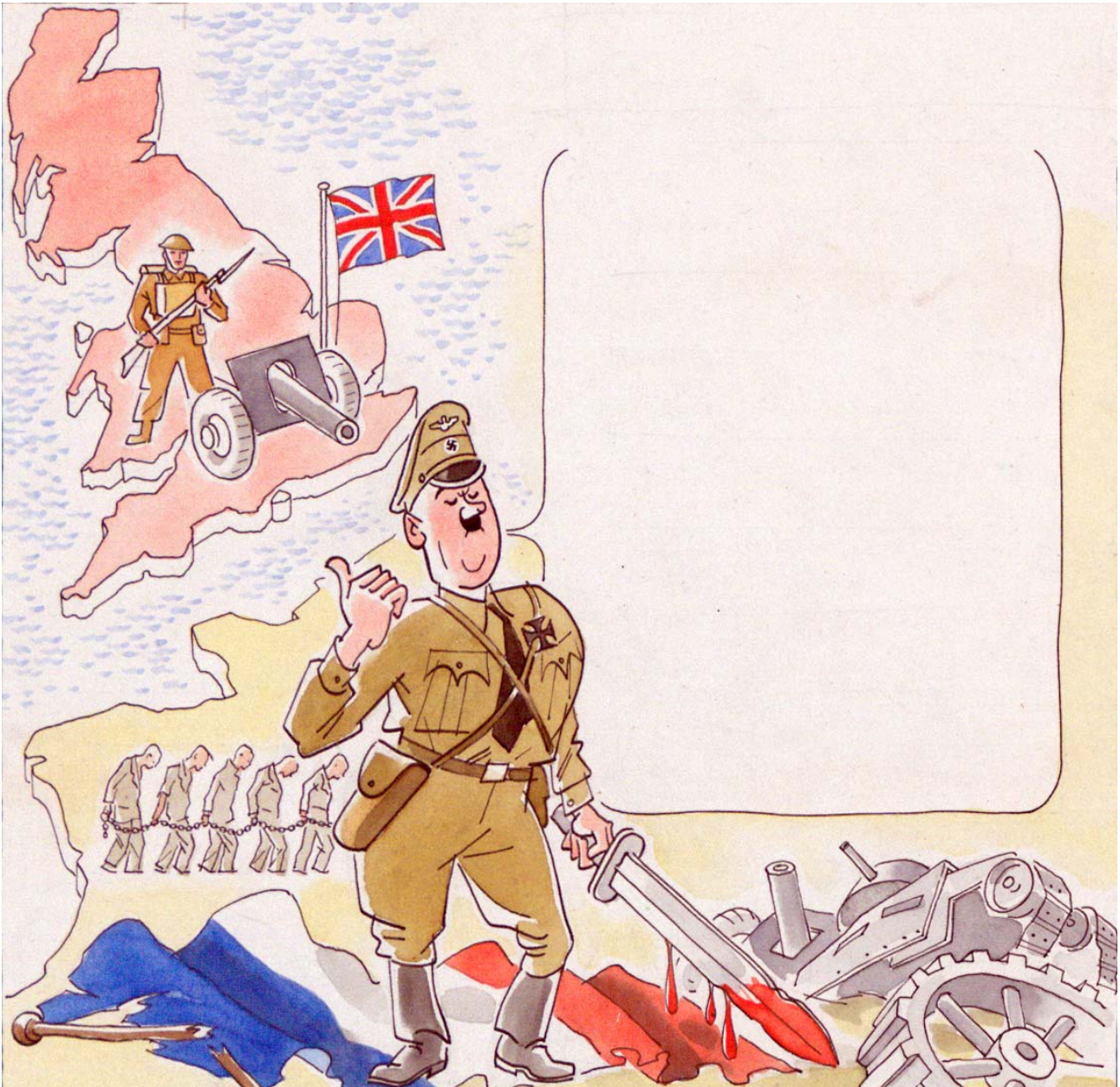
This image is a piece of propaganda produced by the British government in the summer of 1940. The basic message is that Hitler is "all talk" and that Britain will easily drive him back if he tries to invade. A caption would have been added later.

The question for us in this investigation is whether the British government really was this confident. Look at the other documents here and decide for yourself.

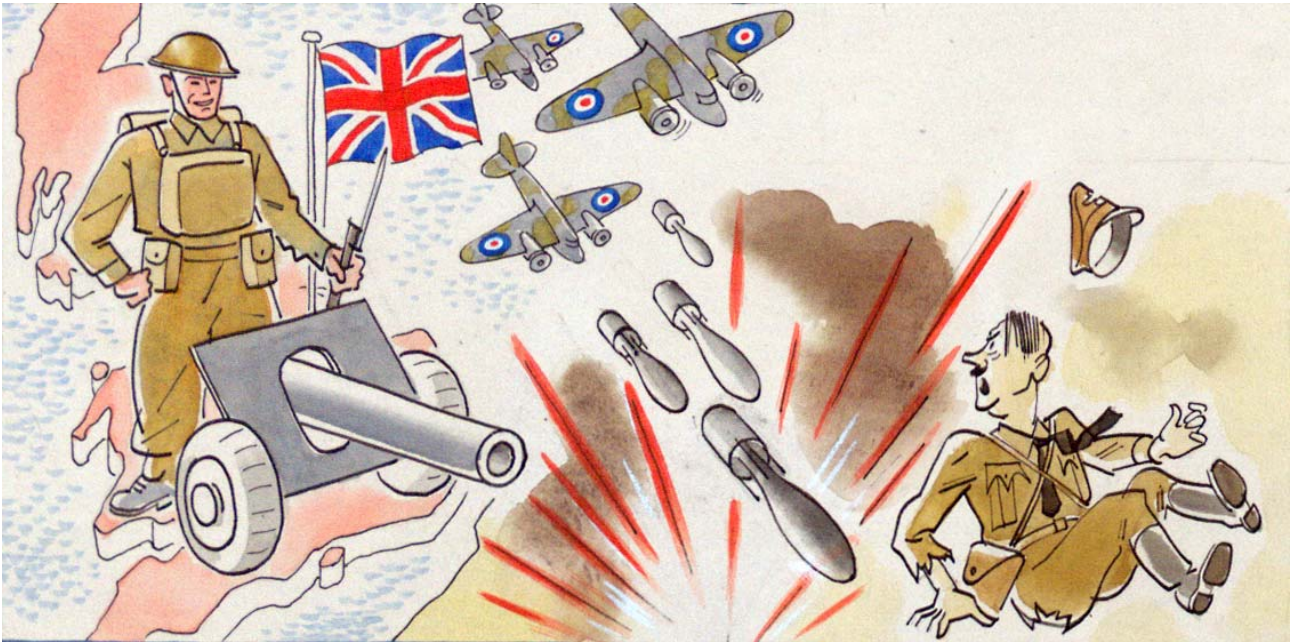
A drawing produced by the British Ministry of Information in the early stages of the war

Catalogue ref: INF 3/1436

Source a



<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/>

Source b**What is this source?**

An artist working for the British Ministry of Information during the war produced this drawing. It might have been used for pamphlets, magazines or posters.

The Ministry of Information published thousands of pieces of propaganda during the war. It made films, radio programmes and cartoons.

What's the background to this source?

The image was created some time after France fell to the Nazis in June 1940. At this time Britain was the only democratic country still opposing Nazi Germany.

The German advances in 1939 and 1940 were devastating. In the early stages of the war Hitler overran Poland, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium and France. It would not have been surprising if the British people had felt that invasion was a danger.

WESTERN EUROPE 1939–1945: INVASION

It's worth knowing that..

This particular example was probably designed as a poster. The artist has left a space for a caption to be inserted.

Not all of the drawings produced were used. Some were not quite right. Sometimes drawings were thought to be too upsetting.

How was this image supposed to work?

1. How does the cartoon get the message across that Britain is safe from invasion? You might find it helpful to look at:
 - Hitler's overconfidence
 - How the British soldier is shown in the two parts of the image
 - The weapons held by the British
 - How Hitler is shown in the second image.
2. You have been asked to suggest a caption for Hitler in the first part of the image. The aim is to show he is overconfident and also to motivate the British people by showing Hitler they will not give up. Write the caption.
3. What does the cartoon suggest about Nazi rule and methods? How realistic are these messages?