

2/40. This Conference views with great concern the attitude of Military authorities in discriminating among the military rates of pay for African and Coloured war recruits.

3/40. This Conference disagrees and strongly opposes the view that it is wrong for Non-Europeans to pay attention to their economic and political grievances during the war. It asserts that Non-European demands for democratic rights and Trade Union organisations cannot be separated from the world-wide struggle for freedom and social justice. Conference views with dissatisfaction the absence of a clear definition of war aims by the Government.

The Executive Committee of the African National Congress at a meeting held at Bloemfontein on the 29th and 30th August, 1942, reaffirmed the previous war resolution of the Congress passed on July 7th., 1940, in which Congress "gave their considered opinion and expressed concern at the developments that have taken place in the war that is now raging in Europe. The Executive expresses loyal sympathy with the British Commonwealth of Nations in the difficult task that has been thrust upon it as a result of recent developments. The Executive notes with deepest concern that the struggle has now entered Africa and that African soldiers are being employed by some of the combatants.

"The Executive Committee desires to place on record their conviction that the time has arrived when the Union Government and Parliament should consider the expediency of admitting the Africans of this country into full citizenship in the Union with all the rights and duties appertaining to that citizenship.

"With this end in view the Executive Committee considers that the territorial integrity of the Union of South Africa can only be effectively defended if all sections of the population were included in the defence system of the country on equal terms, and that those who are or may be eligible for service should receive full military training in all aspects, and be fully armed. Further, that those who are recruited for whatever military service should be placed under regular conditions of such service involving adequate support for their dependents during and after the war. In this regard we would urge the authorities to enlist the services and co-operation of African leaders in addition to those of Chiefs and Headmen.

"With regard to subversive propaganda the Executive Committee are convinced that the removal of grievances such as Pass Laws, Low Wage levels, Industrial Colour Bars, the refusal of Trading rights to Africans, and so forth, will go a long way to counteract mischievous doctrines that are being disseminated among Africans.

"Further the Executive Committee respectfully urges the Government to take immediate and adequate steps for the guidance, organisation, discipline, and protection of the people against any emergency that might arise out of, and as a result of the present conflict."

"The Secretary moved that the question of what the attitude of the Congress should be in the event of an outbreak of war be considered. A long discussion ensued and a rough draft of a resolution was left in the hands of the President General to shape in proper form and present to the press the following morning.



"The resolution should state that Congress believed that there was danger of an imminent war between Democracies and Dictatorships, that South Africa would side with Democracies. If so, then Congress must be loyal to the Government. The Executive further desired to state emphatically that if African men were called to serve again as in 1914, they should not be merely used as labourers but be given full military training and be allowed to play their part in the defence of the country. The Executive further urged the Government to include Africans in the role of full citizenship and defence systems." (July 5th., 1939.)



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