

Excerpt

RESOLUTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION

1. Punishment of War Criminals.

The Executive Committee of the League of Nations Union recognizes that war cannot be made humane. But acts of violence permissible to a belligerent are strictly defined and limited by rules of International Law.

The charge against the Germans and their Allied is that, in defiance of these rules, they have carried out a system of terrorism by slaughter, outrage and torture, not to speak of robbery and destruction, unjustified by any military necessity and aimed at men, women and children of all ages and in certain cases dictated by racial or religious prejudice as in the wholesale massacre of Jews.

In order to re-establish the principles of law, to satisfy the legitimate indignation caused by these horrors, and to prevent retaliatory massacres, the Executive Committee believes that it is essential that those individuals, whoever they may be, who are accused of having ordered or carried out such crimes should be brought before courts of justice which shall, after open and vigorously fair trial, pass sentence on any persons convicted of the offences charged against them.

Where possible, the Committee hopes that the Courts will be international in character.

The Committee welcomes the assurances by the Government that they are taking preparatory steps in the direction indicated and it trusts that, as and when enemy-occupied territory comes under United Nations control, they will secure all known accused persons there. It also hopes that it may be possible to prevent such persons escaping from justice into neutral territory and that, if they do so escape, the United Nations will require their surrender.

2. Prevention, where possible, of further War Crimes.

The Committee considers that it is of the utmost importance that all possible steps should be taken by the United Nations to rescue persons originally threatened with violence in the countries occupied by Axis forces. In particular, as territories are in process of liberation, the strongest pressure should be put on those still in control of them to abstain from any violence against the inhabitants, to remove all discriminative measures, especially those against the Jews, and to rescue as many as possible who might still be in danger of attack.

At the same meeting it was resolved that,

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The Committee is of opinion that no person figuring on a list of wanted war criminals of any of the United Nations should, on grounds of military expediency or for any other reason, be entrusted with any post of confidence.