

How and the ways in which nelson mandela contributed to the success of the defian...

[People](#), [Nelson Mandela](#)



The Defiance campaign was brought up to combat apartheid in South Africa in 1952. Apartheid was a system set in place to control the non european ethnic groups by introducing laws that restricted their freedom to certain rights. Nelson Mandela was able to gain a leadership position through joining organizations that nurtured his ideas and his ability to lead.

Nelson Mandela became a leading figure as he started doing work as an activist with the African National Congress. The Defiance campaign illustrates Mandela's ability to influence the masses by utilizing his status and cooperation with other activists. This essay explores how and the ways in which Nelson Mandela contributed to the success of the Defiance campaign.

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Through his education, Nelson Mandela developed his passion for activism. Growing up in the era of apartheid Nelson Mandela pursued the career of law instead of chieftainship. In 1944 Nelson Mandela joined the African National Congress(ANC). Upon doing so he was able to accumulate knowledge that he could use to aid the ANC. Through his hard work he was able to gain many leadership opportunities in the ANC. As a member, Mandela and other young intellectuals expressed their dissatisfaction with how the ANC was run and formed the African National Congress Youth League(ANCYL). The youth league influenced the ANC to become a more militant organization as they felt that passive resistance was still not enough to bring about the change that they desired. In a statement made by nelson mandela to address the aims of the Defiance campaign, he says, I would like to emphasise the aims

of our Campaign over again. We are not in opposition to any government or class of people. We are opposing a system which has for years kept a vast section of the non-European people in bondage. The message conveyed through this statement supports Mandela's passion for activism. In the 1950's the Congress Alliance was formed consisting of organizations that stood against the unjust laws. In March 1952, Nelson Mandela acquired a driver's license to become a one man taxi service for the ANC. He was in charge of talking to regional leaders and coordinating youth league events. He played a crucial role in making sure the events would actually be carried out.

Historian Baruch Hirson suggests that the formation of the Defiance campaign was not enacted through the people's desire to fight against unjust laws, but was instead enacted by the ANC to strengthen their party. But the reactions of the people seem to prove otherwise. The events leading up to the campaign strived to create stricter laws. In 1948 D. F. Malan's National Party won the government election even though the party sought to reinforce apartheid laws. Then in 1951 the Separate Representation of Voters Bill was passed. This bill removed coloured people from the common roll, which meant that coloured people could not vote. In addition, on April 6, 1952, the unofficial start date of the the Defiance campaign, brought about mass protest against the festivities for the the celebration of John Van Riebeeck's, a Dutch colonizer, arrival in Cape Town in 1652. Mass rallies were held and important African leaders spoke about militant African nationalism and self reliance. To end apartheid was the big picture. There

were more people black Africans than there were whites, so these laws affected the majority of the population. Over 8, 500 volunteers courted imprisonment by contravening pass laws and curfew regulations, orders segregating whites and non-whites in railway stations and post offices, and other oppressive and humiliating measures. On May 12, 1950, the National Executive Committee of the ANC called for a national Day of protest to address the issues of apartheid in response to the public outcry. As a law student Nelson Mandela was able to use his acquired knowledge to combat unfair laws set by British colonizers.

Nelson Mandela joined the African National Congress after he completed school in 1944. The significance of this event marks Mandela's work as an activist. By joining a group he is able to establish connections and have a goal to work towards. In addition he was a well known face. When Nelson Mandela joined the ANC, his dissatisfaction with how the group was run drove him to create the ANC youth league. This group had a more radical approach to things as they consisted mostly of young intellectuals. As he was one of the main developers of this organization, he was also the face of it as well. This showcased Mandela's leadership characteristic. By the time Apartheid laws were set in place Mandela had already gained the position as National Secretary of the ANC youth league.

The government resorted to extreme measures to handle the situation. It established a proclamation banning all meetings of more than 10 Africans in one place. In addition, laws were enacted with more severe punishment for those who participated in the campaign. There was an increase in

membership of the ANC and since the results were promising, it led to a change in tactics. By embracing all oppressed people, it established unity among them. The Defiance campaign aided in the development of other organizations as well as the development of the ANC. For example the Liberal Party advocated for universal adult suffrage instead of just limiting it to only black Africans. It gained support from church organizations as well. Not only did the Defiance campaign gain national attention but also gained attention internationally. The general assembly of the United Nations were made aware of the racial issues in South Africa. A proposal made by the delegations of 13 Asian and Arab States to consider the question of race conflict in South Africa resulting from the policies of apartheid of the Government of the Union of South Africa" resulted in the establishment of a three-member commission to study the issue and resolve it.

The ANC benefited greatly from the campaign as their membership rose from 7, 000 to 10, 000. Historian Baruch Hirson suggests that The government reacted strongly by taking extreme measures that included, but is not limited to The banning of a number of leading Congressmen and trade unionists from participating in meetings; confining them to their provinces and ordering them to resign from their organisations [and] The banning of the Guardian, an independent weekly newspaper which supported the campaign. In doing so it proved the power of the campaign and how the government felt threatened by the support of the masses for the campaign. Before the Defiance campaign there was a negative image of Africa. People believed that African people were incapable of doing a peaceful protest. The

Defiance campaign boosted the the image of African people as well as Africa in general.

Nelson Mandela contributed greatly through his influence as a youth leader for the ANC and his ability to organize. He utilized his resources such as his connections to people in power and his education to combat apartheid laws. He took on many needed responsibilities which was crucial to the success of the Defiance Campaign. By doing so he was able to gain a leader status, which he used to persuade the masses to participate in the Defiance Campaign. Although the campaign did not immediately terminate apartheid laws, it was viewed as a success as it brought the community together, which played a crucial role in eradicating apartheid laws.