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BROADCAST BY AIR VICE-MARSHAL SIR QUINTON BRAND IN REPLY  
TO A BROADCAST BY BRIGADIER VENTER FROM SOUTH AFRICA ON  
THE OCCASION OF THE 21ST BIRTHDAY OF THE S.A.A.F. TODAY.

(Transmitted in the 19, 25 & 31 metre-bands at 7.15 p.m. B.S.T.)

I am greatly honoured in having the opportunity of addressing a message to the people of South Africa on the coming of age of the S.A.A.F.

Brig. Venter in his broadcast made reference to the flight Lt. Gen. Sir P. van Ryneveldt and I had the good fortune to do 21 years ago.

I would like to assure you that my most pleasant recollection today of that experience is the welcome accorded us and the enthusiasm of the people, culminating on our arrival at Cape Town in the hospitality and kindly consideration of our host that Grand Old Man of South Africa, General Smuts, whom His Majesty the King was pleased to honour recently in recognition of the great respect in which he is held throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations.

May his wisdom and leadership be available at the council of Peace when victory is achieved.

The growth and development of the S.A.A.F. has been watched with interest by the R.A.F. and particularly those South Africans who remain with the R.A.F.

The achievement of the S.A.A.F. in operations to suppress uprisings and disturbances were followed with gratification and pride. Their first success with Junkers 86's ironically enough, soon after the declaration of the present war when the German ship "Watussi" off Cape Town was intercepted, and later in 1940 when military objectives in Italian Moyale on the Kenya-Abyssinia border were successfully bombed without loss, were fitting preludes to the great work which the S.A.A.F. was to do later against the Italians in Abyssinia, Eritrea and in the Western Desert, both in independent operations and in collaboration with the R.A.F.

One of the most ambitious and successful raids was carried out on August 20, 1940, when simultaneous offensive reconnaissances were made against all Italian aerodromes within striking distance of Kenya. Nine days later a highly successful attack was made on Mogadiscio - the target being a large transport concentration of which several hundred were destroyed.

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On February 4, 1941 the S.A.A.F. supporting the Army offensive in Eritrea scored heavily - one Fighter Squadron destroying eight and probably nine Italian aircraft in one day.

The S.A.A.F. also co-operated with the Navy in a ceaseless watch for enemy shipping and in Naval bombardments of the Somaliland coast.

On May 12, 1941 aircraft of the S.A.A.F. were in action for the first time in Cyrenaica and in the Crete campaign it rendered valuable service by providing protective patrols over H.M. ships and merchant vessels engaged in evacuation of troops from Crete.

Time unfortunately does not permit me recounting individual exploits, but consideration of the honours and awards which have been won and the numbers of South Africans (there are approximately 700 in the R.A.F.) serving shows that their gallantry and devotion to duty is unquestioned.

In the present war up to date 76 South Africans serving in the R.A.F. and S.A.A.F. have received awards, a number receiving both the D.S.O. and D.F.C., and at least five have bars to one or the other of these decorations. Seventeen of the above awards have been made to members of the South African Air Force.

Many of those serving in the R.A.F. are veterans of the Battle of Britain last year, the most distinguished is Wing Comdr. A.G. Malan, who has been officially credited with 32 enemy aircraft destroyed, and at least 20 others damaged or probables.

This achievement gives him first place amongst South Africans, and also in the R.A.F. South Africa therefore has just cause to be proud of her sons' achievements, and the valuable service they are rendering in the cause of freedom.

The collaboration in the Empire Air Training Scheme, and the co-operation of South Africa and her sister nations of the British Commonwealth is an inspiring example to the rest of the world, and proof of the justice of our cause.

It is distressing that nations claiming to be highly civilised cannot control madmen who, in their lust for power involve not only their own but other nations in the barbaric and distressing slaughter of human life we see going on throughout the world today.

No nation is secure at the present time however remote it may be from the scene of conflict, and it is fortunate indeed that all who value their freedom and independence are taking measures to effectively increase their ability not only to defend themselves in their own territories but also to collaborate with Britain in the fight against the diabolically directed forces of Nazism and Fascism.

With God's help and blessing Right Must Triumph.

I know I am voicing the wishes of the R.A.F. in congratulating the S.A.A.F. on attaining its majority, and expressing our best wishes for its well being and success in the future.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION