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PETITION FROM THE KAMERUN UNITED PARTY CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS
UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

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Kamerun United Party,
National Headquarters,
Buea,
Southern Cameroons
26th January 1960

Executive Meeting of the KUP held at Buea on the 24th January 1960

The Executive Committee of the Kamerun United Party met at Buea on Sunday 24th January, 1960 in the President's House. Of the several matters listed for discussion the most important was the forthcoming plebiscite in the Southern Cameroons.

The Party held the view that a plebiscite was not absolutely necessary as a means of ascertaining the wishes of the inhabitants of the Southern Cameroons with regards to the future of their Territory when Nigeria becomes independent in October this year. The Party's reason for holding such a view is that the Southern Cameroons unlike the Northern Cameroons has a parliament constitutionally elected with accredited representatives from all over the territory. And in the Party's opinion, issues such as termination of the Trusteeship agreement or determination of the Territory's future with regards to its relationship with an independent Nigeria or a sister territory like the Republic of the Cameroons should not be determined by undue pressure from external forces such as a plebiscite. Rather they should by convention be discussed in the local parliament by debates and motions.

A plebiscite in the opinion of the KUP appears as an imposition and a departure from the fundamental principle upon which the UNO Charter was promulgated with regards to Trust Territories. The principle from the Party's

point of view was basically the training of the inhabitants towards eventual self-government or independence. Also a plebiscite as now suggested by the United Nations gives the impression of lack of faith and trust in the people of the Trust Territory of the Southern Cameroons who through British tutelage have learnt to apply parliamentary democracy in practice by electing a parliament of their own as a sign of political maturity.

However, a plebiscite having been agreed upon as the only solution by which the people of the Southern Cameroons will determine their future when Nigeria becomes independent, the KUP Executive had no option but to examine the two questions to be put critically and objectively. (a) "Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria?" Or (b) Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of the Cameroons?"

The two questions imply compulsion on the part of the people of the Southern Cameroons to choose between joining the independent Federation of Nigeria or the independent Republic of the Cameroons willy-nilly. In other words, the Southern Cameroons cannot attain independence without joining either of these independent nations-Nigeria or Cameroons Republic. In the opinion of the KUP, a decision of this nature is also a violation and departure from the UNO Charter.

In view of this, the KUP therefore resolved that a third question should be asked in order to meet with the wishes of the third school of thought in the Territory. The question should read:

"Irrespective of viability or not, do you wish the Southern Cameroons to become a Republic of its own with U.K. Government assistance- financial and otherwise before joining the Federation of Nigeria or the Cameroons Republic?"

The KUP felt very strongly that a plebiscite unlike an election comes but once in a century and as it has such important bearing on the destiny of a nation, it was resolved further that if the third question was not accepted by both the United Nations and the U.K. Government, the Party would mobilise public opinion all over the territory to boycott the forthcoming plebiscite.

Resolution:

Resolved that a third question should be asked during the forthcoming plebiscite in the Southern Cameroons.

The question should read:

"Irrespective of viability or not, do you wish the Southern Cameroons to become a Republic of its own with U.K. Government assistance before joining the independent Federation of Nigeria or the independent Cameroons Republic?"

2. Resolved that in the event of both the United Nations and the United Kingdom Government not accepting the third question, the KUP would mobilise public opinion all over the territory to boycott the forthcoming plebiscite.

Forwarded to: The Secretary General,
United Nations Secretariat,
New York.

- Copies to:
1. Sir Andrew Cohen,
United Kingdom Representative,
c/o The Colonial Office,
London.
 2. The Secretary of State for the Colonies,
The Colonial Office,
London.
 3. The Leader of the Opposition,
The House of Commons,
London.
 4. His Excellency Sir James Robertson,
High Commissioner for the Southern Cameroons,
Government House,
Lagos.
 5. His Honour The Commissioner of the Cameroons,
Southern Cameroons,
Buea.

(Signed: P.M. Kale)

PRESIDENT,
KAMERUN UNITED PARTY.
