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PETITION FROM THE BAKWERI MOLONGO CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER  
UNITED KINGDOM ADMINISTRATION (T/PET.4/202)

Observations of the Government of the United Kingdom as  
Administering Authority

1. The Native Authority (Amendment) Bill is largely a "tidying up" Bill, designed to remove from the Native Authority Ordinance a number of provisions which are out of date or which have no application to the Southern Cameroons, together with other amendments necessary to bring the law into line with the present constitutional position of the Southern Cameroons. The only new provisions are Clause 3 which transfers to the Minister the power at present vested in the Commissioner relative to the appointment to Native Authorities, Clause 7 relative to adoptive rules and Clause 8 relating to Native Authority staff. Objection was taken, not to any of these new provisions, but to the definition of "Native" in Clause 2, which the petitioners believed would have the effect of transferring to strangers from the Grassfields all control over land in Victoria Division.
2. In view of their disquiet, representatives of the Opposition were granted an interview by the Commissioner on the 23rd March 1961, at which it was pointed out that the provision to which they objected would not have the effect they feared and that in fact, except for the deletion of a reference to Nigeria, the definition merely repeated what had been the law for the last twenty-seven years.
3. In the event the Bill was passed in the House of Assembly with an amendment to Clause 3 proposed by the opposition and accepted by the Government designed to safeguard the position of the indigenous inhabitants of Native Authority areas.

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