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COMMUNICATION FROM THE "FEDERATION DES TRAVAILLEURS AGRICOLES,
FORESTIERS ET PAYSANS DU CAMEROUN" CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS
UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

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FEDERATION DES TRAVAILLEURS AGRICOLES,
FORESTIERS ET PAYSANS DU CAMEROUN,
203, RUE IVY
POST OFFICE BOX 15 - DOUALA.

Douala, 22 December 1954

To the Inter-Regional Inspector of Labour
and Social Legislation, Western Region,
NKONGSAMBA.

Sir,

We have the honour to draw your attention to the behaviour of
Mrs. MARTIRENE, who has an agricultural and forestry business at Loum-P.,
towards her workers.

Mrs. Martiren  takes no notice of the provisions of the Labour Code
already in force; these are concrete cases which reveal the bad faith of the
Moungo employers, who refuse to apply the Labour Code, as we have often
pointed out before.

This woman openly applies the hourly wage rate for unskilled labourers
to the skilled workmen in her employment, i.e., 8.75 francs an hour for all,
regardless of occupational category or length of service.

- NJOCK Eug ne, foreman, with fifteen years service,
- MKWANJING Michel, tractor driver,
- IANGA Etienne, bricklayer etc.,

are paid 8.75 francs an hour, i.e. 70 francs a day, or 1,750 francs a month.

Finally, as Mrs. Martirené persisted in paying unskilled labourers' wages to all workmen without exception, we told her that under Order No. 5270 of 30 September the hourly wage of unskilled workmen in the Mongo region had been increased to 10.50 francs an hour as from 1 October 1954, but she still continues to pay the old rate of 8.75 francs to her workmen, whom she keeps in complete ignorance of the social provisions of the Labour Code.

Our organization strongly protests against such abuses, which are tantamount to considering that human beings have no right to live. Such abuses are tantamount to considering the human being, particularly the black man, as a permanently inferior being, a worthless creature destined to work as a beast of burden and be paid at starvation rates.

We are astonished that these employers can do this with impunity, when there are qualified personnel to check such exploitation.

Mrs. Martirené makes her workmen suffer in all sorts of ways; their wages are often paid very late, about the 10th or 11th of the month. This reactionary class wishes to keep the class it exploits in complete ignorance. As it is a crime to complain nowadays, lest one be considered a communist, they want to force the workers to keep silence even when faced with all the abuses and outrageous behaviour of their exploiters. We say, NO... NO..., this must not go on. We therefore ask you to take steps to end abuses of this kind.

We cannot end this petition without mentioning, at least in general terms, Mr. SIMEONIDES, a planter at Loum. Like all Greeks, he does not even want to know that there is a thing called a Labour Code. The workers on his plantation complain that he does not pay them overtime for the extra work they do during the banana harvest, on Sundays and holidays, for instance, as he should under article 95 of the Labour Code; and Mr. Simeonides does not give them their weekly day of rest etc.!

In the hope that our legitimate claims will be given satisfaction, I have the honour to be, etc.

(Signed) Song

SONG Felix,

Permanent Secretary

For the Executive Committee of the Federation

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