

UNITED NATIONS
TRUSTEESHIP
COUNCIL



GENERAL
T/PET.3/64
22 August 1952
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

PETITION FROM MR. GASTON JOVITE NZAMWITA
CONCERNING RUANDA-URUNDI

Note by the Secretary-General: In accordance with rule 85 and supplementary rule F of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the Trusteeship Council and to the Government of Italy as the Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of Somaliland, a communication dated 17 March 1951 from Mr. Gaston Jovite Nzamwita concerning the Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi.

52-42673

Kisenyi
T/PET.3/64

Kisenyi, 17 March 1951

Members of the Trusteeship Council.

Sirs:

With further reference to my last two communications^{1/} and your acknowledgement of receipt, I venture very respectfully to submit the following for your consideration.

1. I want to know why the authorities are taking proceedings against me. From the day the Visiting Mission passed through Kitega, the day I told Mr. Cargo that I was ready to suffer the inevitable consequences of my statements, I have not had a moment's peace. The tiger held in leash, as it were, by your presence was indeed let loose when you left.

I transmit herewith a copy of the third request for an explanation which I received and a letter from the Resident of Urundi^{2/} permitting me to go to Kisenyi, but setting impossible conditions. They went so far as to bribe people who were to repeat before the competent authorities insulting remarks which I am alleged to have made against the Government. These and other difficulties (which I cannot describe here, since they are so serious that I would compromise the witnesses I would have to cite) compelled me to hand in my resignation. I preferred to resign rather than suffer dismissal, which I would rightly regard as an affront. I was then driven out of my dwelling without a travel pass, after being notified of action taken on my resignation. On arrival in Usumbura I was several times followed into private dwellings and arrested for lack of a travel pass. I came close to being sentenced; I was publicly ill-treated by the police and paid a fine of 50 francs, for which I am enclosing the original receipt^{2/}. The instigator of this violence was Mr. Vermuyten, head of the extra-tribal centres (centres extra-coutumiers) of Usumbura. Wherever I go, I am followed by detectives, and I am preceded by telegraphic warnings so that I will be arrested upon arrival. You will readily see that this systematic persecution is very harmful to me since I will have to make long journeys to earn a living. What am I to do if I am given this reception everywhere? If everywhere I am refused a passport? If I must constantly risk my life, like a hooligan?

1/ Secretariat note: See documents T/PET.3/44 and T/PET.3/44/Add.1 and Trusteeship Council resolution 492 (XI)

2/ Secretariat note: The documents mentioned as annexed are kept in the Secretariat archives and will be made available to members of the Trusteeship Council upon request.

2. Like other educated indigenous inhabitants, I have applied for a civic merit certificate. This privilege should have been granted to me, because the authorities ruled in my favour. (Ask for documents if required). After the visit of the United Nations Visiting Mission, I was refused this privilege, obviously because of my "misconduct". I submit the matter to your wise judgment, and enclose the relevant documentation^{1/}. I want the certificate not because of its value but solely so that my brethren will not look on me as an outcast for having spoken to you.

3. I stress that last remark because I really seem to be an outcast. My father, sub-chief of the Binana Hill, in the chefferie of Kingogo, Territory of Kisenyi, was relieved of his duties as sub-chief for unknown reasons, without a written dismissal, without anything whatsoever, owing to the intrigues of Mr. Labiau, Administrator of the Territory, and especially of his assistant, Mr. Gaupin, who is now Administrator of the Territory of Rahengeri. Some time later, he was taken back into the service of the same territory as a secretary in charge of the Kisenyi road; he had even been jailed through those same intrigues, but that is not the point. The question I want to ask is this: what misdeed could he have committed that would allow him to pass from one of those offices to the other? (If necessary, ask for the relevant file.) Why was he re-hired if his conduct was blameworthy? The Administrator who replaced the one mentioned above explained to my father that there was no black mark against him in his dossier and that he was being re-engaged because he had been unjustly dismissed. It was a really flagrant injustice, and the case quite logically deserves your attention.

Why was my father dismissed? For not doing enough work? For lack of initiative? For physical unsuitability? For insubordination? But if he had any of these defects, how could he be given another post of equal importance? I urgently beg the Trusteeship Council to give this question its particular attention.

1/ Secretariat note: The documents mentioned as annexed are kept in the Secretariat archives and will be made available to members of the Trusteeship Council upon request.

4. I have the honour to inform you that I agree with the proposals concerning representation of Nitunguka and Bigiraneza. Please think of us and of the questions put to you at your earliest convenience. We have received only formal acknowledgements of our petitions and never any objective answers.

I am, etc.

(signed) Illegible

(signed) GASTON JOVITE NZAMWITA

Received at United Nations Headquarters on 14 August 1952.