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PETITION FROM MR. BARNABE NTUNGUKA CONCERNING RUANDA URUNDI

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COPY

NTUNGUKA, Barnabé
Inmate of Usumbura Central Prison,
USUMBURA

Usumbura, 3 April 1955

Subject:

Complaint against Mr. TANTIN
for assassination (or
deliberate crime) of ex-Chief
PITROSE, son of Chief
BARANYANKA

To Dr. BOZIDAR, Aleksander Principal
Secretary, United Nations Visiting Mission,
NEW YORK (City)

Through the good offices of the Governor
of the Usumbura Central Prison, USUMBURA,
With the request that he should give this
complaint his attention.

Sir,

I have the honour to lodge a complaint against Mr. TANTIN, an official of the Government of Ruanda-Urundi (O.C.R.U.), for having murdered ex-chief PITROSE, son of Chief BARANYANKA, at Kayanza, Territory of NGOZI, at 8 o'clock one evening towards the end of March.

The victim was shot by the assassin although he had done nothing wrong, there had not even been a dispute. He was cycling back to his father's house from the home of Chief NDUWUMWE, when the murderer fired twice at him, hitting him first in the leg. Seeing that he had fallen, the murderer went up to him; having made quite sure who it was, he fired a second time, putting a bullet through his forehead.

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Need I tell you that this is the work of the Belgians. Here in Ruanda-Urundi there are countless victims and the cases are filed away and no action taken. I mention below some victims of the Belgians whose cases have not been reported, for they had no kinsmen who could notify you of it, to avoid reprisals:

1. TWAMUKWAZA was killed in the Territory of Byumba (Ruanda) by Mr. Piret, Moise, a former planter at Kagerero in that Territory, in 1948 or 1949. 2. BASUMBABANDI was killed by Mr. MASSET, a prospector for Minétain at Miove, likewise in the Territory of Byumba, in 1947; that case, too, was closed without any action being taken. The aforesaid persons were killed with hammers. 3. Mr. MICHER, an employee of Mr. de Latin, is said to have killed an indigenous inhabitant with a sledge-hammer in 1949, here in the Territory of Usumbura, and again nothing was done (Rwanier, the indigenous inhabitant, is not unknown and I will let you know his name shortly when I have found out what it is). 4. Mr. DELATIN killed a Congolese driver called LEON, in 1945 or 1944, and he was not prosecuted. 5. Mr. MOUTARTS, former Administrator of Bubanza, killed Sub-Chief DEBU by kicking him in the chest, near the heart; he was not prosecuted, either.

Mr. VAN Aigle, Administrator of the Territory of KITEGA, saying that he would teach him a lesson, insulted the Great Chief MAKERA publicly and improperly; this caused the Chief such sorrow that he committed suicide.

6. KUMWAMI, Joseph, was shot by Mr. Dubois, a mechanic of Nyanga (R); this one is still alive, it would be better, in fact essential, to call him up when the hearing is given.

Allow me to describe the victim's conduct and reputation.

A very gifted young man, intelligent, of good moral training, a Christian, received his education at the Astrida School Centre and then worked with his father, the acknowledged Great Chief BARANYANKA, for 10 years, after which he was appointed chief of a Burundi Chiefdom, where he served as Chief for several years; he was then removed from office for no real reason, went back to his father and resumed his former post (clerk-chauffeur to his father). The young man is said to have accompanied the United Nations Visiting Mission when it was in Ruanda-Urundi in 1951. Lastly, he was of very good character, intelligent and well-behaved; yet he was shot for no reason.

As his father is a friend of the Belgians, I find myself compelled to complain against the wrong-doers, for neither the Mwami, nor the Chiefs, nor even his father, in fact nobody in his family will dare to notify your Security Council of it.

In conclusion I wish to say that my huts have not been repaired; although the Vice-Governor-General, Governor of Ruanda-Urundi, replied to my letters on the subject, which I enclose, nothing has been done so far.

With regard to the case in question I would request you to send a few members of the Trusteeship Council to be present at the judgment of the victim referred to, I would also ask you to tell me or, or to appoint, a non-Belgian lawyer who will argue the case and will be paid out of the C.D.P. (territorial funds).

P.S. The day before yesterday I sent you a letter through Johnson ILAHONDGORO, residing at Buyenzi (Usumbura); he will open it and place it in another envelope after reading it, so I have no hope that the letter will have reached you. I had also sent letters before this to my brother-in-law LUCIANI for you; he did not forward them and he stole 7,000 francs from me and what is more he hid the letters received from the Mwami authorizing me to go to Uganda.

Trusting that urgent and prompt action will be taken, I have the honour to be, etc.

With regard to the Mwami, I do not know whether the letter will have reached you.

(Signed) NTUNGUKA, Barnabé

A prisoner, victim of the present
position of the Barundi race
