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PETITION FROM MR. E. RABAUD CONCERNING RUANDA-URUNDI

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85, paragraph 2, and supplementary rule F of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council)

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR THE RIGHTS OF MAN

Committee for Ruanda-Urundi
and
UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION CENTRE

Head Offices and Secretariat,
P.O. Box 5,
Kisenyi (Ruanda)

Kisenyi
9 August 1953

The Chairman of the Petitions Committee,
Trusteeship Council,
New York

Sir,

We beg to submit this second note in rectification of the petition from Selemani Bihango Shaka, against Kalinda, Paramount Chief of the Bahunde-Kivu.^{1/}

We knew that you refused to consider this petition because it came from the Belgian Congo, which is not an independent territory. However, as the petition concerned a chief who might subsequently have certain requests to place before the United Nations, we do not wish to leave in your mind the slightest doubt as to the innocence of the chief in the matter submitted to you. In our view, the only purpose of this petition of suspect origin was to denigrate Kalinda in your eyes.

^{1/} Note by the Secretariat: See T/PET.3/56, which was declared inadmissible at the eleventh session of the Trusteeship Council.

These are briefly the facts. During the war, the notable Luhunga was called up into the armed forces, and died during the hostilities. His family was not immediately informed. During that time, the son of one of Luhunga's servants, Mulemeri, having learned of his father's death, claimed his heritage and wished to take possession of all the cows. A palaver was held, and the court, in which Kalinda had a seat, decided in favour of Mulemeri, the administrator being kept informed. That was therefore not a correct version of the affair, but an attempt to slander Kalinda.

Kalinda is the Paramount Chief by tribal law over a vast but thinly populated territory. He has been fighting for some time against the wholesale and improper expropriations carried out by the notorious National Committee of Kivu, about which many things could be said. He has also been fighting against the encroachments of Banya-Ruanda settlers who are being removed from their lands on the pretext of famine, but mainly in order to supply docile and cheap labour for the mines and the big colonial proprietors.

Such immigration, which the Trusteeship Council should make it its duty strictly to supervise, has already removed from Ruanda more than 300,000 indigenous inhabitants out of a population of just over 2,000,000. The movement of these persons from the high plateaux requires the closest supervision. Thousands of them died as a result. For part of this immigration, the Gishari region was chosen, where living conditions are the same as in Ruanda. Gishari being Bahunde territory, Kalinda was forced to give up 37,000 acres of land for this immigration. He received 30,000 francs in compensation which, in any case, he surrendered to the war effort. Although he does not object to this intrusion of Bahutus into his territory, since they are blood brothers with the Bahunde, the Batutsi domination over his lands injures him for many reasons. Hence his constant protests against it. He might, therefore, sooner or later apply to the United Nations if the Belgian Administration gives him no satisfaction. All this is to remove the effect which the misleading petition of Selemani Bihango Shake may have produced in your mind.

I have the honour, etc.,

For the Committee:

(Signed) E. Rabaud (Secretary)