

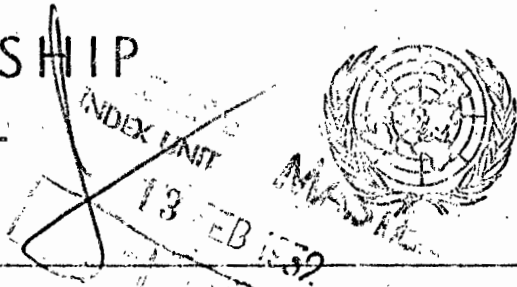
GENERAL

~~T/PET.4/79~~

~~T/PET.5/105~~

21 January 1952

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH



PETITION FROM THE KAMERUN UNITED NATIONAL CONGRESS

CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER BRITISH AND THE
CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

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, two communications dated 30 October and 26 November 1951 from the Kamerun United National Congress concerning the Trust Territories of the Cameroons under British and the Cameroons under French administration.

K A M E R U N . U N I T E D N A T I O N A L C O N G R E S S ,
NATIONAL SECRETARIAT, B U E A , K A M E R U N

B u e a , Kamerun, West Africa,
26 November 1951

Sir,

I am directed to supply the following information in supplement of our memorandum dated the 30th of October:

Pages 4-6 and 14-15 of the memorandum: I am to enquire why such a wide disparity should be allowed to exist between the measures for the benefit of the inhabitants of the trust territories in West Africa and those for the citizens of the former Italian Somaliland in North-East Africa (vide paragraph three page eleven of United Nations Background Paper No. 48 of June 1, 1949, and Articles two to three, seven to eight, fourteen, twenty and twenty-four of the draft Trusteeship Agreement for the territory of Somaliland as approved by the Trusteeship Council on January 27, 1950 - page 183 of United Nations Bulletin Vol. VIII - No. 4 - February 15, 1950).

2. With regard to the questions of (a) the creation of a Kamerun citizenship to express the ideal of a joint Nationality, and (b) of the observation by the administering powers of the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, I am to refer you to Articles one to two, four and nine of the draft "Declaration of Constitutional Principles" guaranteeing the rights of the indigenous inhabitants of the territory of Somaliland annexed to the Trusteeship Agreement (vide pages 186-187 of United Nations Bulletin Vol. VIII - No. 4 - February 15, 1950). Articles 1-2 and 4 are of particular interest to the inhabitants of the Kamerun and we feel we must quote them hereunder:

The Secretary-General

United Nations Organisation,
Palais de C h a i l l o t ,
P a r i s , F r a n c e .

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"Article 1:

"The sovereignty of the Territory is vested in its people and shall be exercised by the Administering Authority on their behalf and in the manner prescribed herein by decision of the United Nations."

"Article 2:

"The Administering Authority shall take the necessary steps to provide for the population of the Territory a status of citizenship of the Territory and to ensure their diplomatic and consular protection when outside the limits of the Territory and of the territory of the Administering Authority."

X

X

X

"Article 4:

"The Administrator shall appoint a Territorial Council, composed of inhabitants of the Territory and representative of its people.

"In all matters other than defense and foreign affairs, the Administrator shall consult the Territorial Council.

"The legislative authority shall normally be exercised by the Administrator after consultation with the Territorial Council until such time as an elective legislature has been established."

3. I am to emphasize the fact that our memorandum of October 30, 1951, relates to the general questions of our rights and interests: petitions dealing with specific cases of infringement of our rights and interests will be submitted to you in due course.

4. We are happy to learn (page nineteen of Trusteeship Council document T/A.C.41/SR.14 of 27 July, 1951) that a United Nations Visiting Mission is likely to visit this country in 1952. We would respectfully urge that the Visiting Mission be allowed to spend more time in the Kamerun than had been the case in 1949, and that it should have full competence to discuss freely and unhampered matters privately or publicly with the indigenous people as circumstances may demand.

/5. I am to

5. I am to enclose hereto a copy of the photograph taken during the recent conference of the Kamerun United National Congress at Kumba.

6. Copies of this letter have been transmitted to His Excellency the High Commissioner of the French Republic in the Kamerun, Yaoundi, and the Honourable the Commissioner of the Kamerun, Buea, for their information.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed Jabea K. Dibonge)
Jabea K. Dibonge

President-General,
Kamerun United National
Congress.

Received at U. N. N. Y. 10 January 1952.

KAMERUN UNITED NATIONAL CONGRESS,
NATIONAL SECRETARIAT, B U E A, KAMERUN

B u e a, Kamerun, West Africa,
30th October, 1951.

Sir,

We are directed to inform you that a National Convention of delegates from the Kamerun under British and French Trusteeship was held at Kumba from August 12 to 13, 1951, whereat it was unanimously decided to inaugurate a virile and vociferous national organisation to be styled "THE KAMERUN UNITED NATIONAL CONGRESS". The Kamerun United National Congress is an organisation of the common man, and all nationals of the Kamerun are eligible for membership. It caters for the well-being and happiness of all nationals of the Kamerun, their tribal or racial affinities notwithstanding.

2.- Before discussing in greater detail the aims and objects of the Congress, it is important to point out that the Kamerun United National Congress is neither an underground nor a subversive movement affiliated with, nor controlled nor influenced by any government, party or association outside West Africa. It is a spontaneous growth incited by the disabilities and crippling handicaps inherent in the present political set-up. The Kamerun United National Congress is not opposed to personalities or individuals as such, but it is fighting against a system of government which is detrimental to the well-being and political aspirations of the peoples of the Kamerun. It is fighting in accordance with the principles laid down in the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreements which resulted therefrom. In this connection, we are to assure you, Sir, that no right-thinking Kamerunian would ever have essayed to question the propriety of the present political set-up had the

The Secretary-General
United Nations Organization,
Palais de Chaillot,
Paris, France.

/people been

people been accorded a square deal, or had the administering authorities taken full cognizance of the fact that Kamerunians too are human beings with desires and aspirations as other people.

3. We have been inspired in our struggle by the words used by the President of the United States of America (Mr. Harry Truman) at the signing of the Charter in the auditorium of the Veterans' Memorial Hall, San Francisco, U.S.A.:

"The Charter of the United Nations which you have just signed is a solid structure upon which we can build a better world. History will honour you for it. Between the victory in Europe and the final victory, in this most destructive of all wars, you have won a victory against war itself...With this Charter the world can begin to look forward to the time when all worthy human beings may be permitted to live decently as free people".

Then the President pointed out that the Charter would work only if the peoples of the world were determined to make it work. "If we fail to use it", he concluded, we shall "betray all those who have died so that we might meet here in freedom and safety to create it. If we seek to use it selfishly - for the advantage of any one nation or any small group of nations - we shall be equally guilty of that betrayal. As this narrative unfolds itself, you shall see how far if at all the words of President Truman have been translated into deeds by the controllers of the destinies of the Kamerun.

4. The decisions unanimously taken by the delegates from the Kamerun under British and French trusteeship at the national convention holden at Kumba on August 12 to 13, 1951, were:

- (a) to press for the early unification of the two sections of the Kamerun. The Kamerun is at present arbitrarily divided between France and Britain. This arbitrary division is inimical to the emergence of the Kamerun as a cohesive self-governing or independent Nation. Experience has taught us that the different systems of European cultures now being instilled into our people by the administering authorities are a bar to the attainment of nationhood by the Kamerun;
- (b) as a necessary preliminary to and pending the consummation of unification of the Kamerun territory, the Kamerun United National Congress should undertake:

/(1) to effect

(1) to effect the removal of all obstacles which now impede the free movement within the Kamerun of indigenous people and the transport of their personal property (including trade goods or whatever origin) that is the total abrogation of the existing customs-cum-political frontier and exchange control, and the re-introduction in lieu thereof of a Customs Union between the two sections of the Kamerun on the lines of the Customs Convention concluded between the High Commissioner of the French Republic in the Kamerun and the Governor of Nigeria which was in force between the years 1916 and 1921. The impression left on every thoughtful person in the Kamerun is that the revocation of this Customs Union in or about 1921 and its replacement by the present Customs frontier was occasioned by the pressure brought to bear upon the administering authorities by the powerful European Trading Combines. If this surmise is correct, then the administering authorities have been remiss in not observing the policy, accepted by every member of the United Nations in control of dependent areas, "that the interests of the inhabitants of these territories are paramount and that the controlling powers accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to the utmost, within the system of peace and security established by the Charter, the well-being of the inhabitants";

(2) to see to the revision, amendment or amplification of both trusteeship agreements which authorised Britain and France to form customs, fiscal and administrative unions between the trust territories and adjacent territories under their control and to establish common services between these territories. In our experience, the operation of this article has in fact created conditions which will obstruct the separate development of the whole of the Kamerun territory, in the fields of political, economic, social and educational advancement, as a distinct and united political entity. The Kamerun United National Congress considers it the duty of the Trusteeship Council to evolve - pending the consummation of unification - safeguards to preserve the special political status of the Kamerun as a whole.

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In this connexion, it is important to remember that even members of the Trusteeship Council had, when examining the British Cameroons report for 1947, expressed misgivings lest the integration of the trust territory with the administering authority's colonial territory of Nigeria would eventually extinguish the distinct political status of the Kamerun. We can do no better than reproduce here the relevant questions asked by the Trusteeship Council:

"Question 5: Under present conditions, would not the logical outcome be the complete integration of the Trust Territory with the Colonial Territory? And if so, would not the realisation of self-government or independence instead of being one of separate evolution, depend entirely on whether Nigeria itself becomes self-governing or independent?"

"Question 6: If it is assumed that the arbitrary division of the territory after the first world war makes it difficult for the Trust Territory to develop separately, was it not unrealistic to submit it as a Trust Territory under the present terms? If, because of such arbitrary division, it is hard to govern the Trust Territory as a unit and it must be joined to adjacent Colonies, would it not be better under the letter and spirit of the Charter to have either a unified Cameroons under British-French trust administration or a unification of Nigeria and the Cameroons as a single Trust Territory?"

"Question 7: In the deliberations of Nigerian executive and legislative councils, particularly with reference to allocating expenditure and planning of departmental programmes, is the Trust Territory treated on a special basis as requiring special favourable consideration or is it simply treated as a series of distinct and perhaps somewhat "backward" parts of the Nigerian provinces?"

In this connexion, we would also refer you to the debates in the Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee on the subject of progress in the trust territories recorded on pages 528-537 of Bulletin Vol. VII-No.9- November 1, 1949, published by the Department of Public Information, United Nations. We shall be interested to learn, in due course, the conclusions and recommendations made by the Committee established by the Trusteeship Council

/on January 27, .

on January 27, 1941, "to make a special study of the problem of Administrative Unions affecting Trust Territories, and to recommend safeguards to preserve the distinct political status of the trust territories, and enable the Trusteeship Council effectively to exercise its supervisory functions" (vide pages 35-37 of U.N. Background Paper No. 48 of June 1, 1949).

Unlike the trusteeship agreement relating to the former Italian Colony of Somaliland which sets a time-limit to Italy's "tutelage" of the Somalis, the period of validity of the trusteeship agreements for the two sections of the Kamerun is not stated, that is these agreements will run for an unspecified period of time. In this connexion, the statement of Mr. Yasin Mughir of Syria during the debates cited in the foregoing sub-paragraph is highly illuminating: "Yasin Mughir, of Syria, made the point that the Administering Authorities were not required to accord complete independence and self-government immediately, nor within any specified period of time", (vide page 529 of Bulletin Vol. VII-No.9 Nov. 1, 1949, published by the Department of Public Information, United Nations). We (the governed) are not surprised, nor do we expect things to be shaped otherwise, for Britain and France were given a free hand by the United Nations to "submit" draft trusteeship agreements which, "after being agreed upon by the States directly concerned" received the approval of the United Nations (compare page 41 of the "Guide to the United Nations Charter" published by the United Nations Department of Public Information). The trusteeship agreements leave political and administrative control in the Kamerun too much in the hands of imperialism. The United Nations have, as usual, placed too much trust in the good conscience of the administering authorities. But the members of the Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee received an unpleasant jolt during the debates on "progress in trust territories" and "safeguarding of trusteeship identity" when all administering authorities said with one voice that neither the Charter nor the Trusteeship Agreements contained any provision which compelled them (the administering authorities) to consult with the Trusteeship Council on their plans for the administration of the trust territories, (vide pages 528-537 of Bulletin Vol. VII-No.9-Nov. 1, 1949, and pages 586-592 of Bulletin Vol.VII-No. 10-Nov. 15, 1949, published by the Department of Public Information, United Nations). In our opinion the United Nations Organisation has been overreached

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by the more politically-astute Western Powers!

To bring about a free and unfettered liaison between the indigenous inhabitants of the two sections of the Kamerun controlled by France and Britain; that is the whole Kamerun - notwithstanding the present divergent systems of administration - should enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of petition, and of movement.

To see to it that local legislatures are established as follows:

(a) a separate and full-fledged House of Assembly for the Kamerun under British trusteeship with full executive and legislative powers; the chief political representative of the administrative authority to be designated, "Chief Commissioner" or "High Commissioner" instead of Commissioner of the Cameroons" as at present. The "High Commissioner of the British Cameroons" shall have the powers reserved to a Lieutenant-Governor under the new Nigerian Constitution subject to such modifications as the special status of the Kamerun demand, and shall be directly responsible to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations through the Governor of Nigeria.

At the Cameroons Provincial Conference holden at Mamfe on 27th/28th June, 1949, for the purpose of determining the opinion of the Kamerun on the subject of the Review of the Constitution of Nigeria - this conference was attended by some forty-three representatives from various parts of the then four divisions of the "Cameroons Province" - it was unanimously agreed by the unofficial delegates that the Northern Kamerun administered as part of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria might be joined to the Southern Kamerun. Further, they agreed that, having regard to the special status of the trust territory under British administration, a separate House of Assembly be established for the Kamerun territory which should be vested with legislative and financial powers. This proposal was turned down. The Commissioner of the Cameroons, who was present at this conference, advanced the usual specious argument that it was financially disadvantageous to burden so small a territory as the "Cameroons Province" on its own with the expenses of a regional staff which would divert money from much-needed social development, and the difficulty at the present stage of finding in the Cameroons enough men of the calibre to operate a regional legislature. This argument appears to us to be untenable because:

- (1) the agents of the administering authority have now essayed the election to the House of Assembly for the Eastern Region of Nigeria of Kamerun nationals of whom the Commissioner had spoken so disparagingly, and suppressed the real reason which is that his government had never intended to run the British Kamerun as a separate political entity adorned with the usual "paraphernalia". The accredited representative of Britain (Mr. John M. Martin) speaking during the debates in the General Assembly's Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee on the subject of safeguarding Trusteeship Identity was but voicing out the truth when he stated, 'inter alia', "It had never been the intention of the United Kingdom to administer those territories (British Togoland and British Cameroons) as distinct political entities, but this should not be interpreted as prejudicing their status as trust territories "(sic). (vide page 586 of Bulletin Vol. VII-No.10-November 15, 1949, published by the United Nations Department of Public Information). But Mr. Martin seems to forget that the British administering authority has undertaken "to develop their (Native) participation in advisory and legislative bodies and in the government, both central and local". Great Britain should have also weighed the financial implications inseparable from such a development before binding herself to perform such an obligation. Moreover, since the peoples of the trust territory have not formally "invited" the administering authority "to control" their country, it is only meet and proper that the administering authority should shoulder unflinchingly the financial burden entailed by the efficient running of the administration;
- (2) the "clearly expressed wishes of the people concerned" are that a separate House of Assembly be established for them. If Kamerunians are good enough to become elected members of the Eastern House of Assembly, there seems to be no reason why they could not be capable of running their own House of Assembly in the Cameroons. In view of the stipulations in Article 76 (b) of the United Nations Charter, we are of the opinion that the wishes of the people of the Kamerun under British trusteeship should override any other consideration;
- (3) the administering authority has not accelerated the pace of higher education during the thirty-seven years it has held sway in the territory

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to enable the country to turn out sufficient men and women of the required intellectual capacity. Apart from this, it is well known that not all intellectuals are imbued with rectitude and sageness, nor could all politicians of renown boast of an academic career (see also paragraphs 26-27 herein);

(4) the 1950 annual report on the administration of the Kamerun under British trusteeship had sufficiently demonstrated that the territory was quite capable of producing the revenue wherewith to run its public institutions and services. The British Kamerun has, for the first time, produced a surplus of E310,000. There are natural resources such as timber and minerals yet untapped, and as development progresses the more will the revenue of the territory increase. The country is not, in our view, being developed as rapidly as the existing economic conditions of the territory demand. If the ideal aimed at in the United Nations Charter and the trusteeship agreements relating to the Kamerun is really to grant us self-government of independence after we shall have imbibed the technique of modern government, then it is, from the inhabitants' point of view, politically inexpedient to locate our legislatures outside the confines of the two sections of the Kamerun. In this connection, we would invite reference to the resolution in box on page 591 of U.N. Bulletin Vol. VII-No.10-November 15, 1949. How could, we may ask, the masses of the people acquire even a rudimentary knowledge of modern parliamentary procedure when their legislatures are located outside their country? The British protectorate of the GAMBIA has an area of only 4130 square miles and a total population of 215,000 (see page 221 of Pears Cyclopaedia: Fifty-eighth Edition, 1948), as against the Kamerun under British trusteeship 34,081 square miles and a total population of 1,027,100 (vide pages 1 and 293 of the printed Cameroons report for the year 1949). The potential wealth of the Kamerun under British Trusteeship is, in our opinion, infinitely greater than that of the GAMBIA. Whereas the Gambia is the proud possessor of her own Governor as well as other public institutions and services inseparable from a British protectorate, the British Kamerun is doomed to be tied for ever to the apron-strings of the Eastern Region of Nigeria! Further, it is not only lugubrious but also

/an herculean

an herculean task to expect the thirteen elected representatives of the British Kamerun to have their voices heard in the EASTERN NIGERIA HOUSE of Assembly at ENUGU, NIGERIA, dominated by sixty-seven elected Nigerians, five European officials, and three other members representing special interests not otherwise represented. (b) a separate House of Representatives for the Kamerun under French trusteeship with full legislative and executive powers. The "Kamerun House of Representatives" should be independent of either the House of Deputies or House of Senates in PARIS, FRANCE.

The position with regard to the French Kamerun is even worse: out of six-hundred odd deputies in the French House of Deputies in Paris, France, the French Kamerun has only three deputies. Two of these are natural-born French citizens whilst the third is an indigene of the Kamerun who has obtained French naturalization and is wedged in between a dual loyalty. Can we justifiably expect these three men to represent the interests of their constituencies in the Kamerun as conscientiously, concretely and zealously if and when those interests happen to conflict with those of their father-land? Decidedly no! The whole system is a farce on a grand scale and should be scrapped. Since the expenditure on all services and public institutions in the Kamerun is met from public funds derived from the territory, the question of the Kamerun being a financial burden on France does not arise.

The House of Assembly for the British Kamerun, and the House of Representatives for the French Kamerun should be vested with real powers and have an African majority. A power of veto might at the initial stage be accorded to the chief political representative of both administering authorities in subjects such as (1) external affairs, (2) defence, (3) finance, and (4) the control of the public service, but these legislatures should have the right of appeal over this veto to the United Nations. All Ministries shall, with a few exceptions, be headed by Africans, who shall speak in the meetings on matters for which they are responsible. The size of these legislatures and the procedures to be followed at elections, and during meetings should be determined by the administering authorities in consultation with the representatives of the

indigenous population. As soon as the principle of unification is conceded by the United Nations, active steps should be taken to evolve in consultation with the people, a Constitution for the whole territory of the Kamerun in the model of the New Constitution for Nigeria.

(5) to effect the compulsory teaching of the French and English languages in all Primary and Secondary Schools in the two sections of the Kamerun. Except in the coastal regions, we have no easy medium of expression amongst the people of the two sections of the Kamerun. In this connection, the United Nations might consider the advisability of erecting and maintaining a non-dominational High School for the two sections of the Kamerun. It is true that a number of indigenous students were receiving higher education in colleges and universities overseas, but experience has shown us that many of the students so trained tended to alienate themselves from their people and exhibit an exaggerated notion of their own importance. Such being the case, we would urge that pressure be brought to bear upon the administering authorities to establish higher educational institutions in the two sections of the Kamerun. (Vide resolution in box on page 537 of United Nations Bulletin Vol. VII-No.9-Nov. 1, 1949).

(6) to create a common platform for the discussion of political or any other issues which might arise in the two sections of the Kamerun. To this end - as has already been indicated in another paragraph of this letter - the indigenous inhabitants of the Kamerun should have freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, and of petition through the length and breadth of the Kamerun. No obstacles, overt or covert, should be allowed to hamper their meeting freely and at any time or place. It is only fair to state, in this connection, that the inhabitants of the Kamerun under British trusteeship enjoy in full the fundamental freedoms reserved to them under the United Nations Charter and the trusteeship agreement, and at no time has any hinderance to the holding of public or private meetings been placed in their way. They move freely without a "pass".

(7) to press for active representation in the Trusteeship Council of the vital interests of the two sections of the Kamerun by special African representatives akin to the special representatives of the administering authorities should, like the administering authorities' representatives, be

available for consultation or otherwise when annual reports and other documents of importance to the well-being of the indigenous peoples are being discussed in the Trusteeship Council and General Assembly of the United Nations. The present system whereby only special representatives of the administering authorities are admitted to the deliberations of the Trusteeship Council and General Assembly is looked upon with grave misgivings by the peoples of the Kamerun, for instances are not lacking where these special envoys of the administering authorities had tended to paint roseate pictures of conditions, or indulged in self-praise of their achievements in the trust territories whereas the contrary was the case. The expenses of this delegation should, on the analogy of those of the special representatives of the administering authorities, be defrayed from public funds.

5. In order to elucidate further the points raised in the preceding paragraphs, we feel we should offer some observations on the political trends in the Kamerun before and after the occupation of this country by allied military forces in September 1944.

6. As you are fully aware, the indigenous peoples of the Kamerun have had no say in the formulation of the trusteeship agreements; they were, as usual, confronted with a 'fait accompli'. In this connection, it is interesting to observe that the indigenous population of the former Italian Colony of Somaliland who, last year, were placed under the "tutelage" of the Italians for ten years only, were fully consulted when the trusteeship agreement relative to their country was in the making. This trusteeship agreement and the annexe thereto are, in our view, the best documents ever produced by the United Nations Organisation on behalf of a dependent people, for they have been worded in a clear and unambiguous language which admits of no artifices by the agents of the administering authority. Likewise the indigenes of the former Italian Colony of LYBIA were actually members of the United Nations Committee charged with the drafting of a Constitution for the administration of their territory under direct United Nations trusteeship for one year only (vide pages two to three of Bulletin VOL.VIII-No.1-January 1, 1950, published by the Department of Public Information, United Nations).

7. The administering authorities of France and Britain have the duty to assure the due execution of the obligations vis-à-vis the peoples of the Kameru, freely entered into to by them under the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreements. Since they are discharging these obligations imperfectly, can nationalists of the Kamerun be blamed if and when they adopt measures which are designed to spur the United Nations to greater efforts than hitherto for the early realization in the Kamerun of the basic human rights, fundamental freedoms and other rights reserved to them under the International Trusteeship System? It is stated on page twenty of the "Guide to the United Nations Charter,"...The "third purpose of the United Nations therefore is to achieve co-operation among countries in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural and humanitarian character. Akin to this object is that of promoting and encouraging BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS FOR ALL PEOPLE WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF RACE, SEX, LANGUAGE OR RELIGION."

8. Each member of the United Nations is pledged to fulfil its obligations under the Charter "in good faith" (compare page twenty of the "Guide to the United Nations Charter"). Page fifteen of the same booklet says, 'inter alia', "...The Conference at Francisco added "a whole new chapter on the subject not covered by the Dumbarton Oaks proposals; proposals creating a system for territories placed under United Nations trusteeship. On this matter there was much debate. Should the aim of trusteeship be defined as "indopendence", or "self-government" for the peoples of these areas? If indopendence, what about areas too small ever to stand on their own legs for defence? Finally, "self-government" was chosen as the aim, it being understood that this term included independence - if the people of the areas desired it and could assume the responsibility - as well as the right to choose some other status as part of a group of territories.." Page thirty-nine says, amongst other things, ".... Some of these territories are important to various powers, and to the world at large, because of their strategic location, some have considerable economic resources of value to the world trade; and in all are human beings at different cultural and social levels maybe, but with the same desires and aspirations as other people..". In view of the principles clearly enunciated above, could any right-thinking person brand us presumptuous agitators if and when we press for the implementation of the obligations solemnly undertaken by our overlords?

9. The first Visiting Mission of the United Nations visited these shores in November/December 1949. Its reports on both sections of the Kamerun were published early in 1950. The advent of the visiting mission was hailed with great satisfaction by the indigenous peoples. The people naturally thought that the Trusteeship Council possesses supervisory functions in relation to the Kamerun and that it could intervene effectively in the governing of the territory. Accordingly, the visiting mission was literally flooded with petitions by political organisations and individual citizens of the Kamerun. Most of the petitions laid strong emphasis on the shortcomings of the British and French administering authorities in the development of political, economic, social and educational conditions in both sections of the Kamerun. The petitioners maintained with truth that the indigenous peoples have not only made no progress at all towards self-government of independence but that the administering authorities were, in so far as the African population was concerned, intentionally dilatory in the realization of other basic objectives of the International Trusteeship System. The indigenes live in the Kamerun and they know what is wrong there. They know that their individual interests are ancillary to those of nationals of the administering authorities. They know that their economic condition is the poorest imaginable, and that the administering authorities have done little and are doing little or nothing to ameliorate the position. They know that almost all important and lucrative enterprises in the Kamerun are in the hands of either nationals of the administering authorities or other non-African aliens.

10. At a parley between the visiting mission and the Bakweri people (in Victoria Division) at BUEA on November 3, 1949, the people directed the attention of the visitors to the fact that there are only two European-owned shops in the southern part of the Kamerun under British trusteeship. Both shops are owned by Messrs United Africa Company Limited, and John Hold & Company Limited. Since the outbreak of the second world war - shops owned and run by enemy aliens were closed down at the outbreak of the war - those British firms have adopted a somewhat queer and hitherto-unknown practice whereby consumer-goods, which are greatly in demand but have been in short-supply since the outbreak of the war, are only sold to a privileged few, the so-called "registered customers", who are mostly Non-natives of the Kamerun. These "registered

/customers"

customers" are forced by circumstances to make what is known in local parlance as 'conditional purchases', that is registered customers buy partly goods which are greatly in demand and therefore easily saleable, and partly goods which do not find a ready market amongst Africans, and which "registered customers" not unnaturally usually fight shy. The registered customers naturally compensate themselves by selling the consumer-goods at a very high profit, often as high as three-hundred per centum. As can be easily imagined, this practice reacts very unfavourably on the poor peasant who, due to other economic factors, finds it extremely difficult to make two ends meet! The Government of Nigeria appointed a Commission of Inquiry some time ago to probe this matter, and, although the Commission of Inquiry has substantiated this heinous and despicable practice, no remedial measures have been evolved to meet the situation, and there is no law to protect the poor peasant from this indirect robbery.

11. The visiting mission had excited great hopes in the minds of the indigenous population of the Kamerun that a change for the better would result from their "visit of inspection". The people felt confident that the Trusteeship Council would see to it that the wrongs and shortcomings brought to the notice of the visiting mission would be righted or assuaged. Alas, these were only pious hopes! Before the visiting mission had completed its task, persistent rumours began to percolate through from abroad that all was not well within the Trusteeship Council: that the British and French Government were impatient of the Trusteeship Council's criticisms of the administration of the trust territories. Fears were freely expressed that the Trusteeship Council might, like its predecessor, the now defunct Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, dissolve ignominiously. These rumours were accentuated by press reports such as that published on page two of the issue of the Nigeria Review of November 26, 1949 - this newspaper is published under the aegis of the Government of Nigeria. The press report said:

"The British delegate has complained to the United Nations General Assembly about the recent findings on the administration of trust territories. One was that the Administering Governments should give greater benefits to the peoples themselves, and another that educational facilities should be improved. He said the British Government was already taking steps themselves in the territories under their trusteeship

/and resented

and resented strongly any interference from the United Nations. They did not object to giving general information about the conditions in the territories under their administration, but they did object to the United Nations trying to tell them how to run these countries."

12. Again, the issue of the Nigeria Review of December 3, 1949, had the following to say about mandated territories:

"U.N.O. and mandated territories.
Lords issue stern warning.

The principal point in the House of Lords debate this week on administration of the Colonies, particularly African, was the reinforcement by Lord Listowel, Minister for Colonial Affairs, of the warning which Government has already given to the United Nations Trusteeship Council that the U.N.O. will not be permitted any intervention or sharing of responsibilities in the governing of colonial territories. Lord Listowel followed criticisms by Lord Tweedsmuir, Lord Milverton and Lord Swinton.

Lord Milverton (former Governor of Nigeria) spoke of 'futility and almost impertinence' of the United Nations resolution referring to flying the United Nations flag and called for Government's firm stand on its right to administer mandated territories unimpeded by ignorant and possibly malicious representations from the outside.

Lord Listowel denounced this "back sea' driving" by 58 nations whose role was surely to watch, criticise admonish and supervise, and not to take any part in the actual process of administration.... It would be a complete dereliction of our duty to the people of the Colonies if we offered to share our present responsibilities with representatives of other countries. This does not mean that we resent outside advice on grounds of national prestige, or that our administration is so perfect that it cannot be improved. That would be a complete misjudgment of our attitude. We welcome constructive criticism from any source, but criticisms at U.N.O. have often been warped by anti-British and anti-Colonial prejudice.

We leave it you to judge the effect of such statements on the indigenous peoples of the trust territories. In our opinion, these utterances mean in effect that the administering authorities could do whatever they will in the so-called trust territories without anybody intervening on behalf of the poor indigenes.

13. The conclusions and recommendations contained in the visiting mission's reports fell far short of the expectations of the peoples of the Kamerun. Suspicion was engendered in the minds of the people that the visiting mission had so kow-towed to the administering authorities as to render it incapable

of propounding effective remedies against the many ills to which the people felt bound to invite the mission's attention. The visiting mission had failed to give proper vent to the clearly expressed wishes of the people to be UNIFIED: in short, the visiting mission had been over-cautious not to give offence to the administering authorities. This attitude would appear to be the outcome of the vicious war of nerves directed at the time against the Trusteeship Council by members of the British Parliament and the British Press for allegedly arrogating to itself the task of intervening in the governing of the British trust territories in Africa (vide paragraphs 11 and 12 above). The enlightened elements in the Kamerun began to ask themselves whether the Trusteeship Council was in fact what it purported to be, a watchdog of the United Nations overseeing the well-being and happiness of indigenous inhabitants of the trust territories, as laid down in the Charter and the trusteeship agreements. We are yet to learn the reaction of the United Nations to this war of nerves.

14. The peoples of the British and French sections of the Kamerun have overwhelmingly asked to be UNIFIED. They felt and still feel that the arbitrary division of the Kamerun between Britain and France with its attendant artificial customs-cum-political frontier has created a situation which tends to nullify the consummation of the basic objectives laid down in Articles 73 and 76 of the United Nations Charter of June 26, 1945. Both the United Nations and the Administering Authorities have solemnly pledged themselves in writing to respect "the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned" (cf. Article 76 (b) of the Charter). Why are they now vacillating to perform their "sacred trust of civilisation" as provided in Article 73 of the Charter? What drastic reforms in the fields of political, economic, social and educational advancement have the administering authorities introduced in the Kamerun since the visit of the First West African Visiting Mission in November/December 1949? The enlightened elements in the Kamerun under British administration have repeatedly requested the introduction of Local Government Reform, but, unfortunately, no action has as yet been taken. No country in West Africa has, in our opinion, suffered at the hands of imperialism as much as the Kamerun: it is an open secret that the administering authorities employ stooges and nincompoops to wreck nationalist attempts at

/emancipating

emancipating the people of the Kamerun from the shackles of social inequality, economic exploitation and political bondage. We know that the movement we have ushered in would as likely as not entail victimization at the hands of the agents of imperialism. We know that some of us would as likely as not be impeached with offences we have never committed in order to muzzle our outcry. But we would asseverate here that we shall not deviate an iota from this "holy" crusade until and unless our sufferings are assuaged. As is the case in Togoland, we know that organisations subtly sponsored and financed by imperialist agents are springing up in this country with the object of undermining our national resurgence and of ensuring the perpetuation of the 'status quo'. We are, however, confident that these enemies of progress would realise in time the folly of their contemptible defection and recant.

15. We are familiar with the plight of the Ewes of southern Togoland who have unsuccessfully fought for the past five years for a change in the present political set-up in their country and for the unification of Eweland. Since the Togolandese are not discouraged by the vacillating tactics of the United Nations and are still striving hard to achieve their cherished goal, we too in the Kamerun, who are similarly placed, are undaunted. We know that the unification of either Togoland or the Kamerun would sound the death-knell of the existing political arrangements.

Says a famous British Statesman: "What we have, we hold!" At another time, the pronouncement of the same Statesman was, "he was not called to office to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire". These words are portentous, for Britain and France have, in our opinion, no intention of ultimately giving up their stranglehold on either Kamerun or Togoland. This opinion is reinforced by a Mr. E.W. Martin's review of a book entitled "Freedom and Authority in West Africa" by M. Robert Delavignette, a former High Commissioner of the French Cameroons, when he writes, amongst other things, on page 397 of the issue of April 1951 of the "West African Review", a monthly magazine published in Liverpool, England, as follows:

".... M. Delavignette believes that it is urgently necessary for the knowledge and methods, tested in West Africa by various European nations, to be pooled for mutual aid. Britain and France jointly recognise that they are partners in a vast enterprise and that all their plans and actions are in the last analysis complementary:

/Great Britain

Great Britain is tending towards the creation of extensive African dominions to be incorporated eventually into the Commonwealth; France looks upon all oversea territory as part of the national community.

".... But never does he make the cardinal error of attributing to the African people who are the governed, all those deficiencies and errors that arise naturally in such a relationship and must inevitably be due in part to the imperfections inherent in authority itself...."

16. In his despatch of July 15, 1950, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies had written, amongst other things, on the New Constitution of Nigeria, as follows:

"..... I wish to make it clear beyond all doubt that His Majesty's Government attaches the very greatest importance to building up a unified Nigeria on the basis of three component regions."

Since, according to the present political and administrative arrangements, the Kamerun under British trusteeship forms one the component parts of the Eastern Region of a "Unified Nigeria", is it far-fetched for Kamerun nationalists to infer that the process of permanently integrating this territory with Nigeria is being carried out with consummate skill and subtlety? In this connexion, we would refer you to the statement of the British delegate (Mr. John M. Martin) at the General Assembly's Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee on November, 1949 - quoted in paragraph 4 (4)(a) 1 above. Having in view these authoritative statements by highly-placed and responsible nationals of the administering authorities, thoughtful Kamerunians are unable to resist the impression that the sugar-coated language used in the United Nations Charter and Trusteeship Agreements wherein it is provided that the ideal aimed at under the international trusteeship system is eventually to grant self-government or independence to the peoples of the trust territories is merely a sedative to lull the childishy-confiding Africans into a false sense of security, that is the notion universally held by them that the Kamerun would ultimately join the community of the free or self-governing nations and establish her own government of the people, by the people, and for the people, is nothing but a sweet illusion!

17. With a view to providing members of the Trusteeship Council with a word-picture of affairs in the Kamerun, it appears to us appropriate to trace

/briefly

briefly the events before and after the German occupation of the Kamerun.

18. Portuguese explorers were the first Europeans to call at the estuary of Duala during their voyages to India in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They found a great quantity of prawns in the estuary where the city of Duala is situated, and as a result they termed the Duala river 'Rio dos Cameroes' (the river of prawns). The territory of the Kamerun derived its name from this river-Kamerun River.

19. News that the Kamerun (Duala) River was very rich in slaves and useful raw materials such as ivory tusks, timber (ebory), palm oil and palm kernels, bush rubber, etc., soon spread in Europe and attracted not a small number of trading ships to that river. Trade flourished, and as it was to be expected the European traders soon vied with one another in extolling the virtues of their respective nations with a view to cajoling the unsuspecting but warlike Kamerun (Duala) chiefs to give them "favoured-nation" treatment, or to place themselves under the "benevolent" suzerainty of their governments.

20. It came to pass that a British Baptist Missionary, the late Reverend Alfred Saker, together with a band of his followers, who had escaped the persecutions of the Jesuit Fathers (Roman Catholic) on the island of Fernando Po, had started a mission station in Akwa, one of the principal quarters of the city of Duala, in 1845. Due to the influence of British Missionaries and Merchants, the independent chiefs of the Kamerun (Duala) invited Her late Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria in 1879 and again between 1882 and 1883 to declare a protectorate over their territory. Owing, however, to the reluctant attitude of the British Government in the United Kingdom, Her Gustaf Machtigal, German Consul-General for West Africa, forestalled Mr. Hewett, British Consul in the Oil Rivers District of Eastern Nigeria. The result was that the German flag was hoisted in Duala on July 14, 1884 - a few days before the long looked-for advent of Consul Hewett. The protests of Consul Hewett both to the Germans and the Kamerun (Duala) chiefs proved unavailing.

21. The most important event attending the occupation of the Kamerun territory as German protectorate was the political treaty of July 12, 1884, between the German firms Jantzen and Thorùhlen and Edward Vohs of Hamburg (Germany) and the Kamerun on the one part, and the independent chiefs of the Kamerun (Duala) on the other part; the Imperial German Government was

subsequently substituted for the two contracting German firms. It may not be widely known, at any rate outside the Kamerun, that the period of time stipulated in the political treaty of July 12, 1884, was thirty years only (i.e., 1884-1914). In December 1884, the towns of Bonaprise (Joss) and Bonaberi (Hickory) of the Bell Clan were subjected to a terrific bombardment, by a German Naval Squadron commanded by Admiral Knorr for rioting against the cession of Duala to the German Kaiser.

22. In 1912, the late Rudolf Dualla Manga Bell, paramount chief of Bell Clan of Duala, was given an officially authenticated mandate by all Duala chiefs to represent the entire Duala tribe in the matter of the expropriation by the Imperial German government of the whole Native lands in Duala. The late Chief Rudolf Dualla Manga Bell notified the Imperial German Government in writing on February 20, 1914, that the Duala chiefs represented by him were averse to the renewal of the political treaty which was due to expire on July 12, 1914. The reason which had weighed with the Duala chiefs to withdraw from the treaty was that the Germans had resolved upon expropriating Native lands in Duala in defiance of the provisions of the treaty which positively laid it down that lands on which villages and farms were situated as well as Native forest estates shall for ever remain the property of the Natives and their descendants (compare the "German White Book" published by a Herr BUCHNER, with particular reference to the duration of the Duala-German political treaty of July 12, 1884; and also the German Government White Paper on the Expropriation of the entire Native lands in Duala, Kamerun, issued by the German Colonial Office in 1913). Chief Rudolf Dualla Manga Bell was executed by the Germans at Duala on August 8, 1914, for daring to question the legality of the German expropriation measures planned for the city of Duala. Since the German-Duala treaty ceased to have any legal significance on July 12, 1914, the Kamerun had tacitly regained her sovereignty as from that date and should for all practical purposes be free and independent, owing allegiance to no World Power.

23. It might be argued that the hinterland tribes of the Kamerun could scarcely come within the ambit of the German-Duala political treaty of July 12, 1884, since the chiefs of those tribes were no party to that agreement. This argument cannot, in our view, hold water because the Duala

chiefs had providently made a 'gentleman's agreement' with the Germans at a later date wherein it was stipulated that Europeans shall neither penetrate into the interior nor have any direct trade relations with the hinterland tribes, and that all trade was to pass through Duala middlemen (compare Harry R. Rudin: "Germans in the Cameroons, 1884-1914", published by Jonathan Cape in 1938). It is thus conclusive that the Germans knew very well that the Dualas held the 'key' to their occupation of the hinterland and that without the treaty of July 1884, they could have obtained no foothold in the areas behind Duala - areas which were subsequently appended to the coastal districts ceded by the Dualas to form a compact "Kamerun". It follows, therefore, that both agreements were legally binding on the entire territory of the Kamerun.

24. These treaties were, as usual, regarded by the Germans as mere scraps of paper to be abrogated unilaterally whenever the exigencies of their country so dictated. Barely four years (i.e., in 1888) after the conclusion of these treaties, the German Government equipped two military expeditions for the subjugation of the hinterland tribes: one led by Dr. Zintgraff went up to the highlands of what is now known as the Bamenda Province of the Kamerun trust territory and penetrated as far as POLA on the Benue river; the other under Captains Kund and Tappenbeck blazed a trail from Batanga on the Atlantic coast to Yaounde where they established a military station in 1889. Other military expeditions followed suit and by 1907 the whole Kamerun was brought under the heels of the German Emperor.

25. Considering the facts disclosed in the preceding paragraphs, the Allied and Associated Powers (namely, Britain, France, etc.) were wrong in regarding the Kamerun as German "property" amenable to seizure as a prize of war during the 1914-1918 conflagration. Consequently the partition of the Kamerun between Britain and France with the connivance of other European Powers in or about 1916 without first consulting the indigenous inhabitants is looked upon by every patriotic Kamerunian as a high-handed act violating the principles of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms which these powers have contracted to uphold. Reports current during the first world war were to the effect that the Allied and Associated Powers were waging war against the Central European Powers so that the communities enslaved or threatened by Kaiserism may be

/liberated,

liberated, and that a system of government of the people, by the people and for the people would ensue. Accordingly, the indigenous peoples of the Kamerun then languishing under German yoke received the allied forces invading this country with open arms as the harbinger of an era of peace, happiness and contentment. Many thousand Kamerunians were massacred by German soldiery as reprisal for assisting allied troops. But as it will be seen from this petition and others submitted to the United Nations by individuals and political organisations in the Kamerun, the high hopes entertained by the people have but imperfectly realised.

26. We concede, however, that the independent and "free" peoples of the Kamerun are not yet sufficiently advanced politically to stand upon their own legs and should perforce be under the guardianship of a more politically-advanced nation. But there must be established a transition period of years during which period the people of the Kamerun must be trained for self-government with utmost vigour. During this period of transition, "imported" officials of the administering authorities must be gradually replaced by Kamerunians whenever vacancies occur and when capable persons are available for such positions. To this end, locally-appointed officials should take up advanced courses on subjects relative to their duties with a view to qualifying them for higher positions (see also debates of General Assembly's Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee on Progress in Trust Territories: pages 528-537 of Bulletin Vol. VII-No.9-November 1, 1949, published by the United Nations Department of Public Information).

27. As stated above, it is true that certain tribes, mostly in the forest belt, in the Kamerun, lack political experience in the modern sense of the world and are, therefore, incapable of assuming without outside assistance the full responsibility of the government of their areas. This is due mainly to the fact that officials of the administering authorities have within the thirty-seven years they have held sway in the Kamerun done their work but superficially in guiding African leaders in the handling of administrative and political affairs, and to turn any mistakes to profit through constructive criticism. You will agree, Sir, that the only way for the administering authorities to promote the education in self-government in the Kamerun is to put political responsibility in the hands of the people to a degree where they

/can learn.

can learn. This is not being done. The so-called native authority system as practised at present is nothing but a makeshift. Training in self-government can only be through experience, sometimes costly but the risk must be taken. It is essential that nationals of the Kamerun should be included in greater numbers in all government bodies, even though they may not have full competence. The progressive initiation of the local leaders in public affairs is in itself an objective of major importance. Reforms on the above lines should, therefore, be initiated at an early date. Says Babington Macaulay on the question of a country not being ripe for independence:

"It is worth the fool in the adage who says he will never go into the water until he has learnt how to swim".

And the Scriptures have it:

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it."

(compare Proverbs chapter 22 verse 6).

28. We make no apology for writing at such an inordinate length nor do we hesitate to lay the truth bare even at the risk of incurring the displeasure of the powers-that-be. The interests of, and love for, our country transcend all personal considerations. We earnestly and respectfully request that careful and serious consideration be given to the representations contained in this memorandum - representations which are based on the decisions arrived at by the delegates from the Kamerun under British and French trusteeship at their recent conference at Kumka.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Jabea K. Dibonge

Your obedient Servants,

Jabea K. Dibonge
General President Kamerun
United National Congress

/CENTRAL

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CENTRAL EXECUTIVE

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| 1. Illegible | 11. Illegible |
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(N.I. Mokeba-Mokoko-Mokeba) |
| 3. G. K. Amboh | 13. Lucas Ayiri |
| 4. Illegible | 14. Illegible |
| 5. Illegible | 15. M. Massango |
| 6. Illegible | 16. Illegible |
| 7. J. H. Lambe | 17. Illegible |
| 8. D. Maddison | 18. Illegible |
| 9. R. T. Tage | |
| 10. Illegible | |
