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PETITION FROM THE DELEGATION OF THE "ECOLE DES CADRES DE L'UNION
DES POPULATIONS DU CAMEROUN" CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER
FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

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of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council)

COPY

of a handwritten letter

Delegation of the Ecole de Cadre,
Promotion Volcan,
Mungo region.

Mont-Coupe, 1 June 1955

The Secretary-General of the United Nations,
New York,
U.S.A.

Sir,

Since 22 May the unarmed Cameroonian people have been victims of a needless war waged on behalf of the French Government by Roland Pré, Colonial Governor. At the very moment that this Governor called in AEF military aircraft and troop reinforcements ("La Presse du Cameroun", 27 May 1955) he decided to ban all telegraphic and postal correspondence in a Trust Territory, which clearly proves the guilt of this person who has enforced measures in this country never seen elsewhere.

We understood that the essential aims of the International Trusteeship System, as defined in Article 76 of the Charter, were valid, namely "to promote political...advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories and their progressive development towards self-government, to encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction". Now

Mr. Roland Pré considered that the Cameroons was a French colony and that he could inflict all the tortures of the world throughout the territory, even going so far as to ransack and loot the huts of peace-loving people and kill even pregnant women and infants. France believes that it can act in this way because the Trusteeship Council has just congratulated it. If it were not for the kindness of the British Government it would be impossible for us now to tell you about the tortures which our people have endured since 22 May 1955.

Firstly, it should be recalled that these incidents, to which the French representative at the United Nations refers as "incitement to revolt and armed rebellion," have been carefully prepared by Roland Pré, and a local newspaper "La Presse du Cameroun", in its issue of 26 May last, mentioned this fact under the heading "Events to come". Convinced that his plan was going to succeed Roland Pré began by controlling telegrams and ammunition as if it were wartime.

But how was the plot hatched and who carried it out? On 22 May 1955, at Douala under the patronage of the turncoat Bagal Guillaume, ex-Vice Chairman of the UPC, and an outcast, the plot was hatched at a meeting of the so-called Front National Camerounais at the house of a certain Mbock Vincent. After that meeting, mercenaries of the "Front" attacked and molested citizens in the Koumassi quarter, and then troops led by Bagal Guillaume went from hut to hut to ransack the homes of the active members of the UPC. All that was done to find a pretext for shedding blood. The next day the victims called in a lawyer who took note of the damage done, and the principal victim, Gacinthe Mpaye, Chairman of the Jeunesse Democratique du Cameroun lodged a complaint. In order to cover up this abuse of authority, in which he was an accomplice, Mr. Perhilou, representative of the High Commissioner, urged certain persons, among whom were Bagal, Mbock Vincent and Maah Georges, to lodge a complaint against certain active members of the UPC. To find a way of starting a war, troops were from that moment stationed in all parts of Douala in order to provoke the people to resist. On Tuesday, 24 May 1955, the leaders of the UPC in Douala, Mr. Mounie, Chairman, and Mr. Ouandie, Vice Chairman, of whom there is no news (are they alive or dead?) held a meeting of the people on behalf of whom they appealed for calm in the face of French provocation. And it was in order to apply the teachings of Mr. Huber, Colonial Administrator, that African opposition was

provoked. Calm reigned after that meeting. The next morning, that is to say on 25 May, an army lorry, in which were a wireless loud speaker and one European and two African soldiers, was stationed in the administrative section of Douala New Bell. Towards ten o'clock, when all the people were at work, three lorries filled with armed troops went towards the New Bell market in order to maltreat the women and steal their goods, and then went off in the direction of UPC headquarters to destroy the building. Upon being warned, the people ran and tried to defend the besieged UPC office. A state of siege reigned all day and all communications were banned. Towards 3.30 in the afternoon, a European gendarme fired on the crowd in the area killing several people and seriously wounding others. We have a photograph of that which we have kept in Douala and shall show to the special mission which the General Assembly must send urgently because it is impossible for us to set foot in the town. We sleep in mountain caves. As soon as this news was known the town realized that France had declared war on an unarmed people. Firemen were placed in a lorry in order to fire on the crowd; there were some deaths, the exact number of which is still unknown. During the night of 26 May the UPC office and nearby huts were set on fire. In order to cover up this abuse of authority "La Presse du Cameroun" of 27 May spoke of a fire brought about by the active members of the UPC. Who can believe that the active members of the UPC would deliberately burn their huts and the headquarters of their movement? These deeds were actually committed by armed forces under the orders of Roland Pré. They went into the huts and arrested innocent people whom Bagal had named, and it was in these circumstances that Matip Theodore, Administrative Secretary of the UPC, who was reading in bed, was arrested, wrongfully maltreated, sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and upon pain of death, compelled to sign blank papers on which the authorities later wrote such enormities and shameful travesties of the truth, worse than anything ever perpetrated by a government of that type. It was in these blank papers, as a result of oral instructions given by the Magistrate Cad to Felix, a member of the regional brigade and an officer of the judicial police, that evidence was found for bringing charges against the leaders of the UPC, against whom a warrant for arrest was issued for armed rebellion and incitement to revolt. This is how a government dishonours itself! A high official like

Roland Pré takes the initiative of killing Cameroonian patriots and then puts the responsibility on those who call for the maintenance of order. It should also be pointed out that this incident had been foreseen by the authorities as the Administrator-Mayor of Douala had ordered the Laquintinie Hospital not to allow the surgeons to go off duty because many wounded were expected. That statement was made by a French doctor, Mr. Cazenave, surgeon at the hospital in question.

It is therefore obvious that the French authorities had prepared the unleashing of this war against a peaceful, unarmed people. Moreover, from the time of his arrival in the Cameroons Roland Pré himself has stated that he possessed the means of "countering the action of the Communists", and all the patriots who are fighting for the unification and independence of the Cameroons are called Communists. Roland Pré wrote in his report (which the UPC unmasked in April) that within six months he would have outlawed the UPC and sentenced its beloved leaders. There is therefore no doubt that today's incidents explain the whole programme denounced much earlier on by the UPC. A French newspaper "Marchés Coloniaux", in its issue of 7 May 1955, said that the Cameroons would become a new Viet-Nam. Another French newspaper "Aspects de France" said in its issue of 22 April that Roland Pré should be recalled as he was following a policy in the Cameroons which was contrary to good Cameroonian-French relations. It can also be seen from that newspaper that Deputy Ninine, writing to the President of the French Republic, said "Mr. Roland Pré thinks he knows everything without having learnt it, and he will not listen to anyone. At this rate there will be bloodshed before long." How did these newspapers and these people of consequence know that all that would happen? Was it because of a "signal" which the leaders of the UPC gave to their representatives, as the Authorities shamelessly appear to prove? Surely not! Mr. Soucadeaux, Colonial Governor, did well for five years in the Cameroons. The Cameroonian people did not unanimously approve of his policy but everybody agreed in recognizing that he did not bring in armed troops to fire at unarmed law-abiding citizens.

A French Colonial Administrator, Prestat Gerard, is going to unleash and head the bloody repression in Mungo. After the incidents of 25 May 1955, Gerard Prestat rearmed his European troops and gendarmes on 22 May last in order

to break into the private homes of the active members of the UPC who were conferring about their movement. As soon as they arrived, Prestat, armed with a stick to which a nail was fastened, went up to Karmen Sakeo and hit him over the head, whereupon he fell senseless. As soon as the alarm was given, troops rushed upon those present and began to break up the furniture. The people tried to get rid of the aggressors and during the scuffle members of both sides were wounded, but more active members of the UPC were wounded than aggressors. On Monday morning, 23 May, three lorries loaded with troops besieged the whole Mungo region, especially Loum and Penja, where people asleep in their beds were arrested, bound and tortured in the most inhumane fashion. Honest patriots were arrested, robbed, tortured, their huts destroyed and their belongings looted because a white man had violated the home of citizens who had resisted in accordance with French law. Our bags were seized, cut into pieces and all our documents and money stolen, including the dresses and underclothing of the woman Omog Gertrude. And this is French civilization! Our Mungo colleagues who were going to Nkongsamba to protest were welcomed at the station by military prison vans and rifle fire. Monique Kamen and other active members were seriously wounded and taken to the hospital at Nkongsamba.

Tayou Pierre, a representative of the Syndicat F.O., has carried out the plot in Yaoundé. No news is reaching us as all correspondence has been stopped.

The Chairman of ESCCAM was sent to provoke Kingue Abel, Vice-Chairman of UPC at Ngambé.

Instead of feeling uneasy, all these criminals are assured of legal protection.

All Cameroonian women are living under uneasy conditions. Our leaders are reported as missing and only the authorities know their whereabouts. While a newspaper of the colonists - "Marchés Coloniaux" writes that "their integrity and honesty are incorruptible", Roland Pré has decided to kill them. He would have ordered them shot on sight. Is this the way to fight political opponents?

What is the United Nations waiting for in order to take action? Has it decided to allow an unarmed people to be exterminated? Is the Cameroons a French colony? Is this the ideal of the United Nations, proclaimed in Article 1 of the Charter, namely the maintenance of international peace and security?

Does the United Nations want our happiness or is it giving the French permission to kill us, who, by the death of our sons and brothers in the last world war, have contributed to international peace.

If the United Nations continues to turn a deaf ear to us, it will be the end of three million Cameroonians living under French administration. Roland Pré should not only be recalled and arraigned before a criminal court, but a mission of inquiry should be sent urgently to the Cameroons and should demand that our leaders be found and allowed to continue their political activity.

This is not a complaint from two Cameroonians but from all Cameroonian patriots who wish to live in freedom. We thank the United Kingdom Government for allowing this letter to reach you.

Further, in view of the gravity of the situation we ask you to apply Article 99 of the Charter by drawing the Security Council's attention to the incidents which are occurring in the Cameroons under French Administration. It is an urgent matter and the lives of millions of men are at stake, whom Roland Pré has decided to exterminate by armed force and by the use of submissive magistrates whom he rules with a rod of iron. Tell the French Government to remember the obligations it assumed and signed with regard to the Cameroons. Its representatives will make the usual untruthful statements because, among the French, the white man is never wrong and a white man's skin must be paid for by the lives of thousands of Cameroonians and by their personal belongings worth millions of CFA francs. And then they say there is no racial discrimination! But, if the truth is one and indivisible, the United Nations must link its Charter with reality.

We have the honour, etc.

for the delegations:

(Signed) Jean Bitchoka Tong

UNION DES POPULATIONS DU CAMEROUN

Cameroonian branch of the Rassemblement démocratique Africain.

Delegation of the Ecole des Cadres de l'UPC (Promotion Volcan)
in the Mont-Coupe Bush

Mont-Coupe, 10 June 1955

The Secretary-General of the United Nations,
New York, U.S.A.

Sir,

We have the honour to send you, as an annex to our petition of 1 June 1955, a poem by our colleague Jean BITCHOKA, Chairman of the Koumassi Central Committee of the UPC,^{1/} in order that you may understand the intelligence which the French Government is using in order to torture the Cameroonian people.

We point out that in order to preserve international peace and security it is to your interest to transmit all these petitions, or at least copies thereof, to the Security Council and also to submit them to the very next session of the United Nations General Assembly in view of the importance and gravity of the matter, as far as peace is concerned.

The French Government continues to torture the Cameroonian peoples and, by means of a subterfuge called "control of tax and identity papers", many of the active members of the UPC are being arrested and arbitrarily sentenced by the magistrates of the regime on trumped-up charges. All the colonists and Roland Pré, their Governor, are at present meeting in EDEA in order to study the second phase of this war and to seek ways of outlawing the UPC. We challenge the French representative to contradict this information.

^{1/} Note by the Secretariat: The above-mentioned poem has been placed in the Secretariat's files and is available to the members of the Trusteeship Council on request.

Furthermore, we request you to urge that a special mission of inquiry be sent to study this matter on the spot instead of merely contenting itself with the lying statements which the French representative will make in reply to these requests, for he will always find that these tortures are warranted because he will say that they are intended to maintain public order. You must exercise your right of control over the Cameroons and demand that the law be respected because we are tired of the lies and corrupt practices of the French colonialists who want a distorted picture of the incidents for which they are always responsible.

Your reply should be addressed to Jean GWODOG, 13 rue des Messageries, Paris.

I have the honour etc.

(Signature illegible)

Chief for the delegation
