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PETITION FROM THE LOCAL COMMITTEE OF THE "UNION DES POPULATIONS DU CAMEROUN"
OF BONELECKE-BONALEMBE CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

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Copy of a handwritten letter.

UNION DES POPULATIONS DU CAMEROUN (U.P.C.)

Local Committee at Bonelecke-Bonalembé, Akwa-Douala.

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

Sir,

The local committee of the Union des Populations du Cameroun at Bonelecke-Bonalembé, meeting today in plenary session, has the honour to bring to your notice the colonialist repression which has gone on in the Cameroons since the arrival in the Territory of the new High Commissioner.

Arbitrary arrests of the active members of the U.P.C. Persons who commit offences against the members of the U.P.C. are never indicted. The active members of our movement, who are blameless, are, however, served with a summons.

Thus, on 5 March 1955, on the arrival in the Territory of Ruben Um Nyobe, our people's representative, the French Government in the Cameroons served him with a summons and welcomed him with a troop of soldiers, in front of whom Mr. Roland Pré could be clearly seen. At 5 p.m. on 7 March 1955 the Cameroonian people demonstrated their sympathy with their delegate by accompanying him in large numbers to the law courts.

When, after severe colonialist repressive measures have been taken, an active member of the U.P.C. in the Cameroons under French Administration upholds the rights of a citizen, he must go to prison. Such was the case with our colleague, Fozo'o Ekabé, at Maroua.

On 2 April 1955 it was the turn of our colleague Kingué Abel, who was required to pay 40,000 francs (forty thousand francs) for a licence for the newspaper "La Voix du Cameroun".

Without mentioning the murderous attempts which are often made against the leaders of our Movement, we urge you to intercede with the French Government which, instead of respecting public freedoms, is infringing them to the detriment of the U.P.C. by taking armed action against it.

We reserve the right to live or die with the defenders of the Cameroonian national cause.

Services rendered to the Cameroons by France.

The bridge over the Wouri

The bridge over the Wouri, a symbol of the services rendered to the Cameroons by France, is prejudicial to the interests of the indigenous inhabitants, but helps the Whites to exploit the wealth of the Cameroons. These exploiters who, before the bridge over the Wouri was built, owned foodstuffs which rotted on the quay at Bonabéri and produce which could not be shipped, are today tranquilly disposing of their produce and foodstuffs. They are using the bridge as a means to further their exploitation of the Cameroons.

A stem of plantains, for which an indigenous inhabitant of the town would have to pay 100 francs, costs him 150 francs once it has crossed the bridge; a box of salt which would cost a peasant 5 francs costs him 7.50 francs once it has crossed the bridge. Strikes are breaking out, trade unions are demanding the application of the Labour Code, but the colonists remain unconcerned.

Hospitals. The hospitals in the Camercons, with their serious racial discrimination, must be seen to be believed. After she had been at the hospital for three months a nurse in training acted as a doctor. A patient entering the hospital is compelled to pay the pharmacy for medicine supplied, because the remedies prescribed by the doctor are not available at the hospital. A patient with a temperature of between 39 and 40 degrees is compelled to leave the hospital so that his bed may be taken by a newly-arrived patient. A mother must hug her baby to her breast because of the shortage of beds.

The food given to patients is very mediocre. (Macabos cooked in their skins in hot water with salt fish). In the countryside conditions are beyond comment. An expectant mother awaiting confinement must make a journey of three to six days to find a hospital.

Education. An example of the fine education in the Cameroons is the fact that there are two classes in one class-room and one student teacher for every three classes. The registration of children in the kindergarten is carried out very discreetly. A notice says: "The enrolment list is closed"; then a year later the child has reached the agelimit. What will the child who has passed the agelimit turn into - an educated person or an idler? (See page 271 of the annual report of the French Government on the administration of the Cameroons). Such in a few words are the services rendered to the Cameroons by France.

Sir, the Cameroonian people look forward above all to the early arrival of a United Nations Mission to the Territory; the majority of the members of the mission should be representatives of non-Administering Powers.

The Cameroonian people strongly urge that the passport of their representative, Ruben Um Nyobe, be visaed in order that he may go to Paris to carry out the mission with which he has been entrusted by the political officers of our Movement.

Why does the French Government often forbid our leaders to travel?

It is these points that our Local Committee has the honour to bring to your attention now by summarizing the repressive measures taken.

We have the honour, etc.

Douala, 15 April 1955.

(Signed) Local Committee of Bonelecké-Bonalembé - AKWA - Douala.
