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COUNCIL



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PETITION FROM MR. ALBERT MBOM CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS
UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85 of the rules of
procedure of the Trusteeship Council)

Mbôm Albert
Farmer
Memel Kamerun under French Administration
Eséka

Memel, 22 November 1956

Petition

To the Chairman, Fourth Committee, Eleventh Session, United Nations, New York
Sir,

Since 1955 the French Government has if anything intensified its campaign of brutality in our territory. On 19 February 1955 the Pré administration passed emergency decree No. 1323, prohibiting and proscribing all meetings.

On the strength of this the Kamerunian people, unarmed and without any means of defence, were massacred in May '55. Since 22 June 1955, one would think our land was the private property of the lordly French with their menials, mercenaries and valets. They have used all sorts of threats, but with no effect on the people of Kamerun, in spite of their destruction of our property and their rules and regulations. I was almost beaten to death and tortured on 5 July, 1956, when they tried to find out why I had joined the National Movement. On 12 January 1956 they confiscated all my belongings. On 25 September 1956 they ordered me to appear before the tribunal on 3 October 1956 to revoke the petition I had presented to the visiting United Nations Mission (No. 384).

Five times I had to defend my claim to my home. The French Government has seized our land and forests, turning them over to the Forestry Company without any consideration for the indigenous population, ignoring the fact that Messrs. Guerin and Co. have moved in.

On 4 November 1956 two of their work-people were lost in the forest, and the new Governor was told: workmen of yours are missing. He replied: If it turns out to be true that the people of Memel have killed them, no one will come out of the village alive. Some hours later they were seen coming out of the bush - another trumped-up affair.

To fool world opinion, the Colonialists have put the blame on the people's organizations in our country ever since the time of the massacres in May and have dissolved them or imprisoned their most popular leaders. Sir, we are living in a colony and are victims of the old treatment meted out to the negroes.

The object of these acts is to stifle our most legitimate aspirations. Below I summarize the position once and for all:

(a) Decree of 13 July 1955:

Let us recall first of all that the UPC was dissolved by a decree of the French Council of Ministers dated 13 July 1955, and based on the law of 10 January 1936 designed to suppress associations or de facto groups attempting to organize armed demonstrations in the streets. More specifically, before an association or group can be proscribed, it must in structure and military organization constitute a combat unit or private militia, and its operations must be such as to threaten the security of the national territory or to attempt by force to establish a republican form of government.

(b) Loi-cadre

The Kamerun people do not want the loi-cadre. They refuse to participate in these elections planned under the loi-cadre. They will not vote.

International Trusteeship System Article 76 b: to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence, as may be provided by the terms of each trusteeship agreement.

The loi-cadre is not in accordance with the proclamation of 22 April 1955, relating to the purposes of the forthcoming elections.

We reiterate our request that the United Nations should send a commission to help Kamerun establish the new State.

We repeat that we shall not participate in the forthcoming elections, by virtue of this joint proclamation.

We consider the visit of the last Visiting Mission as taking the place of a referendum.

We urge the United Nations to hear the delegates of the Kamerun Nationalist Movements.

We feel sure that the United Nations, as our protector, and the fountain head of the law, will not allow a country like Kamerun to be legally bound by the vote of others, mixed together as they are in the loi-cadre. We shall protest against it and refuse to accept it.

As the United Nations has heard our protests it will not allow us to continue this purposeless life in the misery we have been suffering recently.

Our aim is the immediate Independence and unification of our beloved Kamerun.

I have the honour to be, etc.

Done in the maquis, 22 November 1956

(Signed) Mbôm Albert
