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PETITION FROM THE SOMALI YOUTH LEAGUE, BRANCH OF GARDO
CONCERNING SOMALILAND UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION

Note by the Secretary-General: In accordance with rule 84 and supplementary rules F and L of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the Trusteeship Council, to the Government of Italy as the Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of Somaliland, and to the Governments of Colombia, Egypt, and the Philippines as members of the Advisory Council for the Trust Territory of Somaliland, a communication dated 30 September 1951 from the Somali Youth League, Branch of Gardo, concerning the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian administration.

This communication was transmitted to the Secretary-General by the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in East Africa.

Memorandum for the United Nations Visiting Mission

- (1) We thank God and the United Nations for the visit of the Visiting Mission, for which we have longed. Our greatest wish was to be able, some day, to tell you all our desires. We beg you, gentlemen of the Visiting Mission, to examine our claims and to judge them for what they are worth.
- (2) Since Great Britain handed over the administration of the Territory, Italy has not kept the engagement taken before the UN. Putting aside the trusteeship regulations, Italy has reimposed the former colonial regulations inherited from the Fascist Government.
- (3) An old brick house was given to us by the British Administration, because it was uninhabitable. To make any use of it whatsoever we were obliged to spend an enormous amount of money, some S/3,000. On 26 June 1946 the repairs were finished and the same day we opened the local branch of our party. Almost as soon as the Italian Administration came back to power we were ordered to leave the house on the grounds that it belongs to the Italian Administration, while to our knowledge Italy renounced all her former African possessions to the UN, and even published the fact in the newspapers. We of the SYL Committee said that we were ready to leave the house provided the Administration refunded our expenditure. The Administration's only answer was "Leave the house immediately otherwise we shall put all of you in jail". In conformity with such an order we left the house without getting back our money.
- (4) On 21 December 1950 we sought permission to build a new house in front of the Gardo school on a piece of land that does not belong to anybody. We were unable to obtain this permission because the so-called L.P.S. Party opposed us. The local authority backed the L.P.S. Party because the L.P.S. favours Italy. It is unfair that the AFIS should favour some parties and some classes of the people. Up to now we have not been able to get the land.
- (5) On 4 April 1951 we wrote a telegram lodging a protest about the house. This telegram was addressed to the following: the Chief Administrator of Somaliland for the United Nations, and the Secretary of the SYL of Migiurtinia, Mogadiscio. The official of our town was unwilling to send our telegram, but we protested so much that eventually he agreed to send it. Yet our telegram never arrived, as the Headquarters of our Party in Mogadiscio informed us.

/So we

So we protested again to the local authority, which admitted that our telegram had not been sent and offered to refund the fee we had paid. We were given this money. We believe that no other Administration applies such a system. Only Fascists can be so unfair.

(6) From the very moment that Italy came to power, her one aim has been to terrorize the Somali people, forgetting her pledge as soon as she set her foot on our unfortunate soil. Yet, before coming to our country, Italy claimed in all the newspapers of the world that she was no longer Fascist but had established a truly democratic government. And Italy also promised to observe the trusteeship rules but up to now not one has been followed in Somaliland. All Members of the UN must by now know that Italy is not worthy of any trusteeship administration and we pray God and the United Nations to grant us our fundamental freedom.

(7) On 12 September 1951 a party of young members of the S.Y.L. were sitting in front of the Mosque. As it was a holiday for us, the feast of ARAFA, these young people had gone out for a walk and were awaiting the hour for prayer. After a short while, a party of about 45 men, armed with clubs and stones, rushed at our boys, who were roughly beaten and ran away, because they were only eight youths against a party of 45 men, all members of the L.P.S. Half an hour later the police arrived to inquire what had happened. They were told everything, and, moreover, they were able to see for themselves the 45 armed men, who were still there with their clubs. Nevertheless the Police did not arrest anyone, for reasons we never found out. These facts were later reported to the Resident of Gardo, who only appeared anxious to know which side had prevailed. When informed that the SYL had been put to flight, he said: "I have been waiting for that good news since this morning, but better late than never."

We called on the Resident to deliver our account of the facts. He answered that he could not place anybody under arrest since none of us had been killed and he suggested that we should come to an agreement with the L.P.S. We answered that we would call on nobody but that if the local authority remained unwilling to solve these problems we would appeal to a higher authority.

We also

We also want you to know that these people belonging to the L.P.S. Party bear the name of "terrorists" and are paid by the Residence as "salaried workers" while in fact they are not true tribal chiefs.

(9) In our small and poverty-stricken community, there is no justice and nobody can obtain what he is entitled to but ^{has} to comply with everything he is requested to do.

(10) A man by the name of Lucano Emilio was sent here by the Administration as a schoolmaster. Instead of fulfilling his duty as a schoolmaster he is taking part in politics among the people, creating discord among the inhabitants.

(11) We wish you to know that before your arrival in Gardo our hospital was an utter pig-sty and that it is only in these last few days that it has been painted and put in order. But it still lacks the medicines necessary for the population and there are no doctors.

Gardo's real needs

(a) Real schools and trained schoolmasters.

(b) A well-equipped hospital, medicines and a doctor.

(c) Road maintenance, new wells and cattle troughs.

(d) A general rise in wages, for workers do not get more than

S/2 a day and the cost of living here is very high.

(e) A well organized service for removing refuse, because since

the British Administration left nobody cares about

public health here.

(f) The frontier between Migiurtinia and Somaliland should be open,

for a good many reasons, for both trade and the grazing of

the livestock of both territories.

(g) We would also like the Administration/build a "meschinopole" (?)

We trust that our request will be carefully examined. We pay our homage and our deepest thanks in advance.

The committee of the S.Y.L., Gardo.

Warsama Daele and others