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COMMUNICATION FROM "ONE KAMERUN" NATIONAL SECRETARIAT AT KUMBA  
CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION AND THE  
CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

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ONE KAMERUN (O.K.)

National Secretariat  
P.O. Box 49, Kumba  
Southern Kamerun

TCH.E/NDT

14 October 1958

No. 386/OK

Open letter to the Governor-General  
High Commissioner of Kamerun  
at Lagos

Sir,

We are writing to you most respectfully to ascertain your views on the administration and future of Kamerun, with respect to its future relations with the United Kingdom. We know that for a long time your Government's policy has been more or less liberal with regard to the Kamerunian people. But it would seem that certain incidents which have occurred in the western zone of our country, or in the zone at present under your administration, took place on your orders.

We are referring more specifically to the arrest of Noubi Janvier, Financial Secretary of One Kamerun.

Before coming to the main point of our letter, we should like to inform you of the circumstances of this arrest which, in our opinion, was absolutely illegal. During the night of 4 October 1958, Mr. Noubi Janvier was arrested at Kumba by the Franco-British police and brutally taken away to a French gaol.

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We consider that Mr. Noubi, as an alien and a political refugee who had spent three consecutive years at Kumba, should in any case have been dealt with first under British law and should even have received a summons from the British police, since, as a regular officer of a legal party, he had never acted as a fugitive.

According to the police, Mr. Noubi was regarded as a criminal. In order to satisfy public opinion, we tried to obtain proofs of his crime, namely, the offence, the place of the offence, the means, the accomplices, the motives, the methods, the time and the witnesses, but no incriminating evidence was supplied to us when we applied to the police, which clearly shows the brazen complicity of the United Kingdom in the Noubi case. In the first place, the arrest was made by night and so there were no charge proceedings which would be considered satisfactory under British law; secondly, the person thus arrested did not enjoy the privilege of an accused person, namely, of appearing before an English court of law; and thirdly, even if the arrest had been made without the assistance, in person, of the French police, we would be obliged to inform you that neither the elementary respect nor the "Jus Gentium" enjoyed by accused persons of all races and creeds under article 5 of the Human Rights were observed, for as soon as he was seized, Mr. Noubi was brutally ill-treated, although he offered no resistance.

We would take the liberty of quoting the words spoken by a leading Frenchman in 1885. President Jules Ferry stated during a debate in the French Parliament that the Declaration of Human Rights was not made for negroes.

Do you intend to revive this old idea in this age of Zeta, now that the trumpet call to the independence of peoples has sounded? We hope that you will answer "No", for it is high time that the future relations between Kamerun and the United Kingdom were put on a sound footing. Taking into account the services which Kamerun rendered your Government during the last war, do you not believe that there would have been a gulf of hatred between France and the United Kingdom if the latter had handed de Gaulle over to Hitler in 1940? Similarly, it will be difficult to establish agreement between our country and yours, if your Government feebly allows itself to be led astray by the acts of the evil Frenchmen who, since 1955, have been requesting the repatriation of all the political refugees

whom your Government is protecting in western Kamerun. We have no intention of shielding criminals, but we ask that the local laws should be applied. Your Government is damaging a hitherto friendly agreement between it and our people, since it has often shown itself to be more liberal than the French Government. Your Government is acting like a gentleman in court clothes who, nevertheless, stains himself with wine. We know how far your Government has carried its liberality, contrary to the ideas of the evil French rulers.

You have often remained neutral on Kamerunian politics, but it is time you realized which way the wind is blowing and in which direction the community of nations is developing. Kamerun must be independent, whatever the wind or tide.

The only proof of the position which Kamerun took with regard to your Government in 1940 would be to put an end to this legal comedy and to recognize our immediate unification and independence as facts based on history and law.

We hope that you will sympathize with us and that our ills will be remedied. This remedy can only be the rapid liberation of the patriot Noubi Janvier, respect for the rights of refugees and your co-operation in achieving our complete and immediate independence.

In conclusion, we would inform you that, since your Government did not hand over de Gaulle and his followers to Hitler, it would be unjust and irresponsible of it to deny the rights of political refugees, in the light of the principles of the Human Rights to which England has solemnly subscribed.

We have the honour to be etc.,

(Signed) J.E. Wanke, official of O.K.

(Signed) (illegible) Tch. Tchemiap Elie

(Signed) (illegible)

Copies to:

1. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, London
2. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, London
3. Representative of the High Commissioner for Kamerun, Buea
4. Representative of the Police Superintendent, Buea
5. The Prime Minister of Southern Kamerun, Buea
6. Fenner Brockway, House of Commons, London
7. United Nations, New York
8. International League for the Rights of Man, New York
9. League of Refugees, New York
10. International Red Cross, New York
11. Federation of Youth, Budapest (Hungary)
12. Afro-Asian Bloc, Cairo (Egypt)
13. The Prime Minister of France, Paris (France)
14. Students of "Black" Africa in France (Paris)
15. Daily Times, Lagos (Nigeria)

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