

UNITED NATIONS

TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

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PETITIONS CONCERNING THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

215th Report of Standing Committee on Petition

Chairman: Mr. R. Jaipal (India)

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- 1. At its 478th, 479th and 484th meetings on 5, 6, and 17 March 1958, the Standing Committee on Petitions, composed of the representatives of China, France, India, Italy, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland examined the petitions concerning the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration which are listed in the preceding table of contents.
- 2. Mr. X. Deniau participated in the examination as the Special Representative of the Administering Authority concerned.
- 5. The Standing Committee submits herewith to the Council its report on these petitions and recommends, in accordance with rule 90, paragraph 6, of the Council's rules of procedure, that the Council decide that no special information is required concerning the action taken on resolutions I-X.

- I. Petitions from Mr. Léopold Njapa Kamadjou (T/PET.5/954) and the Young Kameroonians of Batouri (T/PET.5/956)
- 1. In a letter dated 7 September 1956 (T/PET.5/954), Mr. Njapa Kamadjou, Secretary of the New-Bell Station Branch of the JDC, makes a complaint about the acts of the Chief Subdivisional Officer of Bafoussam. In support of his allegations, he mentions acts of brutality committed by lorry-loads of troops at Bamoungoum market on 10 June 1956, on the orders of the Chief Subdivisional Officer. After a clash, Ngoutchegni Spsenehe Michel and Soh Ngandjou Mbouda were killed, and thirty people taken to prison and brutally treated. On the following day, after a protest demonstration, many persons, men, women and children were arrested, taken off to prison and "clubbed".

The petitioner then gives a list of thirteen killed, twenty injured, fifteen persons arrested, and nine persons whose property was looted after these incidents.

- 2. He concludes by reporting that there has also been looting in the Subdivision of Bafang, in the Bamiléké Region.
- 3. In its reply to this petition (T/OBS.5/110, section 3), the Administering Authority refers the Trusteeship Council to its observations in reply to the petition T/PET.5/910 relating to the Bamougoun incidents. It once again states

1/ Note by the Secretariat:

These observations, already reproduced in document T/OBS.5/89, section 5, were as follows: "It is true that on 10 and 11 June 1956 arrests were carried out by the local administrative authorities in the village of Bamoungoum and Bafoussam for assault and battery against the Commandant of the gendarmerie and threats against the Chief Subdivisional Officer.

The accused in these two cases were tried on 15 and 16 June 1956 by the Correctional Court at Dschang; four of them were sentenced to three years' imprisonment and a fine of 25,000 francs and one of them to five years' imprisonment, ten years' banishment and a fine of 25,000 francs.

The other accused received sentences of two to three years' imprisonment.

Administrative and judicial investigations showed that there were no deaths or injuries, contrary to the petitioner's false allegations."

The Secretariat would also remind the Standing Committee on Petitions that T/PET.5/910 has already been covered in section X of document T/C.2/L.320.

emphatically that there were neither killed nor injured and that the allegations of the petitioners are untrue, entirely without foundation and completely imaginary.

4. The Young Kameroonians of Batouri, in a letter received on 26 November 1956 (T/PET.5/986), which lists fifty-two names, report the state of unrest prevailing in certain regions in the Cameroons, particularly in the Eamileké Region. They recall that the French administration has dissolved the three progressive movements in the country. Petitions addressed to the United Nations and the French Parliament have produced no result. They report an incident which occurred at Bamoungoum, when thirteen people were killed, twenty arrested, and the village property was confiscated by the Administration.

- 5. The petitioners state that they are opposed to the application of the loi-cadre, and request the United Nations to intervene in order to "stop this procedure which will integrate us into the French Union".
- 6. With regard to the events of 1955 and its general policy, the Administering Authority, in its observations on this petition (T/OBS.5/110, section 6), draws attention to the observations made by its representative in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly. With regard to the incidents at Bamoungoum it refers to its observations on petition T/PET.5/910 of 12 June 1956. 1/2
- 7. The petitions were examined and discussed at the 478th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.478 and 484).
- 8. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proposed, at the 484th meeting of the Committee, that the following paragraph be added to the text of the draft resolution before the Committee:
 - "2. Recommends to the Administering Authority to take the necessary measures to re-establish and guarantee in practice the democratic rights and freedoms of the indigenous inhabitants of this area."

This paragraph was rejected by 3 votes to one, with 2 abstentions.

9. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 3 votes to one, with 2 abstentions, draft resolution I, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

^{1/} Note by the Secretariat: See paragraph 3 above.

II. Petition from Mr. T. Jules Atemkeng (T/PET.5/955)

- In a letter dated 8 September 1956, the petitioner complains that he has 1. been unjustly dismissed from the Accounts Department of the French West Africa Company (CFAO), after three years and seven months of service. He also complains that he was earning only seven thousand francs, despite the fact that he was married and had children, that his daily wage was cut during July 1955 without good cause, and that he received no bonus at the end of the year. Since that time he has received no payment for the overtime he has worked to make up the days lost during his illness; in 1953, the work schedule and the hours of starting and finishing were altered in violation of the regulations of the Labour Code: he alleges that his official title on his certificate on the day of his dismissal was changed because he had asked for a holiday after working three years and seven months without a holiday or rest-days; the employees of the Company are authorized to buy goods on credit at the commissariat up to the amount of their monthly wages, with the result that on pay-days they have already spent their entire wages for the month.
- 2. The petitioner complains that there is discrimination against Africans when they try to bring disputes concerning their dismissals before the courts. He concludes by demanding immediate unification and independence for the Cameroons.
- 3. He attaches, as an annex, a copy of a letter addressed by him on 23 October 1956 to the Director of the French West Africa Company, Marseilles, giving an account of all the grievances listed above.
- 4. The Administering Authority observes (T/OBS.5/104, section 5) that the petitioner has never informed the Labour Inspection Service or the Douala Labour Court of his dispute with the French West Africa Company (CFAO). Nevertheless, a thorough investigation has been made and shows that:
 - (a) Mr. Atemkeng, who was engaged as a clerk on 16 July 1952 and subsequently became an assistant machine operator, was terminated from his employment on 3 November 1955 because of the abolition of his post, the accounting work for the Douala branch having been taken over by the Company's headquarters at Marseilles.

- (b) Mr. Atemkeng, who was engaged at a starting wage of 7,000 francs a month, was reclassified on 14 August 1955 to category 5B of the collective agreement, with a wage of 12,000 francs a month.
- (c) Mr. Atemkeng in fact did not receive the end-of-year bonuses in 1955, because he was no longer present on 31 December as the regulations in force demand.
- (d) At the time of his discharge, he received the sums and allowances to which he was entitled by the laws, regulations and by custom, namely:

wages from 1 to 30 November 1955 12,000 Frs.
discharge allowance 5,650 "
compensatory allowance in lieu of paid holidays 18,720 "
allowance in lieu of notice 12,000 "

- (e) The petitioner worked only seventeen days during July and was paid only for that number of days because he did not submit a medical certificate for the days of absence as required by the Labour Code.
- (f) The complainant never worked any overtime to make up for the time lost.
- (g) The hours of work of the CFAO as follows: 7.30 a.m. to 12 noon and 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday: 7.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. - in all a forty-hour week.
- (h) The goods credit system mentioned by Mr. Atemkeng is not compulsory and credit can be granted only up to the amount of one-half of the monthly wage.
- 5. The petition was examined and discussed at the 478th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.478 and 484).
- 6. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 4 votes to none with 2 abstentions draft resolution II, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

III. Petition from Mr. Jean-Marie Judjou (T/PET.5/982)

- 1. In a letter dated 27 November 1956, the petitioner complains that he had to pay the market tax in order to try to sell two chickens there. He also complains of the taxes which children who are not strong enough to work have to pay, and of the fact that all building work has to be paid for.
- 2. The Administering Authority observes (T/OBS.5/107, section 2) that it does not understand the object of this petition.
- 3. The petition was examined and discussed at the 478th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.478 and 484).
- 4. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 4 votes to none, with 2 abstentions, draft resolution III, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

IV. Petition from Mrs. Josepha Nana (T/PET.5/990)

- 1. In her petition of 24 November 1956, Mrs. Nana, the mother of four children, complains of a seizure by the customs service at Loum on 16 July 1955. The customs forcibly took from her the sum of 300,780 francs, which she was carrying with her in her capacity as the treasurer of a family bank at N'kongsamba, and for which she says she received a receipt for 3,780 francs. She has not known the whereabouts of her husband since the incidents of May 1955.
- 2. The petitioner condemns the methods used, the recourse to force and the actions of the French administration and the French colonialists. She calls for the unification and independence of the Cameroons, the discharge of political prisoners and the rescinding of the Act of 13 July 1955. She endorses the Joint Declaration of April 1955 and protests against the integration of the Cameroons into "any Administering Authority's colonial empire".
- 3. The Administering Authority confirms (T/OBS.5/116, section 6) that Mrs. Josepha Nana was searched by the customs at Loum-Bakossi on 16 July 1955, and states that she was exporting currency without a declaration; she had with her the sum of 29,750 francs, concealed in some tapioca. Under the regulations in force, she was sentenced to a fine of 3,780 francs, for which receipt No. 11 was issued on the same day. Moreover, Mrs. Nana has never been treasurer of any family undertaking at N'kongsemba.
- 4. The petition was examined and discussed at the 478th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.478 and 484).
- 5. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 4 votes to none, with 2 abstentions draft resolution IV, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

V. Petition from Mr. Elie Lavater Ngué (T/PET.5/994)

- 1. In his petition of 12 November 1956, the petitioner protests against the behaviour of Mr. Hubert, Chief Subdivisional Officer at Lolodorff, who caused Ndongo Matthias, chief of the Memel group, to be beaten, though no reason was given for the action. He says that he has been in the maquis for one year and seven months and mentions the death of a maquisard, Tate Abraham, principal secretary of the western section of the ASC. He summarizes the "civilizing work" of France in the Cameroons as: rape, massacres, beatings, stealing and looting, savage repression, disregard of the law.
- 2. The Administering Authority, in its observations (T/OBS.5/107, section 3) states that Mr. Elie Lavater, a member of the UPC, is at present living in the Cameroons under British administration, and the Administering Authority has been unable to contact him to check his allegations and obtain further information concerning them.
- 3. The petition was examined and discussed at the 478th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.478 and 484).
- 4. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 4 votes to 1, with 1 abstention, draft resolution V, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

VI. Petition from Jean Yamengam (T/PET.5/1039)

- 1. In his letter of 29 November 1956, the petitioner, a planter at Manengoteng, complains of search made by "police and soldiers" on 28 November on the premises of the newspaper <u>Cameroun mon Pays</u>. Typewriters were taken away, newspapers torn up and the manager and his employees were roughly handled.
- 2. He requests that a delegation should be sent to put an end to the massacres which were "to begin on 23 December 1956". He rejects the <u>loi-cadre</u> and calls for immediate unification and independence for the Cameroons.
- 3. The Administering Authority states (T/OBS.5/115, section 3) that it is true that the newspaper "Kamerun mon Pays" was seized on 28 November 1956. At the same time, the Chief of the Wouri Region lodged a complaint against it for dissemination of false news. It is not true that there was any brutal behaviour. Yamengam Jean was not present during the events he reports. A warrant of arrest having been issued against him on 30 September 1955, he moved to Tombel, in the British zone, since when he has not been seen in the Cameroons under French administration.
- 4. The petition was examined and discussed at the 478th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.478 and 484).
- 5. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proposed, at the 484th meeting of the Committee, that the following paragraph be added to the text of the draft resolution before the Committee:
 - "2. Recommends to the Administering Authority to guarantee strictly the rights of the indigenous inhabitants to freedom of speech."

This paragraph was rejected by 3 votes to one, with 2 abstentions.

6. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 3 votes to one, with 2 abstentions, draft resolution VI, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

VII. Petition from Mr. Michel Docgne (T/PET.5/1048)

- 1. In a petition of 4 December 1956, the petitioner, a pupil in the sixth class of the Catholic Mission at Mbouda, alleges that four houses, whose owners he lists, were set on fire at Mbouda on 1 December 1956 on the orders of the High Commissioner. The petitioner protests against the arbitrary nature of the measures and requests the unification and independence of the Cameroons.
- 2. The Administering Authority states (T/OBS.5/117, section 7) that there is no Catholic College with a sixth class either at Mbouda proper or in the subdivision. It adds that the petitioner could not be identified and the names of the persons listed in this somewhat obscure petition were unknown. The High Commissioner had not gone to Mbouda on 1 December.
- 3. The petition was examined and discussed at the 479th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.479 and 484).
- 4. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 3 votes to none, with 3 abstentions, draft resolution VII, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

VIII. Petition from the people of Balessing (T/PET.5/1084)

- 1. In an undated petition, the petitioners state that they went to Dschang on 20 November 1956 at the summons of the Chief Subdivisional Officer, in connexion with "a controversy with the Balessing Chief". They report that an encounter took place in which some forty persons were wounded by "moniteurs européens".
- 2. The petitioners protest against the brutality and ill-treatment that the villagers of Balessing have received ever since 1952 at the hands of Chief Tiogning, who became a French citizen, and state that they have received no reply to their former protests.
- 3. There follows a list of expenses incurred in the transport of the Balessing tribe to Dschang, in compliance with the aforesaid summons.
- 4. The Administering Authority states (T/OBS.5/116, section 8) that it is true that between 500 and 600 persons, originally from Balessing and residing at N'kongsamba and Douala, went to the Dschang subdivision on 20 November 1956 to protest against decisions taken by Chief Tiogning on land matters. The Chief Regional Officer was obliged to clear the approaches to the public buildings, but no shots were fired on this occasion. At most, a few persons may have been slightly bruised. A deputation was later received by the authorities.
- 5. The Administering Authority also states that Chief Tiogning is not a French citizen. Complaints have been lodged against the Chief and are being investigated.
- 6. The petition was examined and discussed at the 479th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.479 and 484).
- 7. The text of the draft resolution which the Committee had before it at its 484th meeting contained the following paragraph which was rejected by 3 votes to one, with 2 abstentions:
 - "2. Recommends to the Administering Authority to take necessary measures which would lead to the establishment of representative organs of local government based on elections in the region, and also to safeguard of the rights and freedoms of the indigenous inhabitants of the region."
- 8. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 3 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions, draft resolution VIII, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

IX. Petition from Mr. Paul Ngondjeu (T/PET.5/1095 and Adds.1 and 2)

- 1. In a letter of 17 January 1957 (T/FET.5/1095), the petitioner, Municipal Counsellor at M'Balmayo, asks the Trusteeship Council to assist him in recovering certain sums of money which seemed to be due to him by the SCOA. He asserts he was dismissed from the firm in January 1956 for no specific reason and without notice, after having been hired as a salesman at Sangmelima on 12 December 1949. His letters of protest to the head office in Paris and to the Labour Inspectorate at Yaoundé were not answered. He complains that he is not even allowed an advance on his deposit in order to provide for the needs of his family of three children and two wives.
- 2. He attaches copies of the letters he sent on 15 August 1956 to the Director of the firm, notifying him of payments made in respect of his bond and claiming a certificate of employment, his salary for the period in which he was unemployed without the certificate, a family rental allowance, a seniority allowance, travel expenses for his return home 500 kilometres from Douala, his commissions on his turnover, reimbursement of his bond, his annual bonuses and a complete current account for the period in which he was manager. He also encloses the copy of a letter he sent to the Labour Inspectorate at Yaoundé, claiming payment of his one per cent commission on sales amounting to 106,692,371 france.
- 3. In a second letter, dated 21 January 1957, the petitioner reiterates his complaints concerning the non-payment of the commission which he considers owing to him for sales, and accuses the SCOA of having misappropriated the sums he paid in as a bond.
- 4. In a third letter, dated 15 April 1957 (T/PET.5/1095/Add.1), the petitioner transmits a copy of a pay slip of November 1955, together with birth certificates of his three children.
- 5. In a fourth letter, dated 19 July (T/PET.5/1095/Add.2), Mr. Ngondjeu asks the United Nations "to have a passport issued for him" so that he may state his case in person.
- 6. The petitioner, in a letter of 2 January 1958 (T/PET.5/1095/Add.3), informs the President of the Trusteeship Council that he has received a letter from the "Department of Foreign Affairs" stating that there was no objection to his going to New York to submit his petition in person to the Council, but that the

journey would have to be at his own expense. The petitioner claims, however, that his expenses should be borne by the SCOA, since his petition was prompted entirely by that company's action. He wishes to know when he will have to appear before the Trusteeship Council so that he may obtain his passport in time.

- 7. The Administering Authority states (T/OBS.5/115, section 4) that the SCOA had brought an action against Ngondjeu Paul for misappropriation of funds. The case is being investigated at Yaoundé. Since penal cases take precedence over civil cases, the Labour Inspectorate, which has been informed of the dispute, must await the decision of the courts before it can determine what action should be taken on the petitioner's request.
- 8. The Administering Authority points out that it is not true that a certificate of employment was withheld from Mr. Ngondjeu for a year. He was given one on 1 May 1956. Moreover, on 11 April 1957 the Labour Inspectorate informed him that he would be given a copy if he had lost the original.
- 9. The petition was examined and discussed at the 479th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.479 and 484).
- 10. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 4 votes to none, with 2 abstentions draft resolution IX, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

X. Petition from Mr. Basile Wafo (T/PET.5/1100)

- 1. In a petition of 10 January 1957, sent from Kumba, the writer, a planter, complains that his two-month-old child was murdered by "the French colonialists". The child was allegedly killed because he had been named after Moumié Felix, the leader of the UPC in the Cameroons. The petitioner dwells on the brutality of the repressive measures employed, and concludes by demanding the immediate unification and independence of the Cameroons.
- 2. The Administering Authority states (T/OBS.5/116, section 10) that it is true that Wafo Baile's wife lost her child at the beginning of 1955, but that it died at the home of its mother, who never at any time applied for public or private medical assistance.
- 3. The petition was examined and discussed at the 479th and 484th meetings of the Standing Committee (documents T/C.2/SR.479 and 484).
- 4. The representative of the Soviet Union drew attention to the difference in the dates of birth of the child as given by the petitioner, namely, 25 December 1956, and as given in the observations of the Administering Authority, namely, at the beginning of 1955.
- 5. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proposed, at the 484th meeting of the Committee, that the following paragraph be added to the text of the draft resolution before the Committee:
 - "2. Recommends to the Administering Authority that it investigate the complaint of the petitioner regarding the death of the son of Mrs. Julienne Kakapping born on 25 December 1956."

This paragraph was rejected by 3 votes to one, with 2 abstentions.

6. At its 484th meeting, the Committee approved by 3 votes to one, with 2 abstentions, draft resolution X, annexed to the present report, which it recommends that the Council adopt.

Annex: Draft resolutions proposed by the Committee

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I. Petitions from Mr. Leopold Njapa Kamedjou (T/PET.5/954) and from the young Kameroonians of Batouri (T/PET.5/986)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petitions from Mr. Leopold Njapa Kamadjou and from the young Cameroonians of Batouri concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/954 and 986, T/OES.5/110, T/L.829).

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Draws the attention of the petitioners to the observations of the Administering Authority.

II. Petition from Mr. T. Jules Atemkeng (T/PET.5/955)

The Trusteeship Council, ...

Having examined the petition from Mr. T. Jules Atemkeng concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/955, T/OBS.5/104, T/L.829).

<u>Draws the attention</u> of the petitioner to the observations of the Administering Authority and to the statements of its special representative.

III. Petition from Mr. Jean-Marie Judjou (T/PET.5/982)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petition from Mr. Jean-Marie Judjou concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/982, T/OBS.5/107, T/L.829).

Takes note of the observations of the Administering Authority.

IV. Petition from Mrs. Josepha Nana (T/PET.5/990)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petition from Mrs. Josepha Nana concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/990, T/OBS.5/116, T/L.829).

<u>Draws the attention</u> of the petitioner to the observations of the Administering Authority and to the statements of its special representative.

V. Petition from Mr. Elie Lavater Ngué (T/FET.5/994)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petition from Mr. Elie Lavater Ngué concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/994, T/OBS.5/107, T/L.829).

Takes note of the observations of the Administering Authority.

VI. Petition from Mr. Jean Yamengam (T/PET.5/1039)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petition from Mr. Jean Yamengam concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/1039, T/OBS.5/115, T/L.829).

Draws the attention of the petitioner to the observations of the Administering Authority.

VII. Petition from Mr. Michel Docgne (T/PET.5/1048)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petition from Mr. Michel Docgne concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/1048, T/OBS.5/117, T/L.829).

/ ...

Takes note of the observations of the Administering Authority.

VIII. Petition from the people of Balessing (T/PET.5/1084)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petition from the people of Balessing concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/1084, T/OBS.5/116, T/L.829).

Draws the attention of the petitioners to the observations of the Administering Authority and to the statement of its special representative.

IX. Petition from Mr. Paul Ngondjeu (T/PET.5/1095 and Add.1-3)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petition from Mr. Paul Ngondjeu concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/1095 and Add.1-3, T/OBS.5/115, T/L.829).

<u>Draws the attention</u> of the petitioner to the observations of the Administering Authority, in particular that his case is being investigated at Yaoundé and that he would be given a copy of has certificate of employment if he has lost the original.

X. Petition from Mr. Basile Wafo (T/PET.5/1100)

The Trusteeship Council,

Having examined the petition from Mr. Basile Wafo concerning the Cameroons under French administration in consultation with France as the Administering Authority concerned (T/PET.5/1100, T/OBS.5/116, T/L.829).