

UNITED NATIONS  
TRUSTEESHIP  
COUNCIL



GENERAL  
T/462  
16 February 1950  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

Dual Distribution

17 MAR 1950  
[Handwritten signature and initials]

Sixth Session  
Item 17 of the agenda

REPORT OF THE FIRST UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSION  
TO THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE CAMEROONS UNDER  
FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

Letter dated 8 February 1950 from the Chairman of the  
Visiting Mission to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, in accordance with the Trusteeship Council's Resolution 108(V) of 20 June 1949, and in accordance with Rule 99 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council, the Report of the first United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration.

I have pleasure in informing you that this report has been unanimously adopted by the members of the Visiting Mission.

The Mission has decided to release this report on 16 February, 1950.

(Signed) Awni Khalidy

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FOREWORD

After consultation with the Administering Authorities concerned, the Trusteeship Council, in accordance with Article 87 c of the Charter of the United Nations, decided at the 5th meeting of its fourth session to send a Visiting Mission at the beginning of November 1949 to the four Trust Territories in West Africa - the Cameroons under French administration, the Cameroons under British administration, Togoland under French administration and Togoland under British administration.

The composition of the Mission was discussed and determined by the Council at the 5th and 42nd meetings of its fourth session, the 25th meeting of its fifth session, and at a special session held on 27 September 1949. The following persons were appointed:

- Mr. Awni Khalidy (Iraq), Chairman
- Mr. Alfred Claeys Bouckaert (Belgium)
- Mr. A. Ramos Pedrueza (Mexico)
- Mr. Benjamin Gerig (United States of America)

At the 4th meeting of its fifth session, the Council adopted a resolution (1) in which it set forth the Mission's terms of reference. By these terms the Council:

"Directs the visiting mission to observe the developing political, economic, social and education conditions in the four above-mentioned Trust Territories, their progress towards self-government or independence, and the efforts of their respective Administering Authorities to achieve this and other basic objectives of the International Trusteeship System;

"Directs the visiting mission to give attention, as may be appropriate in the light of discussions in the Trusteeship Council and resolutions adopted by the Council, to issues raised in connection with the annual

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(1) Resolution 108 (V) of 20 June 1949

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reports on the administration of the four Trust Territories concerned and in petitions received by the Trusteeship Council relating to those Trust Territories, and in particular the petitions relating to the Ewe problem in Togoland under French and Togoland under British administration and the petition from the Bakweri Land Committee relating to the Cameroons under British administration;

"Directs the visiting mission to accept or receive petitions and, without prejudice to its acting in accordance with rules 84 and 89 of the rules of procedure, to investigate on the spot, after consultation with the local representative of the Administering Authority concerned, such petitions dealing with the conditions of the indigenous inhabitants as are in its opinion sufficiently important to warrant special investigation;

"Requests the visiting mission to transmit to the Trusteeship Council as soon as possible in accordance with rule 99 of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council a report, on the findings of the mission with such observations and conclusions as the mission may wish to make."

The Mission, accompanied by Dr. Victor Hoo, Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories, as the representative of the Secretary-General, and by five other members of the Secretariat, <sup>(1)</sup> departed from New York by air on 28 October 1949 and arrived in West Africa on 31 October. It visited the Cameroons under British administration from 1 November to 11 November and from 22 November to 24 November; the Cameroons under French administration from 12 November to 26 November; Lagos, Nigeria, the seat of government of the Cameroons under British administration from 27 November to 29 November; Togoland under French administration from 30 November to 8 December; Togoland under British administration from 9 December to 16 December; and Accra, Gold Coast, the seat of government of the latter territory, from 17 December to 18 December.

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(1) M. H. A. Wieschhoff, J. Rapoport, R. Miller, G. D. Howard and A. Groenendyck

The Mission departed from Accra on 19 December and established its headquarters at Geneva on 21 December for the purpose of the writing of its report. In preparing its report, the Mission has considered it convenient to divide it into five self-contained parts, as follows:

Report on the Cameroons under British administration (T/461)

Report on the Cameroons under French administration (T/462)

Report on the Ewe Problem in Togoland under French  
and Togoland under British administration (T/463).

Report on Togoland under French administration (T/464)

Report on Togoland under British administration (T/465)

The Mission would be failing in its duty if it did not take this opportunity to thank all the many men and women who have given it their cooperation, their welcome, their hospitality and their kindness in many a way and manner. The Mission received every courtesy and assistance from the Chiefs and peoples of the territories which it visited. It equally well found the greatest kindness and cooperation in the administrations. It was able to see anybody and anything it wished to see, and all necessary facilities were willingly placed at its disposal. The Mission cannot mention them all by name, for they are legion, but it must thank those responsible officials whose territories it has successively visited, and particularly, in the case of the Cameroons under French administration, Monsieur CASIMIR, Haut Commissaire p.i. de la République Française, and Monsieur RAYNIER, Inspecteur des Affaires administratives, who served as liaison officer with the Mission.

The present volume contains the Mission's report on the Cameroons under French administration, which is hereby submitted to the Trusteeship Council in accordance with the terms of reference of the Mission.

Geneva

February 1950.

PART ONE

NARRATIVE OF THE MISSION'S JOURNEY

On 12 November 1949 the Visiting Mission, accompanied by the British Commissioner for the Cameroons, the Resident of Maiduguri and other members of the British Administration, arrived at the northern frontier of the Cameroons under French Administration. They bade farewell to their British hosts and were received by the group of French officials headed by Mr. Raynier, who had come to welcome them.

After changing cars and transferring their luggage, the cavalcade set off for Mora. The highway, wide and well-kept, permitted a high speed reminiscent of excursions in western countries. It was an odd experience to drive past parties of primitive natives going about their usual business.

The country is largely flat, with a trying climate - very hot and very dry. The highway skirts and curves round, at some distance, the chains of hills the barren and uncultivated slopes of which consist of boulder-strewn rock. A trained and watchful eye can make out, here and there, huddled clusters of huts matching the colour and shape of the surrounding rocks. The members of the Mission found some difficulty, even with the help of the administrators accompanying them, to pick them out. The location of these hamlets, perched on the sides and tops of the hills, and their almost perfect camouflage, recalled the not so distant time when these pagan people were compelled to take every precaution to escape the raids of warlike moslem tribes.

In the afternoon the Mission visited the Mora post, with its school, dispensary and administrative centre, and made its first contact with French methods and life in the African territories. The school which the Mission visited was run by a French teacher, and his wife; and the students - clean and tidy boys, all dressed alike, sang French songs extolling "La Patrie". The Mission inspected the pupils' dormitories, well-kept little huts each containing several native beds.

Here the Mission was immediately struck by the principles followed by France in her overseas administration. Without being daunted by any of the differences

between local customs and traditions and European standards and habits, the administration enthusiastically sets about its self-appointed task. It eschews aloofness towards the native population. The success of such methods seems to be merely a question of time and effort.

From Mora the Mission drove to Maroua, the seat of the administration of the north Cameroons region, where it was received by Mr. Casimir, the acting High Commissioner, who had gone to the trouble to fly from Yaoundé to greet the Mission in person. A reception was organized in the home of the chef de région, a practice which was to be repeated all along the route across the Cameroons, enabling the Mission to become acquainted in the shortest possible time with the local officials and notables.

In the course of the next six days, the Mission covered 2,000 kilometres by car and 800 by air. In the central part of the Cameroons they crossed the vast plains inhabited by Moslem Fulani; the rugged and picturesque mountains round Mokolo, densely populated by friendly "pagans"; and the cool and invigorating hill region of Ngaoundere, stopping in several of the populous towns such as Garoua.

It was a colourful spectacle which presented itself to the Mission in the towns and larger villages. The serene, stately and vividly clad notables of the Fulani people who, in their flowing robes, large turbans and richly ornamented weapons, are a living testimony to the strength of Moslem influence in this region for centuries past. The Mission was received in their councils and villages, and impressed by their hospitality and dignity.

When they rode out on their richly caparisoned horses to greet the Mission, they looked for all the world like ruggedly featured knights with their faces marked by self reliance and furrowed by the winds of the desert. Notables on horseback were usually accompanied by footmen, some of whom would emit weird sounds from long metal horns. These Moslem people, always fully clothed, contrasted sharply with the pagans, who were usually unclad or wore nothing but loin-cloths.

Along this route, the Mission was frequently entertained by the notables and village headmen in their customary manner with native demonstrations or sometimes

an improvised play recalling bygone events or ancient traditions.. In one of these villages, the play took the form of the reconstruction of an enemy raid and a counter-attack. Theme and plot were practically non-existent, but there was plenty of zest and expenditure of energy, to the accompaniment of ferocious yells. During the play, the Mission had an opportunity of examining some of the lethal weapons which were obligingly shown them. These demonstrations, always instructive and colourful and varying from one tribe to another, are the traditional way of welcoming visitors to whom it is wished to show respect.

Travelling from the hot dry and dusty country of the upper north, the Mission arrived by Junker planes at Ngaoundere, a high plateau country almost midway between the north and the south of the Cameroons. The appearance of the country changed considerably. The climate was mild and vegetation more abundant. Between Ngaoundere and the capital Yaoundé in the south, the Mission passed through well-watered areas, with pleasing contours, diversified colouring and a relatively cool climate.

Wherever the Mission passed, it was at pains to visit everything that could be visited within the limited time at its disposal. It always began by visiting the administrative headquarters, and then the schools, hospitals, dispensaries, tribal chiefs, various local institutions etc. It noted the development works undertaken by the French administration many of them not yet completed. It was particularly struck by the farm schools and experimental stations set up in various localities to inculcate a knowledge of those subjects best suited to their requirements. It inspected the new harbour installations on the Benoue river at Garoua and undertook the arduous task of travelling some hundred kilometres in order to visit gold-workings near Bétaré-Oya.

This trip was typically African. Leaving the administrative centre of the mining company, the column of cars arrived after a long drive over an extremely narrow track, at a camp on the edge of the bush surrounded with lush, dense vegetation. This was the mine workers' village. The huts of mud and straw were fairly well kept but in no way differed from those of any other bush village. The life of the workers and their families, although engaged in an industry that conjures up ideas of wealth, since it consists of winning from the

earth a most precious substance of paramount value, was harsh and primitive.

The Mission then plunged into the bush by a footpath that could barely accommodate more than one person at a time and arrived at a place worked with tools of a very primitive kind. It was extremely humid, and, as bad luck would have it, a downpour of rain deluged the visitors, lightly clad, as is customary in Africa. After inspecting the workings, they returned to the village, drenched to the skin.

Leaving the grassland area of the northern Cameroons for the forests of the south, the Mission was struck not only by the changed appearance of the landscape but also by the mode of life of the population. The forest dwellers appeared to lead a more carefree existence than the northern tribes. While the latter, in keeping with their environment, were somewhat stern, hardy and meditative, those of the south seemed gayer and always ready to dance, sing and be merry. Sometimes the festivities go on for days and nights. The participants are quite unconcerned by the fact that the monotony of the music and dancing might sorely try the patience of the foreign visitor, and seem to find extreme pleasure in the repetition of these exercises ad infinitum.

The second part of the Mission's trip in the territory covered 9 days. It included a three days' stop at Yaoundé, an air trip of some 200 kilometres from Yaoundé to Foumban, and a car ride of over 500 kilometres from Foumban to Douala over roads which were extremely tortuous and often very bad.

The town of Yaoundé, the capital of the Cameroons under French administration, bears witness to considerable efforts expended in the way of building and development. Being so high above sea level, it enjoys a variable and comparatively cool temperature despite the humidity of the climate during part of the year. It contains many modern houses of European style adapted to tropical needs and presenting a striking contrast to certain native quarters. Although the terrain is not level, the streets are in good condition. The Mission was favourably impressed by the various public services visited. They testify to the attention paid by the administration to the improvement of social conditions and educational and economic development. The hospital, dispensaries, high



school, boys' and girls' schools, domestic science schools, and orphanage form a striking whole. The Mission had an opportunity of talking to the pupils at the domestic science school, and was able, from a few questions, to appreciate the excellent lines on which they are being trained. Here again the Mission noted that the teachers devote themselves wholeheartedly to their work; and the classrooms testify to the efforts of the teaching staff.

While in Yaoundé, the Mission, in order to cope with its manifold tasks, had to split up into several groups. This enabled it to visit several sectors of the Southern Cameroons in a short time and to cover wider areas and investigate more problems than would otherwise have proved possible. While one part of the Mission remained at Yaoundé and spent long hours listening to the numerous requests of hosts of petitioners, other members of the Mission visited such distant places as the medical centre at Ayos and the impressive hospital built by an American mission at Ebolowa. On all these trips members would stop anywhere necessary in order to listen to the people and see conditions for themselves. Work continued even on Sundays; and here perhaps it can appropriately be observed that the Mission did not take a single day's rest from the moment it landed in Africa to the day it left.

In Yaoundé, in addition to its visits to all the official institutions, the Mission studied the living conditions of the detribalized Africans now living in European centres. It held meetings with local groups, attended the Council of Notables, interviewed many petitioners and had a series of conversations with administrative officials, headed by the High Commissioner, to whose co-operation, guidance and hospitality the Mission would like to pay tribute.

On 21 November, the Mission left the capital by air again by Junker plane, for Foumban, the seat of an important sultanate and a centre of native arts and crafts. This station possesses a most interesting museum containing many fine specimens of African art. In addition to the museum, the Mission visited the local school, the dispensary, a co-operative factory for processing the coffee produced by native planters, and several workshops where local craftsmen produce the remarkable wood and copper articles and the cloth and embroideries for which this corner of the Cameroons is renowned. The Mission was glad to note how native arts are being fostered.

In the centre of the town of Foumban, composed like all African towns of grass-thatched mud huts, stands a huge brick castle erected by the German administration for the use of the present Sultan's grandfather. In front of this castle, which is now in such a dilapidated state that only the huge entrance hall with its display of drums and various ornaments can be visited safely, the Mission was received by the Sultan and entertained by a spectacle depicting scenes in the history of the tribe. The play, consisting of a succession of independent tableaux, was performed by actors of both sexes; how the Africans made war, called their men to arms, took prisoners, inflicted punishment; how mothers gave their male offspring a taste for war by making them drink blood; how the wives of a deceased notable were left to his successor and how the latter accepted that legacy; how justice was administered in the old days - all this and other memories and customs were re-enacted before the crumbling palace in the smoky light of paraffin lamps and large wood fires.

The region of Foumban and, further south, those of Dschang and Nkongsamba are situated at a high altitude; their soil is rich and their agriculture fairly advanced. The Mission was impressed by the extent of the cocoa and coffee plantations owned by Africans and by the apparently satisfactory living standards prevailing in the villages through which it passed. The houses were well built and well kept and the people well clad. This area seems to have been under direct European influence for a longer period and to a larger degree than any other in the Cameroons.

From Foumban, the Mission once again resumed its customary means of travel, by car. Rising early in the morning, the caravan passed through numerous villages and unending mountain passes, generally stopping towards midday to lunch with one of the officials located on their route. Everywhere the members of the Mission were received with most cordial hospitality. Then they pressed on with their journey, driving eight hours a day. Along its route, the Mission inspected a number of establishments of every kind, granted many audiences and had the opportunity of talking over any special

problems of the region with the officials of the Administration and with the inhabitants.

Leaving Fouban behind them, the Mission arrived at Dschang, a show-place of which its organizers have every reason to be proud. It stands in the high hills with abundant vegetation round it and in an atmosphere so cool that it was difficult to believe that it was but a few degrees from the Equator. On a hill overlooking a countryside somewhat reminiscent of Auvergne, were a number of small but comfortable houses built for tired Europeans who go there for a short stay and a change of air. There is also a large and well-run restaurant-bar, a meeting-place for visitors. Dschang is the chief town of the Bamiléké people, an industrious and energetic tribe, possessing great artistic skill, and bubbling over with vitality.

A little further on, the Mission visited the native centre of Bandjoun, where it was welcomed by the Sultan with his retinue of notables, accompanied by troupes of masked men and a particularly dense and excited crowd. It was here that it visited with admiration the finest native buildings it had the pleasure of seeing in the course of its whole tour. Some of the huts, adorned with artistically carved doors and columns, and reaching a height of more than 15 metres, were truly monumental in appearance.

A long drive from Dschang southward took the Mission to the final point of its itinerary in the Cameroons under French Administration, the town of Douala. On entering the coastal region, the Mission left behind it the fresh mountain air and easy life of the purely agricultural areas and plunged into a region of high humidity whose intense commercial and industrial activity creates a number of economic and social problems. Douala rivals Yaoundé as a capital, or, to put it more accurately, has never reconciled itself to its abandonment. A large number of the Africans living here are strangers to the town and have but few ties with their own tribal groups in other parts of the Cameroons.

Here again, only by splitting the Mission, reinforced by the Bamenda party, was it possible to attend to the many demands on the Mission's time. The Mission's headquarters, at the Government Palace overlooking the sea, became during the three days of the Mission's visit, the centre of Douala's political life. Many groups and individuals representing all walks of life sought audiences with the Mission and practically all the problems likely to arise in a town in full course of development were aired in its presence. While one group of members was attending to these duties, the others visited the schools and hospitals, the port facilities of Douala and the very important works in progress at the Edea dam.

When on 27 November, the Mission bade farewell to the Cameroons and went by air to Lagos, it had the feeling that it had learned a great deal, the certainty that it had devoted every minute of its time and all its efforts to its task, and the satisfaction that it had thus achieved an almost complete tour of the two Cameroons. It still had to visit two comparatively small territories, in which however it was faced with the most difficult and delicate problem, of all those entrusted to its charge.

ITINERARY

Date	Place	Description
Nov. 12	Enter Cameroons under French administration	Reception by French officials.
	Région du Nord-Cameroun	Discussion with local officials.
	Mora	Visit school and dispensary (under construction).
	Maroua	Reception by High Commissioner of Cameroons, by local officials and by prominent African and European members of community.
		Visit school and hospital.
Nov. 13	Leave Maroua	Visit agricultural Experimental Station.
	Mokolo	Visit local officials, inspect school, hospital and leprosarium.
	Rhumsiki	
	Enter Région de la Benoué	Reception by local officials.
	Guider	Reception by local Lamidos.
		Visit to school.
	Garoua	

Date	Place	Description
Nov. 14	Garoua	Meeting with local officials and local Lamidos, and prominent members of African and European community. Visit port development and schools.
		Depart by air for Ngaoundere.
	Ngaoundere	Meeting with local officials and Lamido of Ngaoundere and Banyo.
	Enter Région de l'Adamaoua	
Nov. 15	Ngaoundere	Visit hospital.
	Wakwa	Visit Cattle Experimental Station.
	Meiganga	Meeting with local officials.
		Visit Lutheran and Roman Catholic Missions. Visit Creamery.
	Enter Région du Lom et Kadei Bétaré-Oya	
Nov. 16	Bétaré-Oya	Meeting with local notables.
		Visit hospital (under construction)
	Woubou	Visit gold mines and meeting with mine officials of Comp. Minière de l'Oubangui Oriental.
	Bertoua	

Date	Place	Description
Nov. 17	Bertoua	Discussion with local notables.
<u>1st group:</u>	Batouri	By car to Batouri. Discussion with local notables. Visit schools and hospitals.
<u>2nd group:</u>	Enter Région de Nyong-et-Sanaga.	By air to Yaoundé.
Nov. 18	Nanga Eboko	Visit Pottery
	Yaoundé	Reception by High Commissioner.
	Yaoundé	Visit Cité Enfantine, schools.
		Meeting with local officials, European and African members of the community.
		Meeting with Protestant Missionaries.
		Visit to girls' schools and hospital. Visit various sections of town.
Nov. 19	Yaoundé	Meetings with chiefs, notables and various groups of petitioners.
<u>1st party:</u>		Leave for Ebolowa.
<u>2nd party:</u>	Yaoundé	Discussion with local officials.
	Mbalmayo	

ite	Place	Description
	Enter Région du N'Tem Ebolowa	Discussion with African petitioners.
		Visit American Presbyterian Mission.
		Visit Agricultural School.
<u>3rd party:</u>	Yaoundé	Leave for Ayos.
	Ayos	Visit Medical Centre.
Nov. 20	Yaoundé	Attend meeting of notables.
		Discussion with High Commissioner and his advisers.
		Reception by African and Syrian-Lebanese communities.
Nov. 21	Yaoundé	Leave by air for Foumban.
	Enter Région Bamoun Foumban	Visit Museum and workshops for African arts and crafts.
		Attend Council of Notables.
		Visit to the Sultan.
		Guest of the Sultan at native representation.
Nov. 22	Foumban	Visit Coffee Plantation.
	Enter Région Bamiléké.	
	Dschang	Visit hospital and receive petitioners.



Date	Place	Description
Nov. 23	Dschang	
	Banjoum	Visit Market and village.
	Bangwa	Visit Hospital of Protestant Mission.
	Bafang	Visit Hospital of Catholic Mission.
	Enter Région du Mungo	
	N'Kongsamba	Visit school, hospital and electric power station (under construction).  Hearing of petitioners and chiefs.
Nov. 24	N'Kongsamba	
	Mbanga	Discussions with officials, chiefs, notables and missionaries.
	Enter Région du Wouri	
Nov. 25	Douala	Reception by Syrian-Lebanese Colony.
	Douala	Interview with journalist.
		Visit port, railroad station and workshops, schools, including professional school, water station and public works.
		Discussion with petitioners.

Date	Place	Description
Nov. 26		
<u>1st group:</u>	Douala	Reception by the Ngemb.  Discussions with representatives of different African groups.  Discussion with representatives of different department heads.
<u>2nd group:</u>	Douala	
	Enter Région de la Sanaga Maritime	
	Dizangue	Visit rubber plantation, hospital, labour camps.
	Edea	Visit dam and hydro- electric works.
Nov. 27	Douala	Departure for Lagos.

PART TWO  
CHAPTER I: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) Structure and Organs of Local Government

The Cameroons under French administration stretch for nearly 1,000 miles from Lake Tchad in the north, southwards to the Gulf of Guinea. It is inhabited by a population approaching three million persons, comprising a diversity of tribes, languages and customs, varying from the Bantu tribes in the south, who occupy the forest areas, to the Sudanese in the north who, some centuries ago, moved westwards to occupy the unforested lowlands of that area. The social and political organization of these tribes varies from the rather well organized feudalistic system in the north to the more fragmentary and less integrated tribal organization in the south.

The fundamental task of the Administering Authority in this vast territory is to develop the diversified peoples and the rich but scattered natural resources into a modern state. It was clear to the Visiting Mission that important steps in this direction have already been achieved. Everywhere great activity was apparent - in the building of roads and bridges, the construction of hospitals, dispensaries and schools, in the development of modern cities, in the recently introduced cultivation of coffee and in the development of the natural resources of the Territory the Administering Authority appears to have made a splendid beginning in developing the potentials of the Cameroons.

The establishment of local government through the appropriate use of traditional institutions is an important factor in this development, so also is the setting up of a central deliberative body representative of the whole Territory, about which more will be said later in this Report. The task of the Administering Authority appears to be to harmonise existing institutions with the development of new ones in such a way that limited but important governmental functions will continue at the local level while increasing powers are developed in a central government.

The Mission heard a great many comments, some critical, some commendatory, as to whether a central government was being developed too rapidly at the expense of local and tribal institutions or whether, on the contrary, feudalistic and traditional institutions were permitted to retard the development of a central government. Although views differed on this question there could be no doubt, even to the casual visitor, that the Administering Authority is engaged in a process of political transformation which, if continued, is destined to perfect a modern system of central government superseding the system of tribal chiefs.

Local administration is carried on under the guidance of fourteen regional administrators or chefs de région, each responsible for one of the fourteen regions into which the Territory is politically divided. The Visiting Mission was able to visit eleven of the fourteen regions to discuss at some length the political and social problems of that region with the French administrator and with many of the notables of each of these regions.

The Mission was invited several times to attend a regional council of notables, presided over by the chef de région, and it was able, in this way, to form some impression of the operation of this system, and in particular the way in which the chef de région consults with and is guided by the chiefs and notables in his particular area with respect to local, and even national, problems. By way of illustration it may be interesting to describe a discussion which took place in one such local council on the question of the prevailing practice of the dot or dowry. The chef de région explained at length to the chiefs and notables his point of view as to the abuses which the present practice of the dot was leading to. He explained that amounts frequently demanded by the father of a marriageable daughter ran up to Frs. 30,000 to Frs. 40,000 and that it was very difficult for a young man to raise this sum of money short of a number of years. This was leading, he said, to delayed marriages with resultant social problems, which in his view was not only leading to the increase of prostitution but was having an effect upon the

progressively lowering birth rate in certain areas. He flatly recommended that the Council consider abolishing the practice altogether, not only for demographic reasons but also because the practice was morally unsound in that it made young women into commercial objects of barter and sale.

The ensuing discussion was lively and participated in by many chiefs and also by a missionary and other well-known personalities in attendance. It seemed to be apparent from the discussion that the chiefs, while recognizing the seriousness of the problem, were not willing to abandon the practice altogether. Proposals were made to put a maximum limit on the amount of the dot and well reasoned arguments were brought forward to the effect that to eliminate this traditional practice too suddenly would only result in evasion of the law.

This illustration is only cited to show that the Administering Authority is desirous of taking up with the local groups questions affecting their welfare, and although these groups are consultative in nature, they afford an opportunity in a systematic way for bringing a variety of questions before the people and thus enabling the local administrator and the central government to be guided by the opinion of the traditional authorities. In effect, the chiefs and notables acted as intermediaries between government officials and the masses of the population.

The higher chiefs and chiefs of cantons secure their appointments from the High Commissioner on the nomination of the chef de région, while village headmen are normally appointed by the chef de région on the nomination of the chef de subdivision. These nominations, however, are only made after consultation with the people, the notables and the heads of families concerned.

In the matter of appointments or recognition of the chiefs, the situation appears to differ between the north and south. In the Islamic and Sudanese north the prestige of the Lamido or Emir is usually so great and the manner of his appointment so fixed in tradition that the administration tends to deal with the traditional institutions as they exist. It is only rarely that the administration has found it advisable to remove these chiefs. In a number of cases the powerful Lamidos of the north have themselves consented to be elected

to the Representative Assembly. Relations between the French Administration and the northern chiefs in general appear to be excellent.

In the south, however, the situation differs in this respect. In that area traditional institutions have long been disintegrating. Tribal groups are smaller and detribalisation appears in many cases to be very advanced. Moreover, contact with European influences and missionary activities, as well as the influence of modern education, have tended to undermine native customs and beliefs. Nevertheless, African society in the south continues in its foundations to function through its chiefs, even though some of the educated elements appear sometimes to be quite critical of their less well-educated natural rulers.

The Administering Authority recognizes this state of mind and in the Preamble to the draft Law laying down the status of traditional chiefs it states the following:

"The existence of customary or traditional chiefs, i.e. chiefs who were formerly termed Native chiefs, is one of the original features of African society. These chiefs are primarily the representatives of a group of people. For instance, sedentary communities are represented by provincial and cantonal chiefs, village headmen and chiefs of tribal lands, nomadic communities by heads of tents, chiefs of "forik" or camps and chiefs of groups. This list is not exhaustive neither is it intended to establish a clearly defined and immutable hierarchy but, on the contrary, is subject to numerous local variations.

"The French administration, faithful to its principle of respecting local custom, had maintained this institution and recognized it as possessing the character of positive African Law. At the same time it had hedged it round with regulations, varying from territory to territory, which in some cases appear to have incurred the reproach of being either too superficial or too involved.

"On the other hand, the rapid development of Negro French Africa in the last few years has brought about such far-reaching changes in the political, economic and social life of the indigenous inhabitants as to make it seem doubtful to what extent the magistrature of the traditional chiefs was capable of adjustment to the new ways of life of the people. Experience however shows that the institution remains an essential factor in African society. The French Republic proposes therefore, as in the past, to maintain this institution, at the same time stressing the need for its development."

The Visiting Mission, with regard to the position of tribal chiefs in the south, received the impression that their authority is becoming increasingly insecure. A number of complaints from various chiefs in the southern part of the Territory stressed this point. By way of illustration, one described the decline of his authority in the following vivid terms:

"My father", he said, "was a chief with great authority. Everyone rushed up at the sound of his tom-tom and his people did all the work he demanded of them. Part of the kill at hunts was his by right. He could enforce respect for his authority with the whip. To begin with, the white men respected those customs but now everything is changed. The natives no longer work for the chiefs unless they are paid. The Administration give them no support. On the other hand the chiefs have to serve as intermediaries between the administration and the population for the transmission of orders and often find themselves between the devil and the deep sea."

It appeared, however, to the Mission after hearing the stories of many chiefs, that the more enlightened among them do not believe it is possible or desirable to return to the past. They seem to be aware that modern development in their Territory calls for new and better institutions of government and that the exercise of their former power by a large number of small and petty chieftains is no longer feasible.

In the new draft law in regard to the status of chiefs, which is presented to the Mission with the explanation that it has not yet been adopted by the French Parliament, it is specified that traditional chiefs stand at the head of communities whose existence and organization are based on custom. The chief is the representative of the community he controls and the agent of the local government. He exercises his authority under the conditions and through the organs provided for by custom and enjoys the prerogatives attributed to him by custom in so far as such authority and prerogatives are not incompatible with measures for public order. The chief represents his chieftom in his relations with the Administration and with third parties. Any infringement of his legitimate authority shall be punished. Eligibility for the office of chief is defined by custom, which likewise governs the choice of the chief. No one may acquire the status of chief unless the nomination made in accordance with custom has been approved by the Administration. When approval is

withheld the reasons must be given. The chief, as the representative of a community and agent of the local government, is subject to supervision and to the chain of command of the administrative authority. Provision is made for disciplinary action; warning, suspension of grant and dismissal. The last two penalties may not be imposed until a council, which shall include other chiefs, has been consulted. The chiefs receive an annual grant, chargeable to local budgets, the amount being fixed in accordance with the importance and resources of their chiefdom.

The draft was the subject of lengthy discussion in the Representative Assembly in February 1949, first in the Commissions on Administrative Affairs and on Social Affairs and finally in plenary session. Although this subject lies outside the competence of the Representative Assembly, the draft law was nevertheless submitted to it for its opinion and the Assembly signified its agreement.

In the debate which took place in the Representative Assembly various views were expressed and a certain amount of criticism by the African members was expressed to the effect that traditional chiefs could not be regarded as agents of the European Administration that they should not constitute a link in the chain of executive authority immediately below the officials, but should, on the contrary, become independent of the administration and work with it, upheld solely by the authority and prestige arising from custom and by their social or religious status. They should be auxiliaries of the government, it was said, but not its agents. They should assist in the administration but not owe it complete obedience. This perhaps sums up the attitude of the opposition and it would be difficult to say how extensive this opposition is. Among native spokesmen, however, many expressed an opposite view, holding that to be agents of the executive authority of the Government was necessary and acceptable and in no way detracted from their prestige.

From the foregoing it is clear that the existing position of the chiefs in the rapidly evolving situation in the Territory is difficult to define and



even more difficult for a visitor to evaluate. It does appear clear, however, that in the effort to work towards the establishment of a democratic organization and governmental institutions designed to bring about unity and suitable government throughout the Territory, the Administering Authority is recognizing that the process must be one of evolution and that traditional institutions, while continuing to play an appreciable role in the life of their communities, should not be allowed to be an obstacle either to general progress or to the development of a modern central government.

(b) The "Assemblée Représentative du Cameroun" ("ARCAM")

Details on the structure of the Representative Assembly are given in the annual reports on the administration of the Cameroons, in particular in the 1947 Report.

The electorate is divided into two electoral colleges. The first college is composed of French citizens and elects 16 representatives. The second college is composed of Africans, who are included in 13 categories, enumerated on page 14 of the 1947 Report, and elects 24 representatives.

The functions of the Assembly are to deliberate and take final decisions on various matters, including road construction, assessment of taxes, etc. (the 27 categories of subjects on which the Assembly is competent to take decisions are listed in Article 34 of the Law of 30 April 1946 - which appears on page 224 of the 1947 Report). The Assembly must also be consulted on a variety of other subjects, including granting of concessions, the administrative organization of the Territory etc. (the 18 categories of subjects for which the Assembly has to be consulted are listed in Article 37 - see page 225 of the 1947 Report.) The Assembly also deliberates on the various heads of the Territory's budget. The budget is divided into optional expenditure, which the Assembly may pass or reject, and compulsory expenditure (see Articles 38 - 47).

The Assembly elects a Standing Committee of five members, to which certain matters are referred,

It is somewhat difficult for the Visiting Mission to comment on the Representative Assembly. The Mission was unable to see it at work since the Assembly was not in session during the Mission's stay in the Cameroons. Nevertheless, the Mission was able to gather various opinions on the Assembly, to hear complaints concerning it and also to glance through the records of its meetings. It therefore feels entitled to make the following observations, which are in the nature of general impressions.

(1.) Elections

It appears undeniable that the introduction of a purely elective system, even where the suffrage is confined to persons possessing certain qualifications and is not universal, is a somewhat revolutionary step in Negro Africa today. There seems to be general agreement on one point, namely, that at the first elections, a considerable section of the population and of the African electorate was not very clear as to its meaning. This, it may be added, is one explanation regarding the small number of names on the registers of voters (39,615), whereas, according to the special representative of the Administering Authority in the Trusteeship Council, some 500,000 Africans were qualified to vote. It is possible that many electors did not even understand the significance of their right to vote for a candidate of their own choice, which may explain criticisms as exaggerated as those describing "the frenzied atmosphere of the elections".<sup>(1)</sup>

The Mission itself had first-hand evidence of this ignorance of the system. At one of its hearings a rather influential chief demanded the immediate recall of the representative elected for his area because he (the chief) was not satisfied with him. The fact that he had been elected, said the chief, was due to the instructions he, the paramount chief, had given his subjects to vote for him. Now that he was displeased with this elected representative, who did not show him the respect which was his due, he was to be removed from office without more ado. And the chief in question was only half convinced when the Mission endeavoured to explain to him that in an elective and parliamentary system a representative was elected for the whole period of his term of office

(1) Petition T/PET.5/R.3

(in this case, 5 years) and that an effective way of expressing dissatisfaction by the electorate would be not to re-elect him at the next election.

Nevertheless the Mission does not take a pessimistic view of the matter--far from it. In fact it considers certain features which it noted in this field as distinctly encouraging. The Mission, has, in fact, the impression that many educated or semi-educated Africans--and there are many-- are beginning to understand the meaning of a democratic electoral system and the operation of Cameroonian institutions. It thinks it can safely predict that after a few more elections the Cameroons will have achieved a comparatively satisfactory degree of electoral maturity.

Furthermore the Mission was pleased to note that many chiefs, groups and individuals are interested in the activity of their representatives in the Assembly. In one particular case the Mission heard a chief complain bitterly that the representative of his constituency was out of touch with his voters and did not come to report on the activities of the Assembly and his own work in that body. In another case an outstanding African personality, addressing a council of notables, stated that in his area the elected representatives reported regularly on their activities and that he was unaware of any criticisms by the electors of the way in which their local representatives in the Assembly carried out the functions entrusted to them.

An interesting fact is that in the north of the Territory the Lamidos, sultans whose authority is rigid and complete in a social and political structure which has been crystallized for centuries under Moslem influence, have agreed to be elected to the assembly. Some of them are much too intelligent not to understand that, in the long run, an elective and democratic system will undermine the traditional bases of autocratic society. One of them did, however, inform the Mission that elections were a useful institution "because they allow the truth to come out", while another affirmed that the population appreciated the privilege of being able to choose its own representatives and know very well why it voted for one candidate in preference to another.

Another striking aspect of the awakening of electoral consciousness in the Cameroons was revealed to the Mission when the representatives of co-operative organizations complained of the scant aid the co-operative movement received from the Assembly; they ended by declaring that at the next elections co-operators would support candidates who had their interests more at heart.

There are, therefore, grounds for optimism with regard to the extension in the near future of democratic methods of popular consultation in the Cameroons. Already the body of potential electors amounts to one-third of the adult population and the number of registered electors will certainly show a considerable increase at the next elections. All this is primarily a question of education and instruction but the time when it will become possible to introduce universal suffrage pure and simple into the Cameroons, which is the declared aim of French policy, is already in sight.

With regard to the system of two electoral colleges, the Mission believes it to be a purely temporary expedient more or less justified by the de facto situation, and in particular by the still very low educational level of the African masses and the as yet secondary role played by Africans in certain sectors of the Cameroonian economy. While it is of course only one stage in the evolution of Cameroonian institutions, it is a stage which should not last too long if that evolution is to be a healthy one. Indeed, several petitions presented to the Mission already urge the abolition of the two-college system. (1)

(2) Working of the Assembly

Judging by the information gathered in various quarters, and by the records of the Assembly, that body has made considerable progress during its three years of existence. After the inevitable period of initial uncertainty, it has organized itself on a sound basis and has proved that it is capable of fulfilling efficiently and intelligently its main task of discussing the budget of the Territory. There is ever closer collaboration between the representatives elected by the two colleges and the occasions on which the two groups are opposed are becoming more and more rare. The unanimous adoption of amendments to the

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(1) In particular T/PET.5/56 - 4/34

rules of procedure in April 1949 is a proof of this fact.

It seems that as a result of the activities of the Assembly both the French and the African members are acquiring a more and more definite idea of the general interest of the Territory. Such a development is most encouraging, especially in the case of the African members who represent groups that are still highly parochial in mentality and tribes with as yet very little understanding of the concept of "Cameroons". Though certain members still look at many problems from the viewpoint of the interests of a small group, or even of their own personal interests, others already display a real feeling for the state.

The Visiting Mission has no hesitation in stating that it considers the Assembly, in spite of its limited powers, an excellent school in self-government. A group of persons, independent of the Administration, and including a majority of Africans drawn from the most varied spheres, from influential chiefs down to the elementary school teachers, is obliged to study problems relating to the general administration of the Territory, to view them from the budgetary aspect and from the standpoint of the interests of the Cameroons as a whole. The fact that the Assembly is composed exclusively of elected members and contains no nominated members or French officials, gives it an independence vis-à-vis the Administration which is a sign of health and vigour of good augury for the future.

### (3) Powers

The Representative Assembly's present competence is still essentially limited. Despite its considerable powers with regard to budgetary matters, the field of politics remains theoretically closed to it, and it is still statutorily deprived of legislative powers. The members of the Assembly who are already extremely jealous of the Assembly's prerogatives seem fully determined to do their utmost to extend its powers and competence.

To quote a few random examples:

At its ordinary session in 1946, the Assembly unanimously passed a resolution urging that its powers be considerably extended; in his speech at

the close of the session, the President of the Assembly said: "You have carried out the mandate entrusted to you, Gentlemen, by drawing the attention of the Central Authority to the fact that the powers granted to this Assembly are insufficient to allow it to take a genuine part in the country's administration. You have placed on record your regret at the fact that it constitutes a 'council of notables' rather than a democratic assembly endowed with real powers." On another occasion, the Assembly registered a vigorous protest at the Government's failure to take its opinion into account. On a further occasion, members criticised the Government for graciously consulting the Assembly on matters on which its opinion was not expressly required while debarring it from amending the proposed texts. In addition, the Assembly challenged the Government's interpretation of the legislative texts setting up the Assembly, and affirmed its desire to exercise greater initiative in preparing its own agenda.

In short, although the existing texts do not as yet permit such action,-- and they cannot be changed every year--the possibility already exists of progressively entrusting the Representative Assembly with ever wider powers and transforming it into a legislative assembly with far-reaching competence. Its opinion is already requested on matters on which it might not have been consulted three years ago; while the views expressed during debates carry increasing weight in the formulation of Government decisions.

To conclude these very general observations, it is noteworthy that many petitions received by the mission express, even at this juncture, the desire to see the Assembly transformed into a more or less sovereign legislative assembly. It will suffice to quote here a petition calling for "establishment of a territorial assembly elected by universal suffrage and having powers of decision with regard to political, economic, social and cultural matters relating to the country."<sup>(1)</sup> Another petition, that of the Ngondo,<sup>(2)</sup> is even more explicit. It criticizes the limitation of the Assembly's powers and asserts "that one sees

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(1) T/PET.5/53 - 4/30

(2) T/PET.5/56 - 4/31

no tendency to give it specific powers of legislation and representation the granting of which would be a first step toward self-government. Only if the Cameroonians are given wider responsibilities than those which the Representative Assembly has now, will the inhabitants of the territory be enabled to acquire the necessary legislative experience for self-government." After protesting against the dual college system, the Ngondo proposes the establishment of a Legislative Assembly consisting of 60 representatives of the African population and 15 representatives of the European population. This Assembly would have full powers on questions concerning the Territory, except foreign affairs and the defence of the Territory, for which the approval of the French Government would be necessary. All legislation would be subject to the Haut Commissaire's right of veto.

The Visiting Mission can only conclude by observing that the Cameroons is rapidly approaching the time when a sufficient number of its nationals will have reached the stage of maturity required to enable the country to be given a broadly independent Legislative Assembly elected by a single college on an electoral basis gradually approaching universal suffrage. While it is impossible to predict exactly when this stage of maturity will be reached, the Mission has the impression that the establishment and functioning of the Assembly have enabled the country to take a big step forward in this direction. The problem now is to adjust the development of that organ to a rate of progress which meets the desires of an increasingly better educated population, while remaining within reasonable limits of the possibilities of a country which, after all, is still at the beginning of the modern phase of its development.

#### (c) Representation of the Trust Territory in the French Union

While in the Territory the mission was able to observe the operation of administration at the local level, and also to learn a great deal at first hand of the functioning of government at the centre as it operates through the High Commissioner and his staff, and through the Representative Assembly.

In previous sections of this report, it has been pointed out that the local Councils of Notables discuss many questions on a consultative basis,

while the Representative Assembly is empowered to take decisions on certain economic and social questions on a territorial level, subject to certain powers reserved to the Administering Authority as such.

This leaves political questions generally outside the scope of functions of any organs located in the territory, and these questions, in accordance with the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement, are dealt with legislatively through the central organs of the Administering Authority in Paris. And in this respect, under the French constitution, the territory is treated as an "associated territory" within the French Union.

The Visiting Mission of course was aware that the Trusteeship Council has studied various aspects of this question, and it considered that its terms of reference required it to bring to the attention of the Council, any information relating to the development of self-governing institutions, and their operation, which in its opinion might be useful to the Council.

In this connection a number of communications were received which are enumerated in the Annex to this Report containing petitions. Also, a number of verbal comments from prominent personalities were made, some critical, some commendatory, which may be summarized here.

On the one hand, complaints were received that in spite of the special status of the territory under trusteeship, it is treated from the centre on the same footing as if it were a colony, even though special legislation might be required for the territory as regards such questions as land tenure, immigration, exchange controls or trade and commerce with other nations. It was also stated that in the proposed draft law defining the position of traditional chiefs in West Africa, the special position of the chiefs in the Cameroons should have been the subject of special legislation in view of the requirement under the Charter for preparing the Trust Territory for self-government or independence. And further, that the evolution of the Trust Territory in this direction should not be retarded by general legislation covering other territories whose goals might not in every case be the same.



On the other hand, representation of the Trust Territory in the Assemblée Nationale and in the Conseil de la République was regarded by certain notables who spoke with members of the Mission as having certain advantages for the territory in that it not only enabled Cameroonians to participate at the centre in providing legislation for the territory, but also provided an important experience in the functioning of representative government.

On another subject, the Mission also received requests suggesting revisions of the trusteeship agreement, especially as regards the clauses relating to territory being governed "as an integral part of French territory"; also as regards the failure to consult the population before the trusteeship agreement was concluded.

Since these complaints involved basic constitutional questions, the Mission did not feel that it should make any comment on this subject.

(d) Justice and Police

The Mission, with regard to penal law received some remarks on the subject of separation of judicial and administrative powers. There are 38 minor courts (justices de paix) which deal with petty offences (1-15 days imprisonment; 1-1200 francs fine); 12 courts also have additional powers in criminal matters and can deal with all misdemeanours committed in their area (up to 5 years' imprisonment and fines up to any amount). But the magistrates presiding over these courts are all chefs de subdivision, i.e. officials of the Executive. The French Administration is most anxious to put an end to this system, but its abolition has not been possible owing to the shortage of magistrates.

During a debate in the Representative Assembly in February 1949, a member questioned the Commissaire du Gouvernement and asked that officials who have a position of command should in future be debarred from exercising the functions of magistrate of the "justice de paix". The Commissaire du Gouvernement replied that that was his dearest wish; that he considered it inadmissible for colonial administrators exercising powers of

authority at the same time to act as judicial officers. But, he added, although reform had been introduced on paper, it had unfortunately not been applied in practice owing to the shortage of magistrates.

This state of affairs is deplored in a number of petitions. One<sup>(1)</sup> of them states:

"This uneasiness regarding the administration of justices arise from the fact that judicial powers are exercised by administrative officials. In most parts of the Territory the magistracy is composed of the same administrative officials as are invested with executive authority. Thus, in his own area a chef de subdivision may at one and the same time be plaintiff, examining magistrate, presiding officer of the court and prison governor." Another petition<sup>(2)</sup> adds: "It is very doubtful whether the President of the French Republic himself holds such wide powers."

It should be noted that a large number of petitions which echo the verbal complaints made by various individuals heard by the Mission, assert that the indigénat still exists in the Cameroons. This complaint is probably based on a misunderstanding due to the absence of separation of powers.

Under the indigénat system, officials could impose on indigenous inhabitants specific penalties as a punishment for certain breaches of the regulations without judgment or intervention by the judicial authority. This system was abolished by the decree of 20 February 1946. From then on all breaches were to be dealt with by the regular courts. But it almost invariably happens that the competent court is the justice de paix and that the judge is therefore the same official who was competent to act under the indigénat system. Hence, in spite of the change in principles and judicial organization, a section of the population believes that the indigénat system still exists. A number of petitions assert that the indigénat system still survives, and the same view was expressed to the Mission during various hearings.

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(1) T/PET.5/53 - 4/30

(2) T/PET.5/52

In the petition of the Confédération Générale du Travail (1) it is stated that "There is even an official enactment restoring the indigénat system in a very subtle form. This is the decree of 19 December 1947 which gives the chefs de subdivision the right to impose penalties for minor offences" and the C.G.T. asks for the immediate abolition of this system.

A further series of remarks worthy of report to the Council concern the penal code in general and its application to the Cameroons. Since the decree of 30 April 1946 indigenous justice has been abolished in matters of penal law. In principle, all crimes, misdemeanours or offences now come before the courts exercising jurisdiction over both Europeans and Africans, and the same penal laws are applicable to everyone, the indigenous penal code having been abolished.

This equality before the penal law is not entirely to the liking of all Africans. Some consider that differences in the ways of life of Europeans and Africans are too great for it to be possible to apply the same criteria in matters of penal law. One petition (2) speaks of: "Verdicts which may be just, but which do not correspond to our way of judging things. . . ." This state of affairs engenders a certain feeling of bitterness, since "such a divergence of opinion creates an atmosphere of bitter distrust between French justice and ourselves. . . . Magistrates always seem to find a reason for being lenient whenever a European appears before them." And the conclusion drawn is that "we do not reject French law, but we ask that Africans should be allowed to prepare a code of Cameroonian customary law. . . ." During an interview with the members of the Mission, the authors of this petition reiterated their view that the French Penal Code was not entirely suited to the requirements of the Cameroons in that it contained no element of customary law and failed to take account of the psychology of Africans.

Another source of grievance is the fact that the prison system is not applied in precisely the same way to Europeans and Africans alike. This difference in treatment is alleged to be particularly marked in the case of persons under arrest awaiting trial.

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(1) T/PET.5/52  
(2) T/PET.5/54

The Mission would suggest that the administering authority, having acknowledged these difficulties, will do well to accord them its consideration, in the hope of arriving at a more improved system of justice in the territory.

The Mission received a large number of complaints<sup>(1)</sup> concerning the brutal and abusive treatment inflicted upon the Africans by some members of the police force in the Cameroons. Certain members of the Representative Assembly have also expressed their dissatisfaction with the behaviour of the police. The Mission would suggest that in this respect the situation might be reviewed by the administering authority, and that in case some charges against the police were substantiated, steps be taken to alleviate these grievances in a field that is so closely connected with public safety and welfare.

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(1) e.g. T/PET.5/54 and T/PET.5/56 - 4/31.

(e) Political Parties in the Cameroon:

There has been considerable political activity in the Cameroons for the past three years. It was not until about 1945 that the first signs were seen of a series of attempts to set up groups of a definitely political nature. These groups are considered by some to be a factor for progress and advancement in the territory. Others regard this phenomenon with only moderate enthusiasm, and one of the African parliamentarians in the Cameroons told the Mission that the Cameroonian's initiation into politics at such an early stage was to be deplored.

Shortly after the war, various parties drawing their inspiration from the Metropolitan country made definite attempts to organize in the territory; these included the SFIO (Section Française de l'Internationale ouvrière) (Socialist), the RPF (Rassemblement du Peuple Français, the party of General de Gaulle) etc. These parties have had little success in gaining adherents on a large scale, despite promising beginnings in certain cases; and it can be said that the Cameroons sections of these parties are at present dormant.

Two movements were original in character - the Mouvement Democratique Camerounais and the Rassemblement du Peuple Camerounais, founded in 1945 and 1946 respectively - and had an ephemeral existence lasting only a matter of months.

As for the Communist Party, it was satisfied initially - according to the French Administration - with making itself felt in the trade union organizations, and displayed great activity in 1945 under cover of the Confédération Générale du Travail. Again according to the local administration, the Communist Party's instructions to its representatives throughout Africa specified that the Party should never appear under its own name for fear of frightening off the various peoples, who were ill-prepared to receive a doctrine which would deeply shock their traditional views.

1947 saw the foundation of the U.P.C. (Union des Populations Camerounaises). This party displayed great activity on the occasion of the Visiting Mission's passage; and the Mission accordingly deems it advisable to report at this stage the information it received regarding it.

The information on the organization supplied by the French Administration is as follows:

"The U.P.C. was originally a purely local political group which appropriated certain points of the doctrine which the Rassemblement Camerounais had tried to develop and establish. It was stagnant up to the time that it came under Communist domination. Since then, its activity has steadily increased. That is not to say that the Party has attracted very many adherents. While it has established sections in all South Cameroons centres, these amount, broadly speaking, to general staffs without troops; for the Cameroonian African, after three years of variegated political experiences, has become rather wary and is immediately suspicious of political activities inspired from Europe.

"If the U.P.C. nevertheless finds some hearing, it is because it makes constant efforts to deny its collusion with the Communist Party, its claim being that it operates only as a purely Cameroonian movement for the emancipation of the indigenous peoples. However, in view of the considerable sums devoted by the U.P.C. to propaganda purposes, it remains highly suspect to the population as a whole, which is perfectly well aware, in fact, of the disproportion between the size of subscriptions and that of expenditure commitments, and remains profoundly convinced that all this money comes from an outside source.

"The U.P.C., directed from Paris, has obviously not repeated the mistakes of the Rassemblement Camerounais. It has always been at pains to avoid making a head-on attack on the local social structure, its alleged aim being, on the contrary, to protect and strengthen it, and it attempts to gain the backing of the most important traditional chiefs. It has not succeeded in practice. While it has met with a certain amount of support and succeeded, in one western area, in winning over an important chief, it has not yet penetrated deeply into traditional circles. Its propaganda and activity are spectacular, but their effect remains superficial.

"This propaganda is based on the current themes disseminated by the Communist Party and adapted to local conditions. Thus the instructions received by the various sections explain that the struggle must be conducted against the colonial system, imperialism, so-called abuses, the alleged re-introduction of forced labour and the indigénat, the constant aim being to incite the Blacks against the Whites.

"Several recent attempts to launch general strikes proved a complete fiasco. Acts of sabotage have been committed on railway tracks, resulting in one case in the death of several Africans.

"The party is affiliated to the Rassemblement Democratique Africain, which itself is no more than an offshoot of the Communist Party. It would seem that the U.P.C.'s activity has now reached its peak, the Union having been instructed to leave nothing undone to attract the attention of the Trusteeship Council's Visiting Mission. It is therefore highly probable - its financial means being after all fairly limited - that we shall see a slackening of this agitation before very long."

The French Administration handed the Visiting Mission a copy of a letter sent by the Central Committee of the U.P.C. to its various sections on the occasion of the Mission's passage. This letter is not dated, but was presumably written in the first days of November. It reads as follows:

"Dear Comrades,

It is no news to you that the UN Trusteeship Council's Visiting Mission, at present in the territory of the British-administered Cameroons, is due to arrive in the French Cameroons via Mora (North Cameroons) on the 12th of this month. It will probably visit the following centres: the three Northern Regions (by air) - Batouri Bertoua-Abong-Mbang-Yaoundé, M'Balmayo-Ebolowa-Foumban-Dschang-Nkongsamba-Douala-Edea. It will probably leave the Cameroons on 27 November.

As you are well aware,

- (a) this is the first time that a UN mission is visiting the Territory;
- (b) once it leaves, we shall have to wait a long time for another such visit;
- (c) the responsibility for guiding the Cameroonian masses in the struggle for the emancipation of our country rests solely with the U.P.C. and the progressive organizations.

You should therefore:

- (a) prepare a concise but accurate report to present to the Mission when it passes through your area. The report should consist of two sections:  
Section 1, vigorously denouncing the Administration's violation of our rights and political freedom, not forgetting to mention forced labour, the indigénat and the maldistribution of judicial powers.  
Section 2, which should include a summary of your demands, chief of which we consider to be:
  - Unification of both British and French Cameroons, with the abolition of customs barriers and the co-ordination of education programmes;
  - Establishment of a time-limit for the duration of the Trusteeship agreements;
  - Deletion of the expression 'an integral part of French Territory' in Article 4 of the Trusteeship Agreements;
  - Establishment of a Permanent Supervisory Commission under the Trusteeship Council, with participation of the indigenous population;

- Creation of a Territorial Assembly with deliberative powers on political, economic, social and cultural matters. Creation of Regional Councils elected by universal suffrage.

Apart from these main points, you could raise questions of a political, economic, social and cultural nature relating to your own Region.

- (b) Send a copy of your reports by registered mail to the Central Committee of the U.P.C. (Post-Box No. 435 - Douala) by 14 November at the latest. The task in question is one to which you should devote many hours of valuable work. It must therefore be treated with utmost seriousness. The fate of the Cameroons is in your hands, and it is for you therefore to earn the confidence of our people.

Your fraternally .....

Representatives of the various U.P.C. Regional Groups requested audience of the Mission at such places as Yaounde, Dschang, Nkongsamba and Douala.

Of the 69 petitions received by the Visiting Mission to the Cameroons 17 emanate from the U.P.C. (Central Committee, local committees, affiliated groups and individual members).

The Mission was given a copy of the Union's statutes dated 12 April 1948 and also published in issue Number 1 of the U.P.C.'s newspaper, "La Voix du Cameroun". Article 1 of the Statutes specifies that the U.P.C.'s aim is to rally and unite the inhabitants of the Cameroons with a view to expediting the development of the peoples and raising their standard of living. Article 3 states that any person accepting the Statutes and undertaking to be an active militant and regularly pay his dues may be admitted to membership. According to Article 6, the movement's basic organizational unit is the section, the aim of which is to popularize the U.P.C.'s directives, denounce everything counter to the interests of the peoples of the Cameroons, and assist the masses to organize themselves for the purpose of achieving the objectives pursued by the U.P.C. within the framework of the French Union. Article 8 affirms that internal democracy is ensured within the movement by the



election of the controlling organs at every level. Article 19 specifies that the superior organ of the U.P.C. is the Party Congress. Finally, article 31 declares that the U.P.C. is not a movement standing in opposition to the French Nation, or the interests of the French Union, or the existing Constitution.

During the conversations which the Mission had with U.P.C. delegations, the Union's spokesmen, in reply to questions on that point, invariably asserted that the U.P.C. had no ties or relations with foreign political parties or bodies, unless its affiliation to the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain, which has its headquarters at Abidjan, Ivory Coast, could be regarded as such. They also explained that the reason why the U.P.C. was not represented on the Representative Assembly of the Cameroons was that it had been founded subsequent to the elections.

The Mission could not obtain details as to the size of the U.P.C.'s membership. It failed to secure a definite reply on that point, except to the effect that there was a large membership, in the view of the U.P.C. itself, but that the number of sympathizers was very much larger. The U.P.C. at Douala claimed to have 3,600 members.

The French Administration, on the other hand, considers the number of actual members to be very limited. It was not so much a political movement, according to one view, as an agitational movement which gave a bad example to the country. The same view held the leaders in most cases to be detribalized elements who had received some education but had no links with the masses. Some of them are said to be dismissed officials and former offenders. According to other statements, the U.P.C.'s subsidies come out of the funds of the French Communist Party, and the entire movement exists only in virtue of the fact that the tune is called by a handful of Europeans. The latter, it was alleged, had actually drawn up some of the petitions.

The French Administration reported that the U.P.C. had made great efforts in the Western part of the Cameroons to win over the Bamileke people to its way of thinking. So far it has only succeeded in gaining the support of one

chief's district, and the traditional chief has taken advantage of the fact to intensify his opposition to the authority. Reviving the name of an old secret Bamileke association, the chief has accordingly founded a so-called traditional association under the name of Kumzse. The French Administration also reported that a few very active elements in the U.P.C. were helping him to organize his campaign. The Kumzse Association submitted a petition to the Mission. (1)

The Administration reported that other elements among the Bamileke people, disturbed by the Kumzse movement, had set up the Bamileke Union, whose essential task was presumably to oppose the former's activities. The Bamileke Union also submitted a petition to the Visiting Mission, (2) but during their very brief interview with the Mission, its representatives only raised the land question.

In regard to the Bamileke area as a whole, the French Administration takes the view that the authority must keep a close watch on the situation. For the time being, however, the situation does not give cause to grave concern.

The French Administration also reported to the Mission attempts by the U.P.C. to set up throughout the territory small innocent-looking groups, allegedly of a purely cultural or recreational character, such as "Les Amis du Progrès" (3) at Yaounda, and the association known as "La Voix du Peuple Bafia" in the Bafia area. According to the local administration, these branches of the U.P.C. are for the time being potential rather than real. Their membership consists mainly of a few more advanced individuals who are seeking compensation in the political field for the social degradation they have suffered through their abandonment of tribal life and their intellectual advancement. Though

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(1) T/PET.5/32 - 4/26

(2) T/PET.5/40 - 4/28

(3) Les Amis du Progrès submitted Petition T/PET.5/16 to the Mission.

they have not yet discovered a platform, the administration added, they are clearly inspired by individualistic and democratic ideals, and reveal in a nebulous form the aspirations of the new Africa.

During certain hearings, as well as in certain petitions, the Mission sensed a certain amount of fairly violent opposition to the U.I.C. For instance, at Nkongsamba, a head chief, referring to the U.I.C., warned the Mission against any petitions it might receive from groups of "troublemakers, liars and agitators" who refused to collaborate with the chiefs and the Administration. They are people, he said, "who have not been able, as they would have wished, to achieve by unlawful action, the satisfaction of their personal desires."

At another place, a chief described the leaders of the U.P.C. as disturbing elements, who sowed the seeds of discontent among the population, exploited the concept of "freedom of labour" by demagogic means, campaigned against the French administration, and were the cause of the decline in the authority of the Chiefs; he even asked that the Trusteeship Council should help the French Administration "to root out this evil."

To complete the picture, mention must be made of a few other local groups of a political nature, most of whom have, moreover, submitted petitions to the Mission and requested hearings. One such group is the Evolution Sociale Camerounaise (ESOCAM), a movement of quite recent origin. The French Administration characterizes it with the remark that, as its name indicates, it wishes to see the development of the Cameroonian peoples speeded up. It sprang from the opposition of numerous sections of the population to the policy of the U.I.C. Being aware of the importance of the problems of improving the social status of the indigenous inhabitants and mindful of the difficulties likely to be encountered by the Cameroons under prevailing conditions in seeking to attain the level of western civilization without the help of European nations, its chief aim is to promote this development in agreement with the Administering Authority, by stimulating the latter. After initial difficulties, since the founders of the movement were

not wealthy, though they were resolved to achieve results, the ESOCAM is now beginning to become widely known. According to information given by the local authority, it has even succeeded during the last two months in recruiting members from among supporters of the U.P.C. A large number of people have in fact recently deserted the latter party and joined the ESOCAM. ESOCAM conducts its activities in an orderly and peaceful manner. It submitted two petitions<sup>(1)</sup> to the Mission and requested hearings at several places.

The U.P.C. states that ESOCAM is a movement which the French Administration is supporting in every way it can as a means of splitting the Cameroonian forces,<sup>(2)</sup> whereas the French Administration places all kinds of obstacles in the way of the U.P.C.'s activities.

The French Administration also reported to the Mission the springing up of a number of associations of a purely autochthonous nature, uninfluenced by the political parties of metropolitan origin. Generally speaking these associations are of purely regional importance. For example, at Douala, the revival has been witnessed of a very old association, known as the Ngondo - or Traditional Assembly of the Douala People.<sup>(3)</sup>

The aim of the Ngondo is to promote the development of the Douala people on traditional lines, i.e., by preserving all aspects of tradition that can be reconciled with the essential principles of western civilization. Its membership includes most of the Douala traditional chiefs and the principal notables. Although it sometimes finds itself in disagreement with the French Administration, such disagreement is confined to local questions and so far it has always been possible to reconcile the two viewpoints on account of the Ngondo's patent desire to reach an amicable solution of any problem arising. It should be noted that the Ngondo aims at maintaining the paramountcy of the Douala people over the other races of the Cameroons, a paramountcy springing from the historical fact that the Douala were the first

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(1) T/TET.5/54 and T/TET.5/20

(2) T/TET.5/72 - 4/63 and T/TET.5/53 - 4/30.

(3) At an impressive public ceremony, the Ngondo submitted a petition to the Mission - T/TET.5/56 - 4/31.

(c)

intermediaries between the European traders of the nineteenth century and the tribes of the interior.

The Ngondo has set an example to others and its essential characteristics have inspired the establishment at Edea, in territory adjacent to Douala, of the Association Amicale de la Sanaga Maritime,<sup>(1)</sup> which pursues the same aims as the Ngondo. After various vicissitudes, due to the peculiar mental outlook of the Bassa people, the A.A.S.M. manages to survive, although it has lost much of its vitality.

Alongside the A.A.S.M. there soon sprang up a small group known as "Solidarité Babinbi - Solibabi."<sup>(2)</sup> This is a kind of offshoot of the A.A.S.M. The elements which founded the Solibabi are natives of the Sanaga Maritime, but of a particular region, that of Babinbi. Taking the view that the Bassa of Edea were too prone to monopolize the main activities of the A.A.S.M. and to neglect unduly the interests of those not living in or near Edea, they seceded and founded the "Solibabi". Thus the Solibabi sprang from a kind of local rivalry. The opposition between the two associations was intense for a few months, but has now died down as the activity of the two movements slackened. It should be noted, adds the French Administration, that the Solibabi, being conscious of its weakness, was often ready to fall in with the wishes of the U.F.C. The agreement between the two movements is, however, far from effective as numerous elements in the Solibabi are vigorously opposed to their movement losing its independence.

At Yaounde, an Association of the Beti Clans, known as Asobeti, has been in existence for a few months. Its activities are on a small scale, but it submitted a petition to the Mission.<sup>(2)</sup> Among the Bulu peoples, who inhabit the regions of the N'Tem and Kribi, there has been established "L'Union Tribale du N'Tem - Kribi (UNTK)."<sup>(3)</sup> From its inception, this movement

(1) The A.A.S.M. also submitted a petition - T/TET.5/61.

(2) The Solidarité Babinbi submitted Petition T/TET.5/70.

(3) T/TET.5/17.

(4) The UNTK submitted petition T/TET.5/21.

has been vigorously infiltrated by the U.P.C., but the latter's agents, the most active being discharged officials and former offenders, were soon discredited. The policy pursued by the U.N.T.K. is still very indefinite, a fact due to the essentially anarchical character of the Bulu. Bulu have in fact little respect for any authority other than that of the clan chiefs, the clan being regarded as an extension of the family on either a cognate or an agnate basis.

It is likely, the French Administration stated, that this group, which is at present fairly active and does not conceal its opposition to administrative authority, will soon become dormant.

The French Administration concluded its note on political parties in the Cameroons with the following commentary:

"To sum up, the Cameroonian people has undoubtedly displayed great political activity during the last three years. But it is still feeling its way, since no precise doctrine or clearly marked trends can be deduced from all the activity described. This is due to the African's inexperience and his ignorance of the major political and social problems."

(f) Freedom of Expression

The Mission feels it proper to refer here to the extent of the freedom of speech in the Cameroons under French administration. Everywhere it went it found evidence of that. Whether in public meetings or private interviews people expressed themselves with the utmost freedom, many times in the presence of members of the administration. The Mission informed itself, moreover, on this question from the educated sections of the community, and was invariably assured of the happy existence of this freedom, a matter of which those persons were not only aware but appreciative. The Mission has reason to think that the utmost liberty was left to the various sections of the people to speak their mind, to present their petitions and to voice their complaints in whatever way they liked, which they did. The Mission is glad to observe that this freedom of speech is a matter worthy of commendation.

(g) Question of Frontiers and Relations with the Cameroons under British Administration

A certain number of complaints were submitted to the Mission concerning the difficulties caused to the population by the existence of a frontier and a customs barrier between the two Cameroons. The Mission also received some petitions for unification of the two territories.

Whatever the true situation may be - and the Mission scarcely had time to study the question - one thing seems certain: this problem, if it exists, is not at all acute at the present time and has in no sense acquired the political importance of the unification movement in Togoland. On the whole, the population of the Cameroons shows little enthusiasm in the matter and it is only for the sake of completeness that the Mission feels obliged to include the information obtained on this subject in its report to the Council.

In the North the Mission heard some statements by certain chiefs to the effect that the frontier should be abolished. The more special claims of the Emir of Yola are examined later.

Elsewhere, it was more explicitly stated that the removal of customs barriers was desirable, but not the political unification of the two territories. The reason given for this reservation was that everyone wished to maintain the system to which he was accustomed. In yet other areas, and more particularly in the Bamileke region, the Mission heard more specific complaints regarding abuses by Customs officials; frontier traffic difficulties; the impossibility, for certain families, clans and tribes, of maintaining normal relations between their members settled on both sides of the frontier; the complications resulting from differences of administration, language and currency, etc.

However, some petitions submitted to the Mission do ask for the unification of the two territories. Most of these come from local groups of the U.P.C. which the Managing Committee had instructed to include in their requests "the unification of the two Cameroons territories, British and French, including removal of the customs barrier and merging of the educational programmes."

These petitions are generally rather vague as regards the reasons justifying unification. Some say that the partition of the Cameroons into two zones is an arbitrary measure taken without the consent of the people, and which denies them the relations they should have with the inhabitants of neighbouring territories. (1) Others urge that families, communities and villages are arbitrarily separated by the frontier and that the appeals of the inhabitants of Togoland for unification of their territories, which have undergone the same artificial partition, are sufficient to show the justice of this claim. (2)

Moreover, similar claims were submitted to the Mission in British Territory, while it was passing through the Cameroons under British Administration; particulars are given on pages 51 to 58 of the report on that Territory. (3)

The French local Administration had occasion to give the Mission its views on these questions several times, both verbally and in a note. They are as follows:

"It is true that the political frontiers very rarely coincide with the ethnic frontiers. But it by no means follows that they constitute a serious obstacle between members of frontier tribes.

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(1) T/PET.5/56-4/31.

(2) T/PET.5/72-4/63; T/PET.5/40-4/28; T/PET.5/29-4/25; T/PET.5/53-4/30  
T/PET.5/22-4/24; T/PET.5/12-4/23; T/PET.4/19-5/8.

(3) See also T/PET.4/52-5/65 of the BAMENDA Improvement Association which describes frontier difficulties in the DSCHANG region.



"From north to south along the frontier between the two Cameroons territories there are Sudanese ("Kirdi"), Semito-Sudanese (Choa), Hamito-Sudanese (Foulbe), Sudano-Bantu (Bamoun, Bamileke) and Bantu (Douala) populations. Most of them are firmly attached to the soil, except perhaps the "Kirdi" in the north, who for several years have shown a tendency to come down from their mountains and settle in the plain, in French territory. Among the other tribes there are constant exchanges of visits between the territories, marriages, etc. Some French villages have fields and pasturage in British Territory and vice versa. The frontier administrative authorities have therefore concluded local agreements in order not to hamper the economic and family life of the frontier populations. A good example is the modus vivendi between the Bamileke and Bamoun regions and the district of Bamenda:

"(1) Tax certificates and identity papers of all sorts are equally valid in both zones.

"(2) Customs:

- (a) Foodstuffs carried to supply frontier populations are exempt from all Customs duties,
- (b) Foreign currency is admitted without formalities or exchange, up to a total of £5 per person,
- (c) Free export of cattle to British Territory is allowed under a local exception to the Customs regulations.

"Most of this trade is between families. The balance is fairly even, exports amounting to 1,955,000 francs and imports to 1,370,000 francs. Frontier trade in other areas is of a similar nature."

In the north of the Cameroons, for example, the Mission was informed by the local administration that the Customs authorities exercise hardly any control over frontier movements and merely supervise lorry traffic. In the frontier areas and markets, English and French currencies are used indiscriminately. No identity document or administrative pass is required for crossing the frontier. If some degree of control is exercised, it is to guard against the danger of illegal traffic in currency and goods.

There is one aspect of the frontier problem which the Mission was able to examine rather more fully. When passing through Nigeria it received a petition from the Emir of Adamawa, Lamido of Yola<sup>(1)</sup> requesting the replacement under his direct authority of all natives of Adamawa, whether resident in

(1) T/FET.4/21-5/9.

French or British Territory. This petition is all the more interesting because it asks for the withdrawal of all these areas from the Trusteeship System and their annexation to the Emirate of Adamawa and to Nigeria. One argument used in support of this claim is that most of the chiefs and the population living in French Territory still regard the Emir of Yola as their paramount chief and pay him homage as such. Immediately upon arriving in the areas of the Cameroons under French administration affected by the claims of the Emir of Yola, the Mission enquired into the views of the lamidos and local notables. At Garoua, chief centre of the Benoue area, for example, the Mission interrogated two groups of about 50 chiefs and notables. Their reaction was unanimous and most vehement: they refuse to consider being subject to the authority of the Emir of Yola. They explained that their region had never been a political dependency of Yola in the past. As regards religion they paid homage to the Lamido of Sokoto (in Nigeria) at the time of the Cheikhou Ousmanou, about 1805. Owing to the great distance, the latter appointed Adama, Lamido of Yola as his representative, and entrusted him with the white flag which, in their religion, gave him the right to direct the Holy War against the infidel. But this situation ended with the death of Adama in 1847, and the chiefs in what is now the French Cameroons refused, and in fact, ceased, to be subject to Yola even in religious matters, though they maintained their religious association with Sokoto. Accordingly they are opposed to any proposal to re-establish the kingdom of Yola, and they added that any attempt to make them subject to Yola would result in serious disorder. They also said that they were much attached to French trusteeship and were anxious to remain under this beneficent system.

A few days after the Mission's visit, the Lamidos of the Garoua region, highly incensed at the claims of the Emir of Yola, confirmed their views in writing<sup>(1)</sup>, expressing their opposition to the claim made by the Lamido and his chiefs, and requesting, on the contrary, that "the Cameroons under British Administration should be restored and attached to France, which was, moreover, the desire of the local population."

(1) T/PET.5/68 and T/PET.5/76-4/64.

When passing through Ngaoundere (Adamawa region) the Mission made a similar enquiry among the various chiefs and notables, including the Lamidos of Ngaoundere and Banyo. They also expressed unshakeable opposition to the claims of the Emir of Yola and affirmed their satisfaction with the present situation and with French Trusteeship.

## CHAPTER II - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### (a) General

In a space of 15 days the Visiting Mission visited a territory of 423,000 square km. travelling over 4,000 km., giving hearings to all who wished to be heard, listening to the claims of groups and individuals, obtaining the necessary information from the local administration, reading the documents submitted, attending an impressive number of receptions and public functions, and having to form an idea of the economic situation of the Territory, to understand its problems and to assess the possibilities of a country so new and so extensive as the Cameroons.

The visitor to the Cameroons readily acquires the impression that the Cameroons are a very large and very varied territory, offering great possibilities of which only a proportion is developed, or even studied or known.

On the other hand, it is evident that the Cameroons are now undergoing rapid economic development. There is no doubt that under the mandate system the territory had already been appreciably developed but there is now great activity there; development of towns, construction of buildings, establishment of industries, new plantations, electrification, road building, equipment of harbours, schemes to extend the railway system, prospecting for minerals, etc., etc. The FIDES plan and a favourable economic situation are among the factors contributing to this development.

One of the basic problems in developing the country is undoubtedly that of transport. When France took over the administration of the Cameroons, she inherited 340 km. of roads and 344 km. of railways. The Cameroons now have 10,000 km. of roads and 504 km. of railways. But the greater part of the road system, even though it can carry traffic in the rainy season, is far from meeting modern requirements. The Mission noted with satisfaction that the improvement of existing roads, the building of new roads, and the study of new connections are in progress. The Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Economique et social des Territoires d'Outremer (FIDES) plan for road development provides for 6,000 million CFA francs for road building, and

includes large-scale works such as the Wouri Bridge. Large credits have also been allocated for the improvement and extension of the railway network, and more ambitious plans for the future are already under consideration for a railway connection with the Tchad region, which will open up entirely new prospects for the North Cameroons area. This part of the Territory is at present dependent for its transport on the Benoue river, on which navigation is only possible during two or three months of the year; development of the region, which is very densely populated and has great agricultural possibilities, is thus impossible. Large harbour works are now in progress at Douala, which will soon become one of the best equipped ports in West Africa. In short, the Mission gained the impression that a great effort is being made as regards transport and that in this respect the future prospects of the Territory are good.

As regards mining, hardly anything has been done. The Territory certainly has possibilities, but they have not yet been fully surveyed. The ten-year plan provides for certain measures in this connection, which should ensure the development of prospecting, the study of deposits, etc.

Very large electrification works are being carried out, and by 1952 the Edea power station will be able to provide 30,000 kws of electric power for the Douala-Edea region, which will make it possible not only to supply these two towns with current, but also to develop considerable industries on the outskirts of Douala. A striking feature of Douala is the number of buildings under construction. Other plans for the electrification of towns are being carried out or are under consideration, as well as schemes for the utilization of hydro-electric resources.

As regards agriculture, the export of cocoa increased from 2,500 tons in 1920 to 31,000 tons in 1938, and 42,600 tons in 1948. Bananas were not exported in 1920 but exports amounted to 25,000 tons in 1938 and 31,000 tons in 1948, when 57,000 tons were cut for the market. No coffee was exported in 1920 but exports reached 4,200 tons in 1938 and 6,500 tons in 1948 and have considerably exceeded this figure in 1949. Production of palmetto and palm oil has regained the prewar level. Rubber plantations are expanding and more tobacco is being grown. Experimental stations have been set up in the north of the Territory to

develop the cultivation of ground nuts and to experiment in mechanized agriculture. Progress is being made with the cultivation and processing of cinchona in the Dschang region. Various research and experimental stations are engaged in studying the improvement of cocoa and coffee growing, food crops, oils and oil-seeds, etc. Cattle are bred extensively in the Northern Cameroons and Adamawa and breeding is controlled by the Stock Raising Department. The Mission visited the important stock farm at Wakwa. A ten-year equipment and development plan provides for large credits for agricultural research, agricultural training, preparation of products, plans for health measures, mechanization of agriculture, equipment of technical services, assistance to private enterprise, processing of products, protection of the health of livestock and their improvement, increase and rational utilization.

Felling of forests in 1949 was sufficient for the export of 62,000 cubic metres of logs and the production of 33,500 cubic metres of sawn timber.

There is important European participation in certain branches of agriculture, such as banana, coffee and tobacco growing and the exploitation of forests. This raises certain problems which came to the attention of the Mission. Among other things, it heard Africans complain that the Administration did not assist them sufficiently. Others also complained of the administrative restrictions on coffee growing, particularly in the Bamileke region.

The industrialization of the Cameroons is a recent development, and the Administration favours the establishment of undertakings calculated to diversify and supplement the economy of the Territory by the processing of products which, for lack of suitable industries, have not yet been used or appreciated as they should be. The French Administration is also anxious to equip the Cameroons in a manner suited to the potentialities of the Territory, by encouraging the establishment of public works and transport undertakings.

As regards trade, which also seems to be expanding, and transport, the Mission heard various Africans ask for more assistance from the Administration and complain of the licensing system and transport regulations.

As regards transport, the Mission was informed that in the Bamileke region the Africans owned 150 lorries, and that 250 more have been ordered.

To sum up, the Mission gained an impression of vigorous and increasing economic activity. The Cameroons show no signs of economic stagnation. This development raises many important problems of financing, organization, transport, and the balance between European and African populations, on the solution of which the future of the Territory depends.

(b) Land and Forest Tenure

The following subjects were brought to the attention of the Mission:

(1) Recognition and registration of the land rights of Africans

The certification of native rights is governed by the Decree of 21 July 1932 which permits a person or community holding land by customary tenure to obtain certification and confirmation of his or its legal right in respect of third parties. This procedure involves holding a palaver, public notice and court action and results in the issue of a title. Up to quite recently, very few Africans showed any interest in obtaining such titles and were content to occupy their customary lands without such legal ratification, which in any case was purely optional. In 1948, only 170 hectares of urban land and 2,700 hectares of rural land had been submitted to that procedure. As the annual report for 1948 points out, however, a land psychosis, involving an increasing flow of applications for recognition of land rights, has recently emerged among the indigenous communities, especially in the South where they show greater interest in economic activity and are becoming conscious of the value of land. The Mission was informed that the number of applications filed during the past year exceeded the sum total of all applications granted during all previous years taken together. This sudden rush of applications, mainly individual applications for urban land but also, on occasion, applications by a community, tribe, village or family living on rural land, is due to various causes. One of them is land speculation in urban areas. Another is the need for having a land title in order to obtain a mortgage from the newly established *Crédit du Cameroun*.

As a result the administrative staff concerned has been overwhelmed. In cases where the services of a surveyor are required, the latter, being swamped with work, is unable to carry out his surveying duties expeditiously. The holding of palavers is delayed. In addition, investigations into the actual existence of land rights are becoming increasingly difficult; it is already necessary, in the case of applications submitted by a community, to ensure that its representative does not have the land registered in his own name or in that of near relatives to the detriment of the community as a whole, or that he does not register in his own name lands belonging to neighbouring communities which may happen to be less advanced. Individual applications require even closer scrutiny in view of the possibility of all manner of abuses. This accounts for the frequent demands for evidence, such as the utilisation of the land, in many cases the merest indication of claimed ownership will be taken as sufficient evidence; such as the tilling of the land, or the existence on the land of a smithy, a well, a grave, etc.

The whole problem is complicated by the fact that the conceptions of ownership and land practices, embodied in the various customary laws of the peoples of the Cameroons differ very widely from the principles of French law. There is no such thing, for example, as individual ownership of land. The French Administration is the first to admit, therefore, that in many areas the certificates of indigenous land rights and the establishment of a land register encounters considerable material difficulties under the existing procedure.

A number of Africans pointed to the difficulties experienced by them in obtaining recognition of their customary land rights as against the position of the Europeans, who, they claim, obtain lands without difficulty. An eminent African expressed the view that steps to allay existing feeling were becoming necessary. The matter has been raised several times in the Representative Assembly.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the French Administration has just set up fourteen regional study commissions composed, apart from the chef de région and representatives of the Representative Assembly, of indigenous notables, merchants and planters. These commissions are to study, among other questions,



suitable measures for harmonising traditional usage with French legal principles with a view to effecting a general reorganization of the land tenure system.

(2) Cessions and concessions to Europeans: spoliation and expropriation

Here again, the Mission heard numerous complaints. In the Bamileke region for instance, <sup>1/</sup> the traditional chiefs and members of the Representative Assembly expressed their grievances regarding concessions of land to private persons, companies and missions.

To quote only one typical petition<sup>2/</sup>:

"We have tremendous resources in our Territory. All of these have been ceded, finally and exclusively, to the large European companies and undertakings. Nevertheless, these lands and forests belong to us and the Cameroonian dreads the day when he will become the most disinherited of men and will shortly cease to be an owner and become a beggar. In the Cameroons a few agricultural and forestry companies and about twenty big planters share 4/5ths of the forests and cultivable land. A choice must be made between the policy of granting large concessions to Europeans and the policy of encouraging native enterprise. Cameroonians choose the latter solution which, we may add, has produced excellent results elsewhere."

The French Administration pointed out to the Mission that although under the Decree of 12 January 1938 concessions could be granted by order of the Haut Commissaire, the Decree of 25 October 1946, establishing the Representative Assembly, gives the latter certain powers. For instance, the Assembly has the right to discuss all applications for lands included in the urban development plan, and must be consulted for all rural concessions exceeding 200 hectares. Moreover, a draft order was submitted to the Representative Assembly for approval in February 1949, its object being to amend the procedure for applying the 1938 law on national property, so as to take account of the Assembly's prerogatives.

The French Administration has already pointed out that the grant of rural concessions to Europeans had been provisionally suspended since 1937, in order

(1) T/PET 5/40 - 4/28 and T/PET 5/38

(2) T/PET 5/56 - 4/31

to avoid labour difficulties. During recent years concessions and leases have been granted for industrial purposes only.<sup>1/</sup> The French Administration informed the Mission that it considered the Communist Party to be mainly responsible for this offensive against land concessions to non-indigenous persons.

The Mission also heard various complaints regarding spoliation of lands for the benefit of the Administration or undertakings supported by it.<sup>2/</sup> The Administration stated that it was sometimes necessary to find land for the establishment of new undertakings which would help to develop the Territory. It informed the Mission that for this purpose it had endeavoured to use lands classified as private property before 1940, or to purchase land from indigenous persons by private contract. Whenever it had to classify additional lands as private property, the decision was left to the Assembly which is empowered to discuss and decide these questions, and especially the compensation payable to the owners. The Administration explained that many cases of alleged expropriation by Europeans were really sales by indigenous persons who defrauded less educated villagers, taking advantage of their ignorance to gain possession of community lands which they subsequently leased or resold to the detriment of the family or village community to which they belonged.

In view of the interest shown by public opinion in the Cameroons and of the claims submitted to the Mission, it is suggested that the Trusteeship Council should invite the Administering Authority to provide special, detailed documentation on this subject and to keep the Council informed on the work of the Regional Study Commissions and the Representative Assembly, and on the progress made in revising the system of land tenure.

Attention must also be drawn to a special problem at Doula, where the expansion of the town and land speculation have revived a dispute between the local people and Africans from other parts of the Cameroons or Africa, who have

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<sup>1/</sup> Annual Report 1947, p. 64

<sup>2/</sup> See for instance petition T/PET 5/47

been settled there for many years on unoccupied land placed at their disposal about 30 years ago. The people of Douala ask that the foreigners should be expelled.<sup>(1)</sup> The latter verbally informed the Mission of their anxiety, and the French Administration has long been considering this problem, which it describes as a difficult and delicate one.

### (3) Vacant and Ownerless Land

Under French law "vacant and ownerless land" and also land which has been abandoned for more than ten years belong to the Territory. As customary law does not provide for any time limitation, the French Administration soon ceased to classify land which had been abandoned for more than ten years as the property of the Territory, but continued to include "vacant and ownerless land."

Encouraged by this success, says the French Administration, certain African agitators have endeavoured to prove that "vacant and ownerless land" did not exist under customary law, maintaining that the whole of the Cameroons is composed of real property belonging to communities such as the tribe, clan or family, and that while vacant land may exist none of it is ownerless. The French Administration regards such theories as a mere political manoeuvre with no basis in fact.<sup>(2)</sup> The Mission received a large number of complaints in this connection. Many petitions, several from sources other than the U.P.C., refer to the question and vehemently protest against the idea of "vacant and ownerless land." Similar opposition was voiced in the Representative Assembly, the Commissions of which, and later the Assembly to which a draft decree amending the regulations applying to land tenure was submitted in February 1949, adopted a resolution requesting the deletion of the words "ownerless land" from Article 14 of the draft.

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(1) T/PET 5/59

(2) P.4 memorandum - "Notes au sujet des incidences politiques et sociales du régime foncier du Caméroun" - given by the local administration to the Mission.

(4) Forest regime

The two aspects to be considered when studying the forest regime in the Cameroons are, firstly, the general measures taken to protect and conserve forests and, secondly, the present situation with regard to timber cutting. So far as timber cutting is concerned, the cause of the dissatisfaction is the enormous size of the cutting concessions granted to Europeans.

A quotation from one of the petitions <sup>(1)</sup> on this subject reads as follows:

"We should not think of offering blind opposition to the normal exploitation of forests, taking due account of the opinions and traditional rights of the indigenous masses. It is the arbitrary methods and the intrigue at present employed to dispossess the small African planters of their land which shock public opinion . . . What is more serious still is that this large-scale handing out of our forests and rural land is being made above all for the benefit of non-indigenous persons and to the great prejudice of indigenous planters. For example, out of the colossal figure of 2,046,057 hectares of forest and land distributed in the form of concessions in a single year (November 1947 - November 1948), 2,010,062 hectares were given to non-natives and only 35,995 hectares, or 1/57 of the total area, to natives. A detailed list of these concessions is appended to the present memorandum.

"We denounce this fact as a flagrant violation of Article 7, paragraph 1, of the Trusteeship Agreements and of Article 73, paragraph 1, of the United Nations Charter."

The area of cutting concessions granted amounts to 2,300,000 hectares. The Administration maintains that the present situation and present legislation are in keeping with France's international obligations because they promote the economic advancement of the Territory and of its inhabitants, do not discriminate on grounds of nationality and prohibit any monopoly.

Before the war legislation restricted to four concessions of 2,500 hectares the maximum area which could be granted to one and the same person.

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(1) T/NET.5/52.

...the holder could fell what and how he chose, so long as  
...the minimum cutting diameter. This procedure had serious draw-  
backs since it led to denuding the forests of valuable species, instability of  
forest enterprises and restricted development of forest economy. In its new  
regulations for the grant of forest cutting concessions the Administration has  
endeavoured to see to it that:

- (1) in order to encourage investment of the necessary capital,  
industrialists are assured that their cutting concession will provide the  
volume of timber essential to the operation of their undertakings on a long-  
term basis;
- (2) the volume of timber felled annually does not exceed forest increment.  
(In this connection the Administration points out that a regular annual  
production of 1,000 cu. m. of sawn timber in equatorial forests represents the  
forest increment of 4,000-6,000 hectares.)

The Administration points out that the problems of minimum costs and  
economy of labour are dealt with most successfully by large undertakings.

The breakdown of cutting concessions is as follows:

27	licence-holders	with concessions of less than	10,000 hectares
16	"	" " " "	10-20,000 "
16	"	" " " "	20-50,000 "
4	"	" " " "	50-100,000 "
5	"	" " " "	more than 100,000 "

The breakdown by nationality is: 52 French, 10 African and 6 foreign  
licence-holders.

Every holder of a concession of at least 20,000 hectares undertakes to set  
up an industry commensurate with the extent and, hence, the potential yield of  
his concession. Should he fail to observe this undertaking his concession  
would be revoked or reduced.

So far as the classification of forests is concerned, the French Administration  
sent the Visiting Mission with a wide variety of technical literature in

which it is explained that the Cameroon forests, which represent one of the Territory's richest resources, are threatened in certain areas by excessive clearings, that it is essential - for climatic, hydrological and economic reasons - to keep 25% of the land under timber, and also that it is advisable to plan and improve timber resources in a forest preserve determined by law and covering a specific area. To this end the Administration decided, by decree of 3 May 1946, to place certain forest areas known as "scheduled forests" under a special legal regime. These scheduled areas are protected against depredations of all kinds: excessive cutting, clearing for temporary cultivation, fire, etc. Their present area is just over 1 million hectares. The aim is to schedule 10-12 million hectares and the 10-year plan provides credits for the purpose.

According to the information supplied by the Administration all proposals for scheduling forest areas were carefully examined by the Inspecteurs des Eaux et Forêts who, in fixing boundaries and by creating "islands" within the latter, were careful to disturb the members of neighbouring communities as little as possible. Nevertheless, these communities regarded this new provision affecting the forest regime as a restriction of their rights and an interference with their freedom. In the Sanaga Maritime, Nyong and Sanaga and Mungo areas the native representatives in the classification commissions frequently expressed their opposition. The arguments used to convince them of the necessity of preserving the forests were unavailing against their desire to live and till the soil without let or hindrance in accordance with their ancestral custom. Nevertheless they had been informed that their common rights as regards hunting, fishing and small-scale farming would not be restricted and that the cutting of fuel-wood and timber would require the permission of the Inspector of Woods and Forests. Moreover, clearing and temporary tilling in scheduled forests were not simply prohibited, but were to be the subject of special regulations, the aim of which was to promote the regeneration and development of trees producing valuable timber. But Africans claim further that the Inspecteurs des Eaux et Forêts are guilty of many abuses, such as destruction of growing crops, <sup>(1)</sup> extortion,

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(1) T/PET.5/55.

brutality, etc. (1) The Assembly pronounced in favour, and despite the dislike of several African members for the basic principles of forest classification, 1 million hectares were scheduled and thus became the property of the Territory. The Administration then proposed to compound the usufruct rights of the forests by allocating all revenue from a portion of these forests to each riparian community holding such rights. The idea was to reserve for each district a small parcel of forest of approximately 100 hectares in area for the requirements of the inhabitants. This was opposed by all the African members of the Assembly and expressed itself against it. The Administration decided not to overrule this unfavourable view and withdrew its proposal.

The dispute arises from the fact that in the case of forests, as in the case of all public property, the Africans do not admit the existence of ownerless estates, maintaining that all forests have owners.

The Administration disputes this view, stating that before the European occupation the Cameroons were composed of a series of more or less independent societies which may be called states. In each society the chief exercised sovereign rights over the lands which were subject to his authority, but appropriation of the soil was unknown. Waterways and forest areas represented the State's eminent domain over which the inhabitants enjoyed common rights. When the Cameroons became an administrative entity they took over the individual sovereignty of each State. But the representatives of indigenous communities cannot grasp this idea of territorial unity and deny the Government of the Territory (which they equate with France, the French and the "whites") the right to act in a sovereign capacity and wish their former right of sovereignty to be regarded as a right of ownership.

The French Administration states that it has no intention of robbing indigenous communities by creating scheduled forests, but intends, on the contrary, to ensure the preservation and improvement of a certain area of

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(1) See the motion by Mr. Woungly Massaga in the ARCAM -  
October-November Session, 1948, p. 152.

forest for the benefit of the Cameroons. In so doing it means to respect existing rights which, in its view, may attach solely to products in the case of the old forests which show no trace of contemporary human occupation, and to the land in the case of sections previously cleared where the forest is being regenerated. Therefore, the Administration regards it as reasonable to consider granting ownership of the secondary forests to the communities and reserving ownership of the primary forests to the Territory.

The Administration, however, recognises that it is faced with the very strong opposition of the Africans who continue vehemently to maintain their **property rights over all forests**. The Africans continue to be opposed to the classing of forests and this tendency is obvious in the Assembly. The French Administration hopes, through publicity and reorganization of the land system, to induce the rural populations and their official representatives to understand where the permanent interests of the Territory lie. Should these hopes be disappointed, it adds it is France's duty to ensure the protection of the resources of the Cameroons, against the will of their inhabitants.

The Mission feels it should draw the attention of the Trusteeship Council to this question in regard to which the apparently reasonable programme of the Administration seems to conflict with the deep feelings of the Africans to such an extent that they are energetically opposed to its implementation.

(c) Co-operatives (1)

The Mission considers it of interest to furnish some information on the controversy involving the indigenous provident societies and the co-operatives in the Cameroons as this question was brought to its notice both verbally and in writing.

The Sociétés indigènes de prévoyance (S.I.P.) are not co-operatives in the usual sense of the word. They are not voluntary bodies as the indigenous farmers and stockbreeders in each administrative district are obliged to join.

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(1) Information on the co-operative system is given in the Annual Report 1947 (p.101-103) and 1948 (p.105-109).



Although the SIP's are private corporate bodies with financial autonomy, they also partake of the nature of public utilities and are strictly controlled by the Administration. They might be called "State Agricultural Co-operatives". The SIP's as a body, are controlled by a central supervisory committee, which discusses draft budgets, audits and approves balance-sheets and management accounts. In the capital there is an SIP Joint Fund whose function is to assist the individual SIP's, receive and distribute subsidies, contract loans, purchase equipment, carry out tests, etc. The Joint Fund has advanced 40 million francs to the SIP's since 1945.

According to the Administration, the work of the SIP's has led to varied and important results. Amongst recent achievements the Administration instances: market gardening and farmyard stockbreeding centres at Dschang, Bipindi and Fouban; the introduction of potato growing in the Nbam area; the agricultural and stockbreeding centre at Mvog-Betsi; the dairy produce plant at Meiganga; the purchase and distribution of light equipment and agricultural implements; the construction of rice mills and coffee processing plants, etc. etc.

The local administration looks on the SIP's as constituting the sole link at the moment between the various African communities in the field of agricultural economy and perhaps in other directions as well. It believes that if they were done away with, or made voluntary in character the consequences would at present be retrogressive.

There is, however, considerable complaint against the SIP's amongst the Africans. They object to its alleged anti-democratic character; that contributions to the SIP's are obligatory and are collected at the same time as taxation; that the members have no choice as regards joining and often do not know what it is all about. It is stated that they are controlled by an administrative council which in practice is almost invariably composed of French administrative officials (chefs de sub-division et de région) without the members having any real voice in the administration. Some Africans therefore demand either the complete abolition of the SIP's or such reform as would place control in the hands of the members.

The co-operatives in the proper sense of the word have been enthusiastically welcomed by the indigenous population and more than a hundred have been formed since 1946. They are new organizations and differ radically from the first attempts at co-operative action before the war. They are designed on the lines of similar institutions in metropolitan France and are governed by French metropolitan company law. These co-operative organizations engage in many and diverse activities. They may be classified as co-operatives for the collection and sale of food and export products; supply co-operatives, consumers' co-operatives, producers' co-operatives, etc.

The French Administration is inclined to look with favour on the co-operative societies as it recognizes that a useful purpose is served by encouraging action initiated by Africans and by allowing them to cope with management problems themselves, which does not happen in the case of the SIP's. The young co-operative movement, too, gives rise to certain problems.

Some interesting comments by the local administration are quoted here:

"Leaving aside the Sociétés Indigènes de Prévoyance, the co-operative movement in the Cameroons, as in France, was not based on an overall plan but was the result of separate action by officials or private individuals. For this reason it was lacking from the start in unity and the indispensable means for sustained and effective action.

"It is doubtless necessary in the Cameroons as elsewhere to respect the principle of spontaneous growth which is one of the fundamentals of the co-operative idea, but it must also be recognized that this principle is one of the reasons for the uneven development of the co-operative movement in relation to the needs, aspirations or stage of advancement of each region at a given time.

"Allowance must also be made for the at times mistaken or ingenuous ideas of the indigenous inhabitant and of his individualism or parochial outlook, modified to some extent perhaps by acquired ideas which as often as not have been badly assimilated.

"These factors taken in conjunction make it impossible for the co-operative movement in the Cameroons to develop on exactly the same lines as in countries with an older civilization; thus legal forms are not always observed; until quite recently wild flights of fancy were allowed free play in drawing up the statutes; anomalies and irregularities still frequently occur in management; internal organization and operation often leave much to be desired; basic principles are not always recognized and in any case too

frequently violated. The indigenous inhabitant is too often inclined to see in the co-operative movement a source of profit to himself and the managers, often temporary, are disposed to share this tendency.

"A study of the various aspects of the Cameroonian co-operative movement in the early stages, with a view to deriving lessons for the future, points to the conclusion that only after the progressive education of the members and sustained administrative supervision can the young co-operative societies hope to achieve their ends. Left to themselves and dependent on their own resources the young co-operative societies will never be able to pay their way.

"With these considerations in mind the local authorities have already tried, insofar as their limited resources permit, to lay the foundation of an organization within which the various groups may co-ordinate their hitherto disjointed activities."

The various ways (financial, technical and economic) in which the government has helped the co-operative societies are described in the Annual Report for 1948 (pages 107-108). Financial assistance by the government to the co-operatives amounts to date to 120 million francs CFA in loans, of which 87 millions have still to be repaid. Such repayment is proving very difficult, a fact which in its turn has made the Representative Assembly cautious and has led it to refuse new loans, in particular to cocoa producers, even though the Administration was not opposed to them. The Assembly has in consequence come in for very bitter criticism from certain co-operative organizations. (1)

On the other hand the handling of the new co-operative societies' funds has not always been above criticism. The French Administration says that in the beginning it tried to avoid taking penal action but that it will soon have to consider prosecuting the managers in some cases. Unhappy experiences with European managers engaged by some co-operative societies on the advice of the Administration have in fact helped to solve the difficulty. A department for the supervision of indigenous co-operative organizations and companies was established in January 1949. This department is responsible for the study of questions affecting such societies and for providing assistance and supervision.

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(1) T/PET.5/15

This administrative interference and supervision is not always appreciated by the Africans. (1)

The Visiting Mission believes that the progress of the co-operative movement will be an important factor in the development of the country.

The following conclusions regarding the future of the co-operative movement were submitted to the Mission by the local administration:

"The recent trend of economic affairs and the ever-increasing tendency to return to conditions of free competition are very liable to lead to a crisis in the growth of the co-operative movement.

"It is to be anticipated that amongst the more or less disorganized crop of newly created organizations a certain number will disappear. Some have already done so.

"It is likely that as a result of the process of elimination only such co-operatives will survive as are of real value (processing and selling, services and production co-operatives.) Commercial dealings in products and the importing of supplies will probably revert more and more into the hands of private enterprise.

"Apart from the steps taken by the Administration of the Cameroons, the Ministry of French Overseas Territories concluded arrangements in 1948 for courses of instruction for personnel capable of directing and managing co-operative societies. The students will be chosen from amongst staff who have taken courses in mutual assistance and co-operation in France, and specialists taking courses of practical instruction in modern methods of rural development in the tropics, held at the Colonial School at le Havre.

"Some such arrangements were urgently required as specially trained personnel have a most important part to play both as regards education and administration.

"The Ministry of French Overseas Territories is, moreover, engaged in formulating the basic principles of Co-operation to be applied in all the territories comprising the French Union and in standardising the measures to be taken for its development and financing."

Attention may also be called to the establishment in May 1949 of the Crédit du Caméroutn which has just started operations. This is a state corporation with a capital of 40 million francs C.F.A. which has been

subscribed by the Territory (20 millions in the shape of a long-term loan by the Central Bank for French Overseas Territories at 1% interest). This corporation makes short or medium term loans to agricultural co-operatives and associations, artisan enterprises and agricultural undertakings. It will also make loans on real estate in individual cases for the acquisition of small holdings or for the construction of houses.

### CHAPTER III - SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

#### (a) Medical Services

The Mission visited a great number of hospitals, dispensaries, branch posts and other health and medical institutions and was very favourably impressed by the efforts made by the Administering Authority in this field in the Cameroons, where medical work has already reached a high standard; it is sufficient in this connection to mention the name of Dr. Jamot and the campaign against sleeping sickness. The hospitals in large centres such as Yaounde and Douala seemed to be equipped according to the latest modern requirements; the same thing can be said for other hospitals in more remote centres and also for certain medical units of the religious missions. The medical personnel seems to be competent and devoted to its task. Thirty four European doctors in government service are assisted by an increasing number of African doctors (at present 58) and a large auxiliary staff. There are in addition 18 private practitioners or mission doctors. The Mission was favourably impressed by what is, for Africa, a relatively extensive system of maternity centres, and by the existence of not only African midwives, but also European midwives.

The African population shows great confidence in the medical services. Many Africans who, in other fields criticised the French Administration very severely, paid tribute to its achievements in public health. Of course, much still remains to be done and the Mission heard innumerable requests for an extension of the medical services. The French Administration in no way disputes the need for this, and the ten-year plan provides for an appropriation of Frs. CFA 1,357 million (or about 500 frs. per head of population) for the construction of new buildings and the acquisition of technical equipment and means of transport.

The only point on which the Mission heard complaints was that racial discrimination is still practised in the matter of medical care, Europeans enjoying certain advantages not available to Africans. The training of a larger number of African doctors, more of whom should be given a thorough

training at European universities instead of having to content themselves with the less thorough instruction they receive at Dakar, was also urged.

(b) Immigration Problem

Some African representatives of the Representative Assembly expressed certain fears with regard to the recent influx of European immigrants. The European population, which was 3,210 in 1944, rose to 5,800 in 1948 and 6,513 in 1949. The representatives in question disclaimed any desire to encourage racial discrimination and declared that they saw no objection to useful elements from all races and nationalities coming to contribute to the development of the Cameroons. They did, however, express their anxiety at the influx of foreigners, who came to the Cameroons to enrich themselves, to monopolize trade without putting any capital into the country and to take up posts which might quite well be filled by Cameroonians. They urged that action should be taken in the matter by the Government.

The local Administration declared that it did not encourage European immigration. Conditions of entry (see the Decree of 7 October 1930, reproduced in the Annual Report for 1947, page 201) require, in addition to a visa, the deposit of a certain sum as security to ensure the repatriation of the immigrant, if necessary. It is, however, difficult to refuse to allow those who satisfy these conditions to enter the Territory.

The same explanation was given to the Visiting Mission, as also to the Assembly (1) in reply to the plea of an African member that "the entry of foreigners into the Cameroons be rendered practically impossible."

Quite apart from the possibility of getting immigrants without sufficient moral and other guarantees, the fears of the Africans seem to fall under three different headings: in the first place, they are afraid that too many Europeans may settle in the Territory and occupy land; to which the Administration replies that it guards against this by refusing them concessions. Secondly, they are afraid of seeing the monopoly of trade and

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(1) April Session 1948, pages 43-44

of the country's economic development come more and more into the hands of non-Africans. (1) Finally, they complain that non-Africans are taking up more and more jobs which Africans could fill. As far as supply of labour is concerned, this point will be re-examined in the chapter on labour questions.

(c) Labour

The field of labour, a vital one for the Cameroons, raises many complex problems. First there is the question of freedom of labour, a principle which, according to some, is not properly understood and the abuse of which may be harmful to the future of the country; or which, according to others, is ignored and violated by forced labour practices. There are also the questions of trade union activity, which is considerable in the Cameroons, of output and productivity of labour, of wages and, finally, the question of labour legislation.

(1) Freedom of Labour - Forced Labour

The Law of 11 April 1946 strictly forbids forced or compulsory labour. The abolition of forced labour was greeted with enthusiasm by the African population of the Cameroons.

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(1) e.g. T/PET.5/17



Three years later, opinion on the practical effects of this measure is very divided. According to some, this principle has been interpreted by a large number of Africans as giving them the right to do nothing at all and this misinterpretation has led to a grave crisis in manpower. This manpower crisis is a source of anxiety to the Government of the Cameroons and to a large number of the Africans, Members of the Assembly, where at the request of the Government, the question formed the subject of a debate in the Assembly in April 1949, (1) The Commissaire du Gouvernement stating that:

"The Assembly votes credits and asks for the economic development of the Territory to be more and more intensively pursued. It is, however, quite obvious that unless the Cameroonian people play their proper part, this development will be seriously endangered ... As you know, a law was enacted in 1946 abolishing forced labour. The term 'forced labour', however, must not be confused with that of 'voluntary labour' and the people thus be given the impression that every time help is needed to build a school or a dispensary, such a

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(1) ARCAM, April 1949, pp. 53-54 and 56-66

request can be labelled 'forced labour.' We are dealing with two entirely different things. It would be desirable for you to inform the Government how you propose to solve this increasingly urgent problem. What would be the good of allocating millions of francs for road building if the Cameroonians no longer wish to put their labour power at the services of their own country? ... At the time, and quite rightly, you criticised forced labour. That institution was, however, abolished two years ago and I do not think it is any exaggeration to say that the work performed by the Cameroonians since then has not amounted to very much."

An African member of the Assembly declared that the watchword of the Cameroonian people had become "we have been told not to work any more." This was a grave misunderstanding. To meet this situation, the Social Affairs and Economic Affairs Commissions proposed to take a census of idle persons, to set up in the villages a system of service based on custom to urge recruited workers to sign a contract for a minimum period, to keep back part of their wages and pay it into a savings bank, and to establish penalties for infringements of these new principles. In a word, to launch a grand offensive of propaganda and enlightenment against idleness without, however, re-establishing the principle of forced labour in any form whatsoever. (1)

These proposals are being studied.

In the course of the same debate, certain African representatives made it known that, in their opinion, the manpower crisis was not due solely to the abolition of forced labour, but also to the decline in the purchasing power of the currency.

However, it is not necessary to take an alarmist view of the situation. As the Haut Commissaire pointed out at the opening of the extraordinary session of the Assembly, in February 1947, while it is true that the change-over from a coercive system to a free one is not easy, that uneasiness and misunderstanding arise and some persons appear to confuse freedom of labour with the right to do nothing at all, it is equally true that the economic activity of the Territory is in no sense paralysed, as is eloquently borne out

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(1) ARCAM, April 1949, pp. 99-101

by the statistics. At interviews with the Visiting Mission several African notables re-affirmed their view that freedom of labour was too often interpreted by the African as a right to idleness.

The situation is summarised as follows in the documentary material handed to the Visiting Mission:

"The law of 1946 establishing the complete freedom of labour opened the labour market to the free play of supply and demand. To begin with this law, following immediately on a system of directed recruitment, certainly caused economic disorder, since it led credulous and ill-advised natives to believe that it was no longer necessary to work in order to live. This was the price that had inevitably to be paid for a reform which finally abolished an obsolete economic system. Natural law soon reasserted itself and workers' movements leading to the formation of a growing working class began to take shape."

The Visiting Mission nevertheless heard a certain number of complaints of a different type. The petitions of the U.P.C. and the C.G.T., in particular, assert that despite the law of 1946 forced labour has in fact never ceased to exist. They claim that the Administration is continuing the forced recruitment of workers, especially for work on roads, and specific cases are mentioned in support of these charges with, in certain instances, lists of names and even copies of official documents such as administrative summonses, etc. (1)

During a hearing at Yaounde the petitioners urged the Mission to visit a camp called a "forced labour camp", stating that natives are arrested in the surrounding villages and sometimes even a considerable distance away and forced to work at Yaounde for many weeks, for starvation wages. If they leave one job they are apprehended and punished. (2)

The French Administration transmitted a written note concerning the recruitment of labour for the Yaounde Public Works. The note explains that no pressure has ever been exerted in recruiting these labourers and that they are volunteers from villages some 50 kilometres from Yaounde who are at all times quite free to return to their villages if they wish, any who have done so never having been interfered with.

(1) T/PET.5/52; T/PET.5/36; T/PET.5/42-4/29; T/PET.5/74; T/PET.5/75; T/PET.5/58.  
(2) T/PET.5/68 and T/PET.5/36.

At Nkongsamba the petitioners<sup>(1)</sup> stated verbally that forced labour on roads, in quarries, etc. exists because the Administration offers wages that are too low to attract volunteers. They asserted that chiefs are obliged to supply workers for one or more weeks. It is alleged that such workers are usually not paid. The local chiefs questioned by the members of the Mission said they were unaware of these facts.

At Douala the petitioners urged the Mission to visit the "forced labour camp" at Bonaberi where it was alleged a certain number of natives were forced to load and unload vessels for very low wages and were more or less treated as prisoners. It was physically impossible for the Mission to visit the spot, but it questioned various Africans who said they were unaware of the existence of this camp or of the system of forced labour at Bonaberi.

The French Administration vigorously denied the existence of forced labour. While there might be exceptional cases in which abuses had occurred penalties had been applied wherever such cases had come to the notice of the authorities.

It was stated in the Representative Assembly that there were still cases of freedom of labour not being observed. One representative said that, as regards the gathering of the coffee and cocoa crops by women and girls, forced labour for the benefit of certain private undertakings was not completely abolished<sup>(2)</sup>. The representative of the Cameroons in the French National Assembly also said in the Representative Assembly<sup>(3)</sup> that forced labour was not yet abolished in the Cameroons. The Government Commissaire replied that he could not "let this statement pass without a vigorous and formal protest. A few special cases may have occurred bearing a superficial resemblance to forced labour, but the Government has no intention of allowing anyone to believe that the law of 1946 promulgated in the Territory is not being applied

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(1) T/PET 5/42-4/21.

(2) ARCAM, April 1949, P.58

(3) Ibid, p.65

by the Government. This law is being applied." He added later (1): "The Government and the Assembly, which are unanimous on this question, solemnly declare that they have no intention of re-introducing forced labour".

(2) Trade union activities

Freedom of association is assured in the Cameroons by the Decree of 17 August 1944. The requirements for the setting up of trade unions are as follows:

- (1) Their aim must be the study and defence of the interest of all kinds of workers in some particular trade or group of traders.
- (2) The organizers must be able to read and write French and must not have been sentenced at any time for a criminal offence or a minor offence involving loss of civil rights; they must also be French nationals of at least 21 years of age.

In the draft Labour Code now under consideration no educational qualifications are required of organisers.

- (3) The annual accounts and balance-sheet of every trade union must be presented to the Procureur de la République annually before the last day of February.

When these requirements have been fulfilled the trade unions may draw up their own rules of procedure, sue or plead in civil and criminal courts, purchase movable or immovable property or even - and this is forbidden to ordinary associations - receive such property free of charge (gifts and legacies), organize co-operatives, mutual insurance societies, vocational training courses, holiday colonies etc. The movable and immovable property required for their operation is not distrainable.

The French Administration points out that as soon as this Decree came into force many trade unions were formed belonging to three main categories:

- a) Trade unions proper formed by employees or wage-earners for the purpose of submitting their claims to the employers or the public authorities. All professions and trades have their trade unions, from administrative officials to dockers, with the exception of the army and the police who are forbidden by law to form trade unions.
- b) Agricultural unions which are associations whose main purpose is to defend

(1) RCIN, April 1949, p.100.

the commercial interests of farmers by enabling them, on the one hand, to pool their sales and, on the other, to purchase implements and consumer goods at wholesale prices. These agricultural unions are often combined with a co-operative with a view to deriving the maximum benefits granted by law to associations of these two types.

- c) Employers' associations, which are "unions" of employers formed to present a common front to the claims of the workers' trade unions. One result of the formation of these employers' associations is that collective agreements are discussed, not between one trade union and one employer, but between two unions of equal standing. A federation of these trade associations comprising 10 employers' associations representing the main activities of the Territory, was set up in the Cameroons at the beginning of 1948.

The right to strike is recognised in the Preamble to the Constitution of the French Republic and guaranteed by Article 81 of the Constitution which applies to Territories placed under French Trusteeship.

The local Administration states that the effect of the Decree of 1946, which formally prohibits forced recruitment of labour, has been but to widen the opportunities enjoyed by workers in the Cameroons of combining quite freely to defend their professional interests. African officials may even request to be released from their duties in order to devote themselves exclusively to their trade union duties.

The local Administration concludes that trade union activity can therefore be normally carried out within a legal framework. The fact that the professional groups still represent only a section of the working class must, according to the Administration, be attributed to its lack of political maturity. The worker in the Cameroons has still an imperfect understanding of the object for which he is permitted to organise and often lacks the spirit of solidarity and loyalty which should accompany professional representation. For example, a worker will not hesitate to change his trade union or to join several different groups in the hope of securing satisfaction of claims which are sometimes of doubtful legitimacy. His interest in the work of the trade unions is still not keen enough and the payment of even a small subscription is often sufficient to put him off.

The trade union organizations are affiliated to the main French trade union organizations and follow their political trends.

(a) The Confédération Générale du Travail (C.G.T.) which has been under Communist influence since 1948 and whose activity, according to the local Administration, is of a political rather than a trade union character.

(b) The Confédération Générale du Travail - "Force Ouvrière" (C.G.T.F.O.) which seceded from the C.G.T. in 1948 and found itself in the Cameroons with neither money nor premises. It took over a few agricultural unions and made firful efforts to organize the peasants.

But, adds the French Administration, The C.G.T.F.O. appears to have little chance of developing in the immediate future inasmuch as most farmers prefer the system of production or selling co-operatives, which is more in keeping with the peasant's way of life, to the agricultural union system.

(c) The Confédération Francaise des Syndicats Chrétiens (C.F.T.C.) which, according to the French Administration, has the support of the missions, and especially the Catholic Mission. It adopted an active social policy (family relief etc.) which enabled it to take over a large part of the membership of the former C.G.T.

The Visiting Mission received petitions from the trade unions of these three trends, and mainly from the C.G.T. unions<sup>(1)</sup>, and granted hearings to their representatives. The C.G.T.F.O. which states that it has only 1,000 members, complains mainly that it receives no support from the Government which, it claims, is intimidated by the C.G.T.<sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) On 8 November the C.G.T. sent a letter to its regional and local unions asking them to prepare petitions for submission to the Visiting Mission and informing them of the main questions to be raised. The French Administration communicated a copy of this letter to the Mission.

(2) T/PET 5/50.

The C.F.T.C. states that it has 6,000 registered members and also complains of being regarded as a negligible quantity in official circles<sup>(1)</sup>.

The C.G.T. states that it has 12,000 members, 3,000 of these at Douala. In various petitions addressed to the Mission it complains of numerous infringements of freedom of association, persecution and bullying of militant trade unionists and restrictions on the right to strike. It also states that the French Administration in the Cameroons is sabotaging its work and that members of the Catholic clergy are openly attacking it. It requests that the anti-trade union policy of the French Administration should cease and that the Trusteeship Council should take steps to that end.<sup>(2)</sup>

The following is the general conclusion of the French Administration in the note transmitted to the Mission containing information concerning the trade union movement:

"The trade union movement in the Cameroons did not grow out of struggle or after long experience as was the case in Europe. It was born, without preparation and with the help of the public authorities, of an enactment the provisions of which could have been truly effective only if sanctioning an activity of long standing.

But far from seeing grounds for pessimism in the weaknesses noted the authorities and the educated classes in the Territory regard the trade union movement as a means of leading the working masses to a new consciousness of their true worth."

### (3) Output and productivity of labour

In the documentary material supplied by the French Administration the Mission found comments which it considered extremely interesting, and certain passages of which it thinks worth reproducing here, in particular the following:

"The vital problem with regard to labour in the Cameroons arises, not from under-population (although several companies experience real difficulties in finding hands), but from the moral and technical vocational qualities of the

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(1) T/PET 5/71

(2) T/PET 5/52



workers. At the Edea barrage, for example, the output of an Italian worker is estimated at from ten to twenty times higher than that of a native, according to trade. On the rubber plantation at Dizangue the tappers are as skilled as their Indo-Chinese colleagues from the "Terres Rouges", but they treat three times less trees per day. In a sawmill at Douala the band-saws are attended by ten men whereas in France three would be required. The railway sleepers produced by this sawmill are loaded on ships by teams of eight men, and are sent to Holland where they are unloaded by one man only.

The same comparison can be made in the intellectual field. In a bank a clerk takes 1½ hours to tot up 15 numbers of 12 figures each whereas in France the result is obtained in 10 minutes.

This disparity in output is aggravated also by the quality of the work turned out by natives. To change this situation remedies of all kinds have been tried with varying success."

The Mission notes here that certain Africans doubt the laziness or incapacity of the African worker. They usually argue that, if the African workman were really so bad, the constant rise in exports from the Territory and in the profits of undertakings in the Cameroons would be hard to explain. Where they do admit the inferiority of African labour they attribute it to the insufficient wages, the excessively low standard of living and specially the inadequate diet, the worker's insufficient purchasing power and the lack of opportunity for vocational training. (1)

The French Administration indicates in its note the methods adopted to improve the position:

(a) Reduction or elimination of local labour by mechanization. In the Cameroons the introduction of machinery is proceeding at a faster pace as a result of the equipment programme laid down in the 10-year Plan.

(b) Replacement of local labour by purely European personnel, which, says the local authority:

"is regarded as a paying proposition by many undertakings. The success of Italian labour at Edea is a striking example of this. Speed of execution, workmanship, economy in raw material, better grasp of orders given and professional

(1) T/PET 5/68, T/PET 5/71 and T/PET 5/54.

discretion are among the arguments in favour of such labour, which although it costs more, is subject to homesickness and liable to be affected by climatic conditions."

This solution is strongly criticized by many Africans and the comments of the C.F.T.C. (1) are characteristic in this respect:

"For various reasons, or rather pretexts, the idea was for a time very seriously envisaged of reducing the workers of the Cameroons to poverty and unemployment for the benefit of unemployed persons from Italy, Japan and elsewhere. An experiment of this nature is actually being carried out at the Edea dam.

"Well housed, well fed, receiving luxury wages and, what is more, assisted by African labour which, apart from technical skill, shares the same physical effort, the Italian workers are in the process of giving us an example of the overwhelming superiority of imported labour.

"Even should this experiment prove a complete success, it would nonetheless remain a facile and unfortunate solution. A facile solution, in that it saves its originators the trouble of training skilled local labour and at the same time provides a remedy for the indifference they have so far shown to this problem. An unfortunate solution, in that it relegates indigenous workers to the background of the economic life of their own country and of the world at the same time as it plunges a large number of them into unemployment and misery.

"Furthermore it is difficult to realise how one can 'promote the economic and social advancement' of a territory without the participation of the indigenous inhabitants who should be the free artisans of the economy and the object of that social advancement."

(c) Improvement of African labour, which, according to the French Administration is the most practicable solution and the one most desirable from the human point of view.

The Administration lists various ways of achieving this solution:

(1) Vocational guidance and selection by means of applied psychology, the method recommended by the International Labour Office.

An applied psychology service has been operating in the Cameroons for three years. Up to the present time 1,633 tests applied to the most varied subjects (students, scholarship holders, chauffeurs and carpenters) have demonstrated the perfectibility of the Cameroonian worker and the possibility of increasing

his output by suiting working methods to his aptitudes and character.

An ordinance, approved by the budgetary session of the ARCAM in 1949, provides for the establishment of a compulsory centre at Yaounde, an optional centre at Douala and a mobile centre, all three directed by vocational guidance advisers assisted by one or two practical psychologists.

## (2) Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is governed by traditions which are normally very strict. The master is entitled to collect the pay of his pupils for two years. Even in European undertakings the apprenticed carpenter, the motor-boy and even the kitchen-boy are personally bound to their masters by this customary obligation.

Almost all sizable undertakings train their own apprentices, but results are slow and difficult. As soon as an apprentice feels that he can fend for himself he takes a job with another employer as a tradesman before finishing his apprenticeship and thus adds one more to the class of the semi-skilled.

A draft ordinance based on the metropolitan articles of apprenticeship is now being studied by a Commission of the ARCAM. This ordinance defines the moral qualifications required of an employer who wishes to take apprentices, provides for a supplementary general training to run concurrently with the apprenticeship, punishes the enticement of apprentices away from their masters and appoints Labour Inspectors to supervise the observance of the provisions in the articles.

A rudimentary type of apprenticeship which usually leads to a considerable improvement in output consists in combining native labour with European workers who set an example and arouse a spirit of emulation among the workers. The experiment is being tried at the Edea barrage where the natives, in contact with Italian workmen, have improved their output to a considerable extent.

## (3) Training schools

In 1937, on the initiative of the Public Works Department and the Railway Administration a technical school was built at Douala which went on expanding and finally came under the control of the educational authorities in 1945.

Organized on the same bases as the metropolitan National Schools, the Douala School exists to supply administrative and private undertakings with tradesmen fitters, mechanics, carpenters and bricklayers fit to become indoor or outdoor foremen.

At the outset recruitment was handicapped by the distaste in African families for establishments where manual work was done. But since the war the best elements in the colleges have been infected with the pride of the technician who is master of the machine.

At the present time the School has 111 boarders, with a staff of 8 European and 4 native teachers or technicians. The workshops are to be extended next year to cover 2,000 square metres. In 1949 11 new machines were brought into operation. The course is spread over four years and considerable prominence is given to general and theoretical instruction.

This training, which is designed to turn out highly qualified specialists, is supplemented by:

- (a) practical training in the given trade;
- (b) holiday courses enabling pupils to prove their worth to any undertakings offering them a post;
- (c) scholarships in France for future civil engineers or architects. Out of 125 students passing out at the school at Douala 36 went to France to complete their studies;
- (d) placing of former students in positions of responsibility.

One native teacher of motor mechanics was trained in France where he had a brilliant academic record.

#### (4) Rapid trade training

This applies to adults and youths lacking elementary training and aims at turning out qualified workers after 6-9 months training.

A rapid trade training school is at present under construction at Yaounde on the initiative of Father Dehon. This school enjoys a Government subsidy of

10 million francs. Another rapid trade training school is being planned at Douala. It will comprise masonry, carpentry and joinery departments and will be able to take 40 pupils to begin with.

(4) Wages

The minimum wage is worked out on the basis of price indices calculated for each Region and consolidated by the Statistical Bureau. It is fixed by decree by the Chef du Territoire after consultation with the representatives of trade groups meeting together at their request, in Joint Commissions (commissions paritaires).

The Administration asserts that the principles of "equal pay for equal work" and equality of treatment as between men and women are strictly applied. The stoppage of any part of wages, including output and attendance bonuses, is prohibited.

A considerable number of Africans<sup>(1)</sup> complained to the Mission of the inadequacy of the wages paid. Wages paid in the large centres, they maintain, are often below the minimum living wage, while the principle of "equal pay for equal work" is not applied.

The Confédération Française des Syndicats Chrétiens<sup>(2)</sup> describes the position in the following terms:

"The standard of living of the Cameroonian worker is extremely low, since it springs from a policy based on the principle that the Black has not the same needs as the White, a principle which has been developed to the point where the Black's unconquerable desire to raise himself and improve his standard of living is disregarded.

"The Joint Commissions, which are joint in name only, but in which decisions are unilaterally adopted in disregard of the documents submitted by the trade union organizations, have concluded by establishing a ludicrous minimum wage at a rate - 60 francs a day - totally incommensurate with the actual cost of living. This sum of 60 francs, in fact, would not cover the cost of a decent meal for a man in the poorest native restaurant.

"The following two facts prove that the workers' claims are not completely unfounded:

1. The fact that the minimum wage for Europeans, which is calculated

(1) T/PET.5/54; T/PET.5/52; T/PET.5/68

(2) T/PET.5/71

with undoubtedly greater objectivity (but which those concerned still consider far from satisfactory, although they also enjoy all the benefits of social security) amounts to 25,000 francs, shows that a wage of 2,000 francs, even for an African, is flatly ridiculous.

2. The living standard it affords workers is extremely wretched in every respect.

How, after that, can the Negro be blamed for his disinclination for work from which he derives no benefit and which offers him no incentive?"

A number of Africans verbally informed the Mission that it was not so much a question of obtaining wage increases as of raising the purchasing power of the workers.

The Visiting Mission has the impression that the Cameroons suffers from an absence of adequate studies on living standards, on which an objective appreciation of the question could be based. It noted with interest the study on living standards produced by a chef de subdivision, and trusts that similar studies will become general. It suggests that the Trusteeship Council should give attention to this matter.

#### (5) Labour Administration

The main principles of labour administration and inspection were set forth in the annual reports on the administration of the Cameroons for 1947 and 1948. The mission accordingly deems it unnecessary to revert to the subject. It considers it useful to reproduce below certain passages of a memorandum submitted to it by the local Administration on the subject of the new Labour Code:

"The present legislation is the fruit of experience extending over several decades, and has followed and been adapted to the Territory's social and political development - which explains why the basic texts were successively re-cast and supplemented in 1922, 1925, 1937 and finally 1944.

"The need for embarking on a study of a new labour code was seen as early as 1946. The period of post-war economic prosperity considerably accelerated the social development and advancement towards political maturity of a population whose standard of living has continued to improve; in addition, the election of delegates to a representative assembly and the improvement of information and communication media have resulted in the increasingly active participation of the population in the political and economic life of the Territory.

"Such was the genesis of the idea of a labour code common to the Overseas Territories.

"A preliminary draft was drawn up in October 1947 and, after suggestions and comments by the Assembly of the French Union and the Economic Council, was re-cast and sent to Versailles and the Palais Royal on 3 June 1948 and 20 August 1948 for an advisory opinion.

"The draft formed the subject of discussions and exchanges of views up to March 1949, culminating in the formulation of an extremely comprehensive code. Prior to tabling the draft in the Assembly, the Government decided to round off its studies by a local inquiry.

"Accordingly, Mr. Martine, Deputy and Rapporteur of the Draft Code, was instructed to proceed to Duala on 4 September to make contact with the representatives of the various trade unions.

"The final draft is scheduled for submission to the Overseas Territories Commission of the National Assembly about 15 November. The study of this draft and debate on it in the Assembly will take place in the fairly near future in order to enable the Code to be promulgated in the first half of 1950.

"The draft Code, in its present form, consists of 229 Articles grouped in ten different sections.

"It will apply to all workers in the Territory, without any racial distinction whatsoever.

"The compilers of the draft have thought fit to make an explicit pronouncement of the basic principles underlying the legislation which they were called upon to codify i.e. freedom of work; equality of pay; total payment of wages in cash; the prohibition of fines or stoppages of pay; and freedom to organize in trade unions and the consequential right to strike.

"The draft does not concern itself either with industrial accidents or vocational training, which are dealt with in special laws likewise in course of preparation. The only provisions retained are those covering safety and health conditions at places of work, and notification of industrial accidents.

"The draft Code will introduce detailed legislation on certain points not hitherto covered by any texts in the Cameroons, such as:

1. articles of apprenticeship (Articles 49-59);
2. jobbing or sub-contract work (Articles 60-63);
3. shop stewards (Articles 54 and 55);
4. the Advisory Labour Commission (Articles 156 and 157);
5. the Labour Tribunals for settling individual disputes (Articles 174-200).

"In the case of other points, it will effect a transformation of existing legislation, following Metropolitan legislation as closely as possible as a general rule.

"For example, the educational qualifications required of trade union leaders under the Decree of 1944 are to be abolished.

"The Labour Offices organized in virtue of the 1944 Decree are transformed into Regional Manpower Offices headed by an administrative council consisting equally of employers' and employees' representatives and endowed with well-defined powers (studies on manpower, placing of workers, issue of employment cards, transfers of cash.)

"The Code proclaims the principle of equal pay for equal work without distinction of sex or origin. Nevertheless, it provides for an "away from home" allowance for workers coming from outside their place of employment. It prohibits fines or stoppages of any kind in respect of wages and bonuses, thus outstripping Metropolitan legislation, which still allows for certain classes of fines.

"Lastly, the Conciliation and Arbitration Commissions set up under the 1945 Decree to deal with labour disputes are replaced by Labour Tribunals (for individual disputes) and by the Advisory Commission (for the conciliation of collective disputes). The actual arbitral award may be submitted to a Higher Arbitration Committee for consideration.

"Such are the broad lines of the future Labour Code.

"Its detailed provisions will be dealt with in decrees to be transmitted to the Representative Assembly for its advisory opinion.

"In combination these texts will form a Code which, together with the laws on social security and vocational training, will constitute a truly democratic body of legislation fully meeting the legitimate aspirations expressed to date by the populations placed under France's trusteeship".

The Visiting Mission notes that many petitions call for the promulgation of a labour code as an urgent measure. Several C.G.T unions object to certain articles as at present formulated in the draft Labour Code. <sup>(1)</sup>

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(1) T/PET.5/52; T/PET.5/68; T/PET.5/75; T/PET.5/74



CHAPTER IV - EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Detailed information on education is contained in the annual reports for 1947 and 1948.

During its visit, the Mission was able to confirm that the French Administration certainly deserves the congratulations it received from the Trusteeship Council for having introduced free education on its own initiative.

Members of the Mission made interesting visits to several of the 155 elementary schools in the Territory where 17,068 boys and 4,061 girls are taught. They observed that many schools are directed by men and women teachers qualified in France, and often by married couples, who appear especially enthusiastic about their duties. In many classes, they were glad to see European children sitting side by side with African children and receiving the same education. They were agreeably surprised to find, in every classroom, United Nations posters and literature. They also noted the number of school buildings under construction and that the ten year plan allocates 1,190 million CFA francs for the expansion of education.

Much remains to be done before elementary education can be extended to the whole population of school age, but remarkable efforts are being made in the Cameroons in this direction, and appreciable results have been obtained. The Mission was particularly glad to record the wish expressed by the Lamidos of the north that education should be extended to their territory. During an interview with the Mission, one of them frankly admitted that at first most of the Northern chiefs feared the introduction of the French Administration's educational system, which is on a western basis and provides for teaching in French. They thought it might have a bad influence on religion. Now, they say, they have observed that education does not injure religion in any way, but opens up new perspectives for the country; hence they expressed the wish that an increasing number of schools should be established in their area.

The Mission was also able to appreciate the work of the religious missions, which teach a considerable number of children; 62,231 pupils attend the elementary schools of the Catholic missions, and 30,594 those of the Protestant missions. The Administration of the Territory gives the missions financial

assistance (in 1949 the budget allocated 63 millions to private education), but the Mission received complaints, mainly from the Catholic missions, regarding the inadequacy of this assistance.<sup>(1)</sup>

Nearly all the petitions received by the Mission asked for an increase in the number of schools. Some stress the fact that in many villages in the interior the nearest school is still much too remote; others complain that too many children's education is cut short owing to their age.

As regards secondary education and teachers' training, opportunities in the Territory are somewhat limited. The annual report for 1948 stated that there were generally a great number of candidates for secondary education and that this demand showed the prestige of official secondary education in indigenous circles. Many petitions complain of the inadequacy of secondary education facilities in the Cameroons<sup>(2)</sup>. The religious missions have a certain number of secondary schools, including four teachers' training colleges and three modern colleges, attended by 561 students.

However modern "short" secondary education is given in the competitive courses of the preparatory sections of the modern college at Yaounde, Douala, Dachang, Ebolowa, Sangmelima and Abong-Ebang; it is also given at the colleges at Yaounde and Nkongsamba, at the girls' college at New Bell (Douala) and in the supplementary course at Garoua. This education prepares students for the elementary certificate and the certificate of primary studies. Full modern and classical education is given at the Yaounde college, and prepares students for the baccalauréat, the examination for which is held annually in the Territory by the University of Bordeaux. There are 820 students taking secondary education in the Cameroons, excluding technical students. In addition, there are 76 scholarship students receiving secondary education in France. Secondary education is well organized, and the mission was favourably impressed by the buildings it visited, the teachers and the syllabuses, which are similar to those in metropolitan France. The Mission was particularly impressed by the Ecole Menagère which it visited in Yaounde.

(1) T/PET.5/45

(2) T/PET.5/72.4/63; T/PET.5/54; T/PET.5/52.

In the field of technical training, commendable progress has been made. There is an excellent vocational school at Douala which on 1 November 1949 had 111 resident students. Details of this school have already been given in the chapter on labour. In view of the economic and industrial development of the Cameroons, available technical training must be regarded as still insufficient for the Territory. Several petitions complain of this fact<sup>(1)</sup>. The ten year plan provides for seven centres for vocational training and ten for intensive vocational courses.

Private educational facilities provided by missions in the Cameroons include two vocational schools, attended by 121 students. Two other private vocational schools are being established.

The French Administration is also providing for popular education by courses for adults and by mass education experiments on the lines recommended by United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.

In conclusion the Mission notes with satisfaction that the Administering Authority has taken great strides in education in the Cameroons. Free primary education has been underlined and more advanced forms of it has not been ignored. The enthusiasm with which the educational staff is throwing itself to the task is a tribute to it, and is showing good results. With this progress goes also concomitant development of the country in the way of new buildings for schools and the practical effect likely to be produced in the communities as a result of technical training, especially among the girls.

If demands were made to the Mission for more educational facilities, the Mission believes that these are healthy signs and in themselves an acknowledgment of the efforts already undertaken. They are also a sign of the awakening of the Territory. The Mission suggests that the satisfaction of these demands for further educational facilities are worthy of the highest consideration by everyone concerned.

The Mission must also state that all education in the Territory was undertaken in the French language and that the vernacular languages are neither encouraged nor given scope in the official schools.

(1) T/PET.5/72.4/63; T/PET.5/54; T/PET.5/53.4/30; T/PET.5/52.

ANNEX - PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE  
VISITING MISSION

The following is a list of the petitions and communications relating to the Cameroons under French Administration which were received by the Visiting Mission in the course of its visit in the Territory.

<u>Pétitionniers</u>	<u>Document No.</u>
M.M.M. Do Rio	T/PET 5/11
Comité Régional de l'Union des Populations du Cameroun Région de Nyong et Sanaga	T/PET 5/12 - 4/23
10 personnes au non des populations autochtones des différents villages et groupements ethniques de la Région de Nyong et Sanaga	T/PET 5/13
M. Belinga Zacharrie	T/PET 5/14
Délégation des organismes coopératifs	T/PET 5/15
Association "les Amis du Progrès"	T/PET 5/16
Représentants du peuple Beti	T/PET 5/17
M. Paul Ndzama Ntsama	T/PET 5/18
Union des Syndicats Confédérés de Yaoundé	T/PET 5/19
M. Pierre Dimalla, Président Général de l'ESOCAM A Yaoundé	T/PET 5/20
M. Gaston Medou	T/PET 5/21
Union Tribale Ntem Kribi	T/PET 5/22 - 4/24
M. Armand Félix Manga Ondoa	T/PET 5/23
Secrétaire du Syndicat des Employés de Commerce de Sangmelima	T/PET 5/24 -
Secrétaire du Syndicat des Employés d'Ambam	T/PET 5/25
Union de toutes les populations camerounaises Section de la Provision d'Ayos	T/PET 5/26
M. André Fouda Omgba	T/PET 5/27
La voix du Cameroun (M. Akono)	T/PET 5/28
La voix du peuple Bamoun ( anonyme )	T/PET 5/R.1
Secrétaire du Comité Régional de l'Union des Populations Camerounaises de la Région Bamoun à Foumbam	T/PET 5/29 - 4/25
M. N'bombo Zacharie	T/PET 5/30

Document No.

Pétitionniers

M. Nsangou Moussa	T/PET 5/31
Comité Directeur de Kumzse	T/PET 5/32 - 4/26
Union régionale des Syndicat confédérés de Bamileke	T/PET 5/33 - 4/27
M. Nguèguim Michel	T/PET 5/34
Union de toutes les populations camerounaises Section de la Provision à Abong-Mbang	T/PET 5/35
64 habitants de la subdivision de Saa	T/PET 5/36
Comité Régional de l'Union des populations du Cameroun Région du Nyong et Sanaga	T/PET 5/37
Populations de Bafou	T/PET 5/38
M. Gustave Ekotto	T/PET 5/39
Union Bamileke	T/PET 5/40 - 4/28
Artisans de Dschang	T/PET 5/41
Comité régional de l'Union des populations du Cameroun Région du Moungo	T/PET 5/42 - 4/29
Un Camerounais (anonyme)	T/PET 5/R.2
Employés africains du Commerce d'Abong Mbang	T/PET 5/43
Populations de la Subdivision de Yabassi	T/PET 5/44
La voix du pays (anonyme)	T/PET 5/R.3
Anonyme	T/PET 5/R.4 4/R.1
Vicariat Apostolique Douala Cameroun	T/PET 5/45
Cri de la Sanaga Côtière, Délégation de Yaoundé	T/PET 5/46
M. Jean Nguea Nyoungou	T/PET 5/47
M. Ernest Eyoum	T/PET 5/48
MM. Frédéric Makanda et Gilbert Bilong	T/PET 5/49
Union des Syndicats de la Confédération Générale du Travail-Force ouvrière	T/PET 5/50
MM Léa Ellong, Mongwan Ndemba et Ekallé Pidi	T/PET 5/51
Union des Syndicats Confédérés du Cameroun	T/PET 5/52
Union des Populations du Cameroun, Douala	T/PET 5/53 4/30
Evolution Sociale Camerounaise	T/PET 5/54
Comité central de l'Union des Populations du Cameroun de Mbalmayo	T/PET 5/55

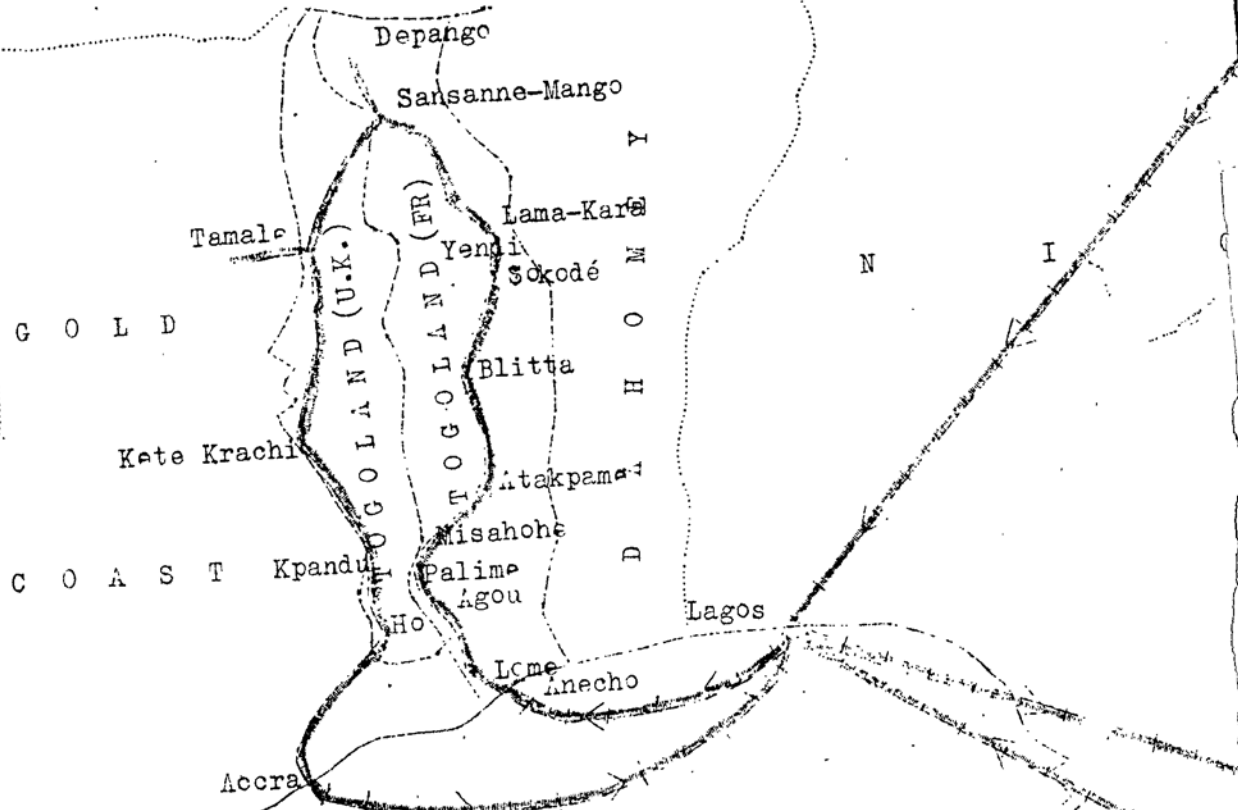
Pétitionniers

	<u>Document No.</u>
Ngondo, Assemblée traditionnelle du Peuple Douala	T/PET 5/56 4/31
M. Yerima Abbe Mouhamadou	T/PET 5/57
Comité central de l'Union des Populations du Cameroun de Mbalmayo	T/PET 5/58
Collectivité de Bonamikengue-Akwa	T/PET 5/59
Comité Féminin de l'Union des Populations du Cameroun	T/PET 5/60 4/32
Association amicale de la Sanaga Maritime	T/PET 5/61
M. Guillaume Hondt	T/PET 5/62
Notables Doualas	T/PET 5/67
Fédération des Employés du Cameroun	T/PET 5/68
M. Skouloukos	T/PET 5/69
Délégation de la Solidarité Babimbi	T/PET 5/70
Union Camerounaise des Syndicats Chrétiens	T/PET 5/71
Comité Régional de l'Union des Populations du Cameroun, Région de la Sanaga Maritime	T/PET 5/72 4/63
Association des Chefs Coutumiers de la Sanaga Maritime	T/PET 5/73
Syndicat des Petits Planteurs d'Eseka	T/PET 5/74
Syndicat des Petits Planteurs de Ndogbessol	T/PET 5/75
Lamibé de la Région de la Benoué	T/PET 5/76 4/64

The following petitions relating to the Cameroons under French administration have been received by the Visiting Mission during its stay in the Cameroons under British administration:

T. Kulle	T/PET 4/10 - 5/4
F. E. Burnley	T/PET 4/11 - 5/5
Balong Native Authority	T/PET 4/15 - 5/6
Cameroons National Federation	T/PET 4/16 - 5/7
French Cameroons Welfare Union	T/PET 4/19 - 5/8
Lamido of Adamawa	T/PET 4/21 - 5/9
Dikwa Native Authority	T/PET 4/22 - 5/10
Bangwa Native Authority	T/PET 4/47 - 5/63

FRENCH WEST AFRICA



UNITED NATIONS  
VISITING MISSION

WEST AFRICA, NOV-DEC 1949  
SKETCH MAP SHOWING ITINERARY

ATLANTIC  
OCEAN

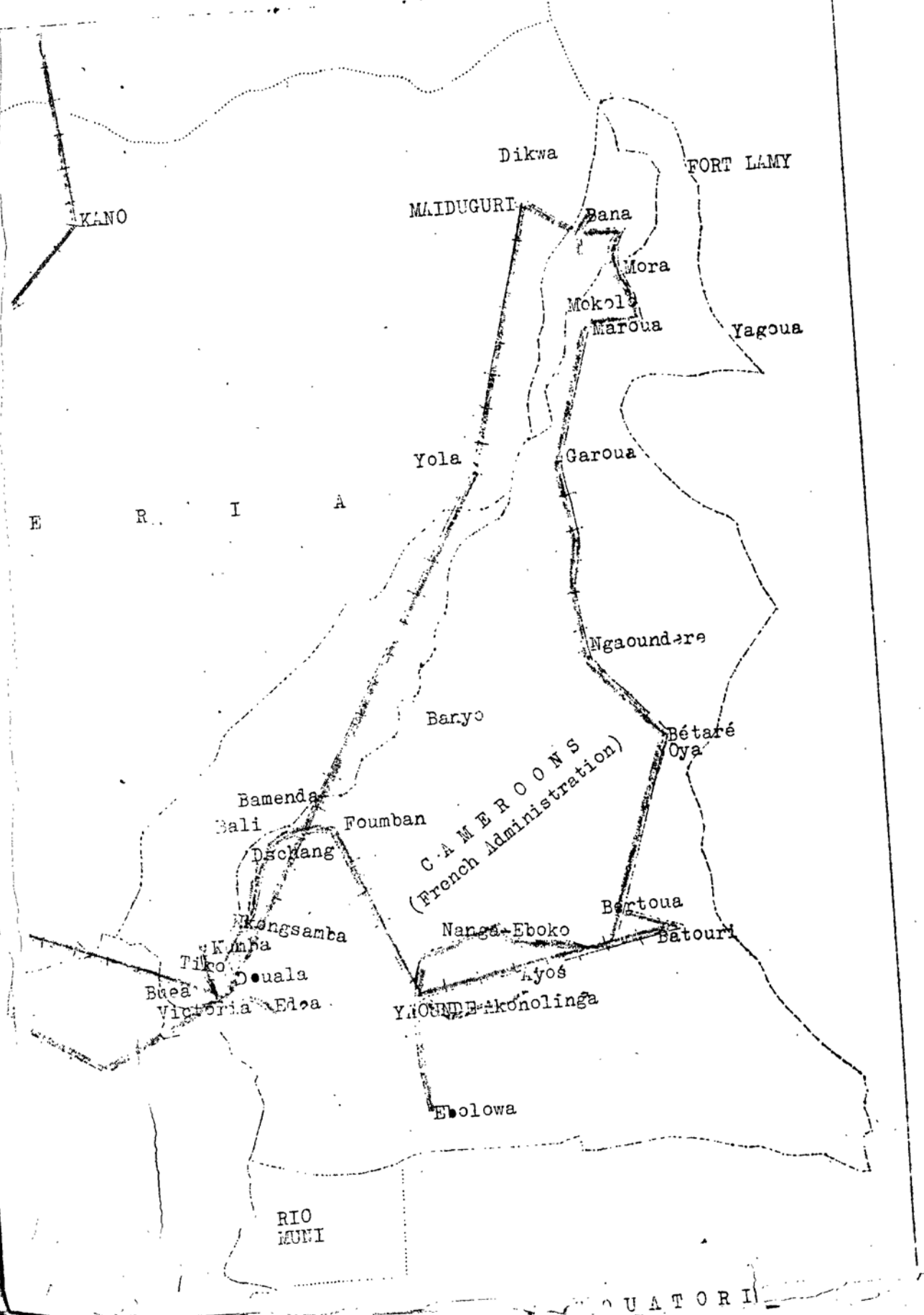
Pétionniers

Godlove Ndongbe and Chief Gaforgbe  
Bamenda Improvement Association  
Cameroons Federal Union

Document No.

T/PET 4/50 - 5/64  
T/PET 4/52 - 5/65  
T/PET 4/61 - 5/66





KANO

Dikwa

FORT LAMY

MAIDUGURI

Bana

Mora

Mokolo

Maroua

Yagoua

Yola

Garoua

E R I A

Ngaoundere

Baryo

Bétaré  
Oya

Bamenda

Bali

Foumban

C.A.M.E.R.O.O.N.S  
(French Administration)

Dschang

Kongsamba

Nanga-Eboko

Bartoua

Kumba

Batouri

Tiko

Buea

Douala

Victoria

Edoua

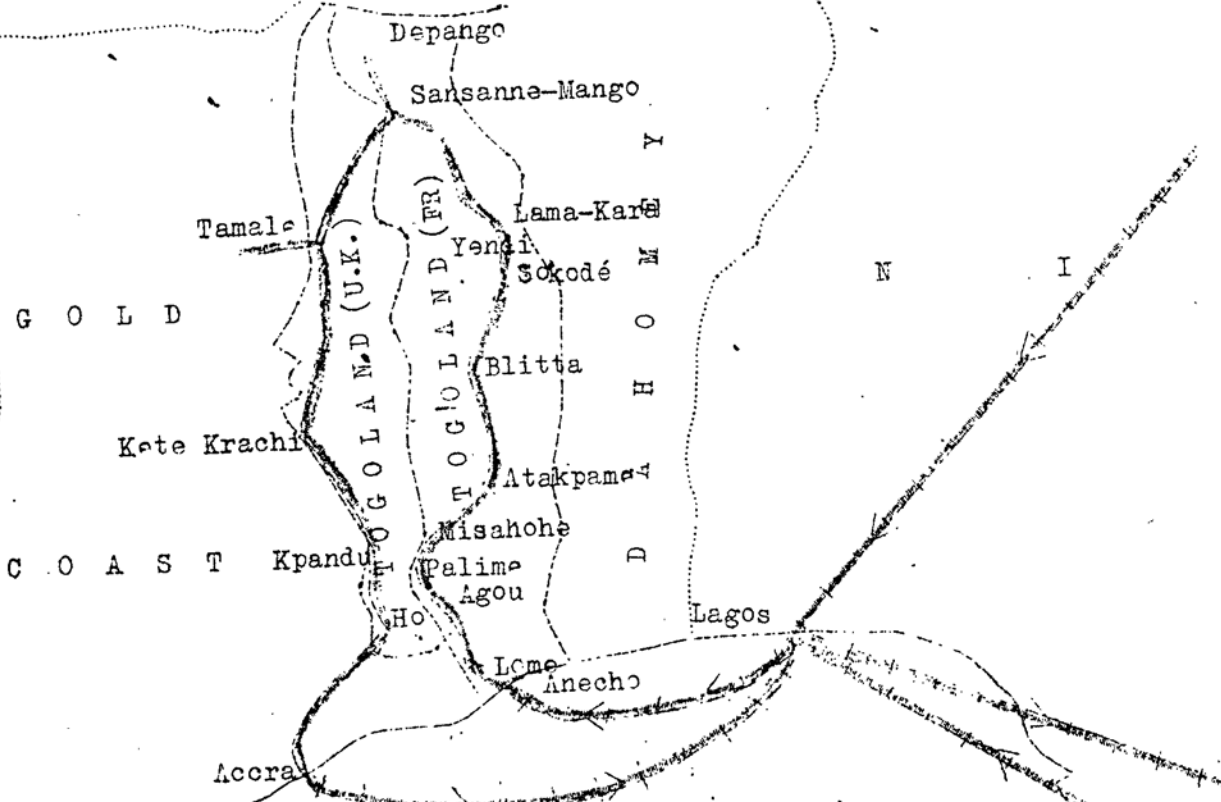
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Konolinga

Ebolowa

RIO  
MUNI

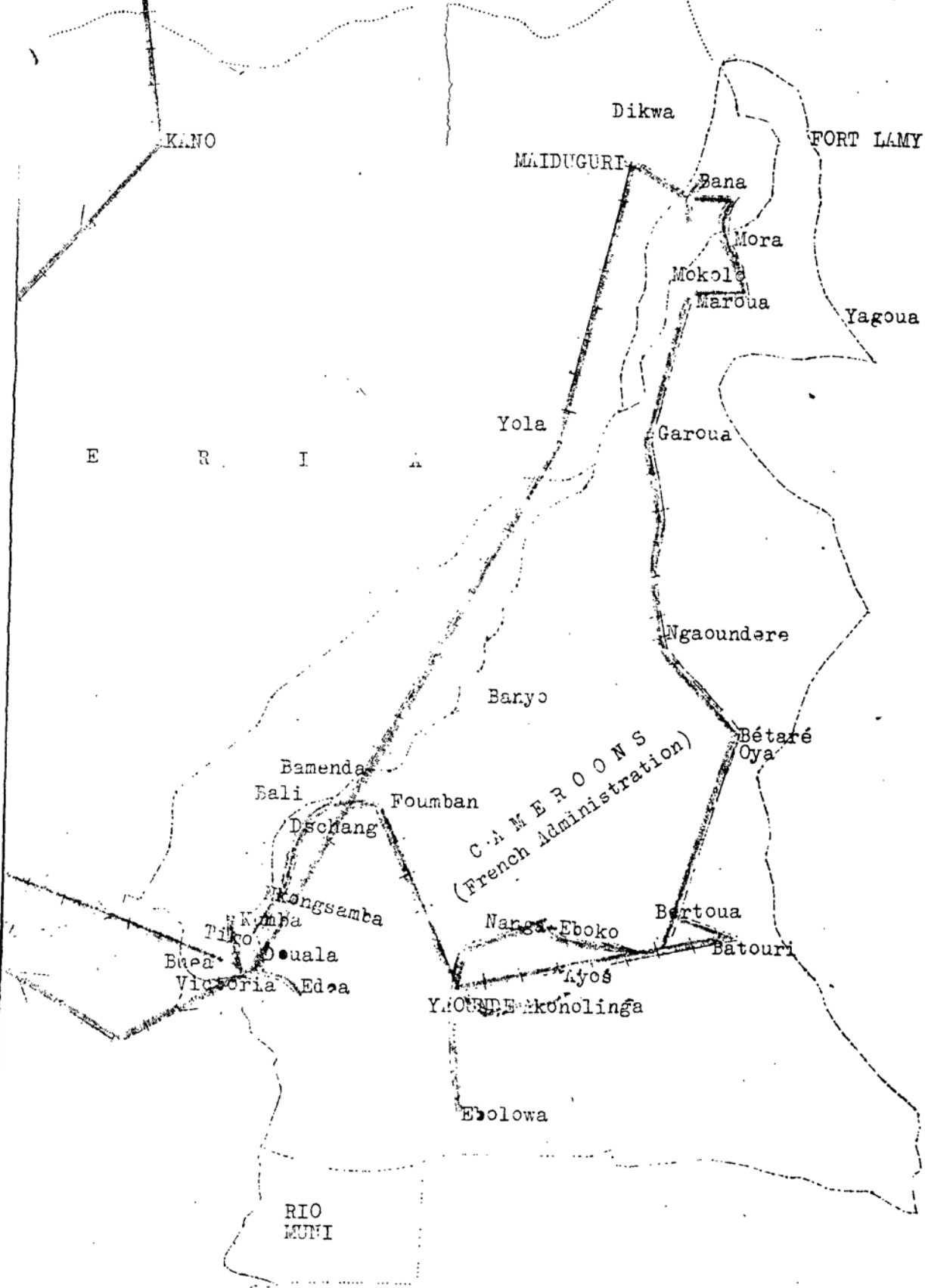
UATORII

FRENCH WEST AFRICA



UNITED NATIONS  
VISITING MISSION  
 WEST AFRICA, NOV-DEC 1949  
 SKETCH MAP SHOWING ITINERARY

ATLANTIC  
 OCEAN



E R I A

C A M E R O O N S  
(French Administration)

FRENCH EQUATORIAL  
AFRICA

RIO  
MUNI