

1979

## The political evolution of Cameroon, 1884-1961

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The research problem is an analysis of the political evolution of Cameroon from a colony in 1884 to an independent state in 1961. It involves not only the transition of the country from a colony to an independent state per se, but also the various factors which kindled the rise of nationalism in the country. The problem is rendered more interesting and complex by the fact that the country had, at different times in its colonial history, been a German colony, as well as British and French colonies - although technically Britain and France administered their respective portions of the country first as mandates of the League of

Nations and then as trusteeship territories of the United Nations Organization.

In order to study the problem, an analysis of the political and economic policies of the colonizing powers in the country is imperative, since they were the determining factors which conditioned the country's political destiny until 1961.

The difficulties in obtaining primary materials on the subject compelled me to deal mostly with secondary materials which I obtained from the libraries of Portland State University and Oregon State University. My personal experiences in Cameroon coupled with the conversations and discussions which I had with some of the Cameroonians who had lived through the German, French and British rule enabled me to select my facts and data from the secondary materials objectively, as well as to refute some of them.

From my research, I found out that Cameroonians until the late 1940's and early 1950's in French Cameroon and British Cameroon respectively, were politically naive with regard to the future of their country; they became politically conscious after the wave of nationalism following the Second World War. The Cameroonian elites were able to exploit the "self-created myth" of a united Cameroon under the Germans in order to demand independence and the reunification of the French and British Cameroons. The political and economic policies of the French government in French Cameroon and the policy of London to govern the British Cameroon "en passant par" Lagos produced blunders which facilitated the demand for the independence and the reunification of the two Cameroons championed by the "Union des Populations du Cameroon" (U.P.C.), in French Cameroon and the Kamerun National Democratic Party (K.N.D.P.)

in British Cameroon; although, admittedly, there were some groups on both sides of the fence which either did not want a reunification of the two Cameroons or immediate independence.

Finally, independence and reunification were not given at the point of bayonet, as was to be the case with Algeria although it was influenced, in the French Cameroon, by the terrorist activities of the U.P.C.; and unlike in Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique or Tanzania, independence was granted to French Cameroon in 1960 not to the violent and militant U.P.C. party which fought for it, but to the "party" which used the principle of peaceful negotiation with Paris. The political evolution of Cameroon culminated in 1961 in the reunification of the French and British Southern Cameroons under the name of the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

THE POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF CAMEROON - 1884-1961

by

NGOH VICTOR JULIUS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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in  
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## PREFACE

The United Republic of Cameroon, as the former Federal Republic of Cameroon is now called, passed through the hands of the Germans, the British and the French from 1884-1961. The political evolution of Cameroon is very complex on account of the differences in the culture and political thinking of the three countries which ruled it. Germany ruled Cameroon from 1884-1915 as a colony and in 1916 Cameroon was divided between Britain and France following the defeat of the Germans in Cameroon in 1916.

Britain and France ruled their respective portions of Cameroon as mandated territories of the League of Nations from 1919-1945. After the Second World War, France governed her portion as a trusteeship territory of the United Nations Organization until it was granted independence in 1960; Britain also administered her portion as a trusteeship territory of the United Nations until 1961 when it was granted independence.

I have endeavored to present the story of the political evolution of Cameroon as objectively as possible. I have laid much emphasis on the former French Cameroon because it was politically much more active than the British Cameroons during the era 1920-1960.

I have arbitrarily decided to use the terms "French Cameroon," or "East Cameroon" to designate the portion of Cameroon which was under French administration from 1916-1960, and "The British Cameroons," or "West Cameroon," to designate the portion administered by Britain from 1916-1961. As the result of a general election in the British Cameroons

in 1961, the Northern part of the British Cameroons voted to unite with Nigeria, while the Southern part voted to unite with the French Cameroon, which had become independent in 1960.

The reunification of British Southern Cameroon and French Cameroon in 1961 marked the achievement of the union of the two Cameroons under the name of the Federal Republic of Cameroon which in 1972 became the United Republic of Cameroon.

The task of transforming Cameroon from a divided colony into a united and independent state was not easy. The stability of Cameroon after independence reflects the political maturity of the peoples of the new state and the growing economic viability of the country.

Ngoh Victor Julius

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I am solely responsible for any omission, misrepresentation or misinterpretation of all relevant facts and data.

Ngoh Victor Julius

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

Cameroon, to the Europeans in the 15th century, was limited to the coastal areas along the Gulf of Guinea. These areas were inhabited by Bantu-speaking peoples before their colonisation and expansion in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries enlarged them to its present area and ethnic groups. Geographically, modern Cameroon is bounded on the East by Central African Empire, on the North is Chad, Nigeria is on the West while on the South it shares the boundaries with Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Congo. With a population of 7.6 million people (1976 census), Cameroon has about 140 ethnic groups of which the most important include the Bamileke, the Beti-Pahouin, Bassa-Bakoko, Douala, Tikar, Kirdi and the Fulani.

The Portugese were the first Europeans to arrive in Cameroon. Portugese sailors, employed by Fernando Gomez, a rich Lisbon merchant, were the first Europeans to enter the coastal waters of Cameroon in the early 1470s. When the Portugese arrived, they were fascinated by the copious supply of prawns around River Wouri which they named "Rio dos Camaroes", meaning the river of prawns. Attracted by trading possibilities, they established contact with the coastal natives who were the Doualas. In due course, the coastal strip of land, occupied by the Doualas, became known as Cameroon. In the 17th century, the Dutch displaced the Portugese

in Cameroon and established trading stations. The Dutch were, in turn, succeeded by the British in the 18th Century and, under the British, the Cameroon natives were introduced to Western laws. To the Portuguese, Dutch and early British settlers, Cameroon was limited to the coastal strip of land occupied by the Doualas. The Portuguese, Dutch and the British exploited the profitable trade in human traffic along the coastal lands of West Africa, including Cameroon. After Britain had replaced both Portugal and Holland as the main trading nation in Cameroon, she after 1820, took steps to abolish slavery in the Gulf of Guinea after she had illegalized it in her territories in 1807.

After 1820, the British negotiated treaties with the Douala chiefs, abolishing human sacrifices, superstition, and slave trade.<sup>1</sup> The Doualas, who acted as middlemen in the trade between the European traders and the natives further inland regarded the abolition of slavery in Cameroon as a decline in their trade and, in order to compensate for it, the kings and chiefs demanded stipends and "dash," from the British government; British traders signed various treaties with the Douala kings and chiefs, especially kings Bell and Akwa (Acqi or Acqui), regulating trade. With the British presence in Douala there developed a polluted and distorted English language, pidgin-English, spoken by the natives as a consequence of trying to communicate with the British.

After the complete abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire in the early 1830s, some emancipated slaves from Jamaica pressed for an

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendices A1 and A2 for treaties signed with the Douala Kings abolishing human sacrifices and slave trade respectively.

"evangelical mission to return to the African homeland".<sup>2</sup> In England, a search for scientific and economic goals which was meant to open more lands in Africa for the English coincided with the Jamaican demand and in 1841 the Great Expedition was launched to open present-day Nigeria to British traders, scientists and missionaries which enabled the Jamaican requests to be included in the itinerant. "The London Baptist Missionary Society, therefore; agreed to Jamaican requests and sent to Africa, from Jamaice, John Clarke, and English missionary and Dr. G. Prince, a former slaveowner"<sup>3</sup> who were to join the expedition at Fernando Po on its way to the River Niger. Unfortunately, they missed the Expedition and decided to stay at Fernando Po and open missionary stations there and in Cameroon.

They paid courtesy calls to the Douala Kings and King William of Bimbia along the coast of present-day Victoria. Although the Douala Kings welcomed their visits, King William rejected further visits because "he and his people had had enough of God's palaver"<sup>4</sup> and their visits were disrupting the trade of the natives. Shortly afterwards, Clarke and Prince went back to Britain but returned to Fernando with more missionaries, including Joseph Merrick and Alfred Saker in 1843 and 1844. Although Alfred Saker was stationed in Fernando Po, he began his missionary work in Douala on June 19, 1845. His stay in Fernando Po was cut short when the Spaniards started suppressing Protestantism. He

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<sup>2</sup>Shirley G. Ardener. Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon 1883 1887, Printed at the Government Press Buea West Cameroon, 1968. p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid

decided to transfer with his followers to the mainland opposite Fernando Po. One June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1858 Saker arrived on the mainland and named it Victoria in honour of Queen Victoria of Britain and on August 23rd, 1858, he signed a treaty with King William, who owned the land, settling his purchase of the land - the final settlement was made in 1862. Although King William was paid for the land, he refused to share the monies with the prominent men in his village. These, in turn, decided to reject the settlement. Saker, however, settled the dispute by giving the "Senior Bakwari - - - a head of tobacco to settle the issue" and later on "three heads of tobacco to settle the palaver".<sup>5</sup> With that Saker established full control over Victoria.

The English missionaries were joined by English traders. Although Saker asked the British Foreign Office to declare Victoria a British colony, the Foreign Office rejected the offer. To promote trade and evangelization, a Court of Justice was opened in Victoria to punish offenders. "For ordinary breaches of the law fines were imposed, as money was needed for the treasury, but for flagrant offenses he depended on corrective powers of a heavy strap".<sup>6</sup> Although the British monopolized trade along the coastal region of Cameroon, after 1860 the Germans, led by the Woermann firm became more and more involved in trade with the Doualas. The Woermann firm was one of two German firms operating in Cameroon - - the other was Jantzen and Thormaehlen. The competition

<sup>5</sup> Shirley G. Ardener Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon 1883-1887. p. 51

<sup>6</sup> Ibid p. 13 Samuel Brew who was an agent of the Woermann Company was the Chairman of the Court and he was responsible for the corporal punishment.

between British and German traders often resulted in disputes and the Douala chiefs, in order to safeguard their middleman monopoly, appealed to Britain to annex Cameroon. On August 7th, 1879 Douala King Akwa, Prince Vido Acqua, Prince Black, Prince Joe Garner and Prince Lawton wrote a letter<sup>7</sup> to Queen Victoria of Britain, asking her to annex Cameroon but the British government procrastinated despite added pressure from German traders,<sup>8</sup> British traders, missionaries and consukir representatives.

#### The German "Coup" in Cameroon

When the British government declined to annex Cameroon, the German traders, faced with increasing French interest decided to appeal to their government to annex Cameroon. Otto Von Bismarck, the German chancellor, was not interested in colonies and supported his anti-colonial policy by saying "Colonial business would be just like the silken sables in the noble families of Poland who have no shirts to their backs".<sup>9</sup> The German traders in Cameroon were led by Adolph Woermann<sup>10</sup> in their demand for the German annexation of Cameroon.

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix A<sub>3</sub> for the letter.

<sup>8</sup> The German traders were alarmed at the immense influences which French traders were beginning to exercise in Cameroon. They thought that if the French were to annex Cameroon, German trade would be jeopardized and in order to avoid this, they preferred the British to the French.

<sup>9</sup> Shirley G. Ardener Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon 1883-1887, p. 22.

<sup>10</sup> Adolph Woermann was the chief representative of the Woermann firm in Douala with headquarters in Germany.

Woermann, in seeking annexation of Cameroon by Germany wanted to bypass the middleman monopoly of trade enjoyed by the Doualas, establish plantations and expand his shipping links. After much pressure from German traders, coupled with British and French manoeuvres in North Africa, Bismarck decided in 1883 to negotiate treaties with the chiefs of Cameroon.

Meanwhile, in 1882, Britain decided in favour of annexation and Consul Edward Hyde Hewett was sent on a fact-finding mission to Cameroon. His findings revealed that France was busy signing treaties with Cameroonian Kings. This alarmed the British Foreign Office, especially when "in April, 1883, Bell and Akwa wrote to tell Hewett that the French had made a treaty with - - - King 'Pass-All'" <sup>11</sup> of Malimba. Hewett was instructed to safeguard British interests in Cameroon by signing treaties with the chiefs in 1883 and was dispatched to Cameroon with treaty forms to be signed by the chiefs in secrecy. On July 6th, 1884 Hewett sent Captain Brooke of HMS 'Opal' to Cameroon with some of the treaty forms while he went to the Nigerian coast. At Big Batanga, in Cameroon, Brooke learnt of the movement of a German ship, the Mowe, in Cameroon; he sent Lieutenant Moore to Douala to inform the kings and chiefs not to sign any treaty until the arrival of Hewett.

While the British were giving out commands on the high seas, Bismarck earlier in February, 1884 had instructed Dr. Gustav Nachtigal to go to Africa and safeguard the interests of German traders. On April 19th, 1884, Bismarck informed the British Foreign Secretary that Nachtigal was

<sup>11</sup> Shirley G. Ardener Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon 1883-1887, p. 20.

going to West Africa to "complete the information now in possession of the German Foreign Office at Berlin on the state of German commerce on that coast -- and was authorized to conduct on behalf of the Imperial Government negotiations connected with certain questions",<sup>12</sup> and asked the British Government to assist him. With this, the British unknowingly gave Bismarck a free hand to annex Cameroon for Bismarck had "decided (on April 28th, 1884) to draft a new dispatch to Nachtigal, instructing him to take the coast between Bimbia and Cape St. John, to hoist the German flag and to declare that the German firms had closed treaties with the chiefs."<sup>13</sup> While Nachtigal was on his way to Douala, Edward Schmidt was instructed to open secret negotiations with the chiefs.

On July 11, 1884 Captain Moore arrived in Douala and advised King Ndoambe Lobe Bell and the other Kings not to allow Germany to annex Cameroon. Shortly afterwards, Nachtigal arrived in Cameroon and, with the Douala Kings and Chiefs in support of Germany following the night campaigns of the German traders, on July 12th, 1884 he signed a treaty with the Douala Kings and Chiefs. These night campaigns were secret nightly meetings organised by German traders, particularly Eduard Schmidt and Johannes Voss of the Woermann and Jantzen and Thormaehlen firms respectively, with Kings Acqua and Bell coaxing them to accept a German 'annexation' of their lands. After much argument, punctuated with conflicting cries of "We want English" and "We want Hamburg", the Germans

<sup>12</sup> Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroon 1884-1914 Archon Books 1968, Yale University Press 1938 p. 36.

<sup>13</sup> Shirley G. Ardener Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon 1883-1887 p. 22

finally convinced the Kings and Chiefs with promises of gifts and money to accept the German 'annexation' of their lands - Cameroon - which led to the Douala-Germano treaty of July 12th, 1884. Kings Bell, Akwa, and some of their subordinates signed for Cameroon while Edward Schmidt, Adolph Woermann and Johannes Voss signed for Germany. The Chiefs, surprisingly enough, safeguarded their essential economic and social rights, although "when, later on the same day, the chiefs were asked to put their crosses<sup>14</sup> to the actual treaty, this clause -- was omitted."<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, the Germano-Douala treaty was signed and Cameroon became in fact and in name a German colony. On July 14th, the German flag was hoisted and Dr. Max Buchner was appointed the Imperial representative. On July 15th, Nachtigal informed the British traders in Cameroon about the treaty. In July Counsel Hewett who arrived after July 16th, 1884, rebuked King Bell for having signed the treaty -- but to no avail. Britain and the "too-late" consul had to accept the "fait accompli". Although Hewett was very disappointed, he went on to Victoria and annexed it for the British Government<sup>16</sup> and in August, 1884 Lieutenant A. Furlonger of the 'Forward' signed 'preliminary treaties' with the chiefs of Batoki<sup>17</sup> for the British Government.

<sup>14</sup>The Kings used crosses because they couldn't sign their names.

<sup>15</sup>Shirley G. Ardener Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon 1883-1887, p. 24.

<sup>16</sup>See Appendix A<sub>4</sub> for the treaty on the British annexation of Victoria.

<sup>17</sup>See Appendix A<sub>5</sub> for the 'preliminary treaty'.

The Germano-Douala treaty of July 12th, 1884 ended the 'independent' role of the Douala chiefs. The treaty not only meant the eventual collapse of the middleman advantage of the Doualas in their trade between the Europeans and natives further inland but it also involved the 'sale' of their land (which they did unknowingly) to the Germans which, in turn, was to culminate in expropriation in 1912. Cameroon, as a German colony, was recognized internationally during the Berlin conference.

## CHAPTER II

### CAMEROON AS A GERMAN PROTECTORATE (COLONY) 1884-1916

The acquisition of African territories by European Powers was internationally recognized at the Berlin Conference of November 1884 to February 1885. Bismark had entered the colonial race initially to protect German trade and he had thought that the cost of maintaining Cameroon as a German colony would be borne by the commercial firms operating in the colony. Dr. Max Buchner was appointed "as a kind of temporary consul who -- represented the Imperial German Government in a somewhat platonic fashion, living the while in quarters rented for Germans traders".<sup>1</sup> In 1885, against his wishes, Bismark agreed that the administration of Cameroon should be controlled by the German government.

#### German Administration in Cameroon

The first major opposition to German rule occurred in December 1884 in the "Douala War" between King Bell who had supported the German annexation and other chiefs and nobels of Joss and Hickory "towns."<sup>2</sup> According to the British, the war erupted because King Bell had killed a native of Hickory town and since the natives of Hickory "town" were of the

<sup>1</sup>

Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons 1884-1914, p. 120.

<sup>2</sup>

They were not towns in the real sense of the word, but villages.

same clan as the natives of Joss 'town', they decided to attack Bell 'town'. To the Germans, the war erupted because King Bell refused to share the money and gifts he had been given by the Germans as the price of the annexation. According to the 'Cameroonian' version given by Joshua Tundi,<sup>3</sup> the war erupted for political and economic reasons. In a letter,<sup>4</sup> written to Joseph Jackson Fuller,<sup>5</sup> he pointed out that the Joss 'town' natives were angry with King Bell who had failed to give them a share of the price while, on the other hand, the natives of Hickory 'town' resented the German annexation. In the course of the war, the Germans aided King Bell, since he had told them, "If you want to rule here, you must make me safe as chief".<sup>6</sup> The natives of Joss and Hickory 'towns were eventually defeated and "all the buildings broken into and all the contents were looted";<sup>7</sup> German rule in Cameroon started with creating a poor impression.

The German rule of Cameroon set in motion the political evolution of Cameroon as a colony under German administration until 1916, and after 1916, as mandated territories of the League of Nations governed by Britain

<sup>3</sup>Joshua Tundi was a member of the British Baptist Church and had been educated by the English.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix B for part of the letter.

<sup>5</sup>He was a Jamaican Baptist missionary who was brought to Cameroon in 1844 by John Clarke and Dr. Prince. He played an instrumental role in the purchase of a piece of land (later named Victoria) from King William. Fuller initially came to Cameroon as a teacher together with Alfred Saker. Born on June 29th, 1825 in Jamaica, he died in London on December 11th, 1908 after having stayed in Cameroon for 44 years.

<sup>6</sup>Shirley G. Ardener Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon 1883-1887 p. 35.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. p. 36

and France until 1916 and then as United Nations trusteeship territories administered by Britain and France, until French Cameroon became independent in 1960 and united with the British Cameroon in 1961. The political evolution of Cameroon effectively began under German administration in 1884. Politically then, Cameroon evolved from a colony in 1884 to an independent state in 1961.

The Germans accused the British of responsibility for the outbreak of the Douala war, as a consequence of the Anglo-German tension in Cameroon which had developed after the signing of the Germano-Douala treaty. To this was added the activities of two Poles, Stephen Rogozinski and Janikowski, who were signing treaties with the chiefs on the slopes of Mt. Cameroon on behalf of the British Government. Although the Germans resented the activities of the Poles, two Swedes, namely, Valdag and Knutson were also carrying out similar activities for the Germans. The hatred of the Joss and Hickory natives of the Germans, coupled with the "far-from-good Anglo-German relations" in 'Cameroon' disrupted German trade in Cameroon until all the parties had settled their differences. Peace was arranged with the Doualas when the murderer of a German worker, during the Douala war was made known; the murderer was shot in March, 1885 by German soldiers.

On July 3, 1885 Julius Von Soden arrived in Cameroon as the first German Governor. In order to simplify his administration, he appointed an Advisory Council composed of three members. He also appointed a chancellor and replaced the outworn court of equity - instituted by the British with the 'Schiedsgericht' which can be regarded as the "forerunner

of the Mixed Courts".<sup>8</sup> In December 1885, a team of Germans led by Jesco Von Putkamer, explored and studied Mt. Cameroon and established German sovereignty over the Bakwerians at the foot of the mountain. In 1887 Britain handed over Victoria to Germany and a good relationship was restored between Germany and Britain in this area.

The German 'Colonial Constitution' of 1886-1888 was instituted which defined the German administration in Cameroon. The Governor in Cameroon derived his authority from the Kaiser and the German Chancellor. The Governor was authorized to issue "decrees for general administration, taxes and tariffs"<sup>9</sup> but these had to be passed through the Imperial Chancellor who also looked into appeals made by criminals who objected to penalties meted out by the Governor. The Governor controlled the courts and was the highest judge; all state property was directed by him. Because of the difficulty of administering the vast territory due to lack of good means of communication, he empowered local administrators to execute some of his functions.

In 1891 Eugen Von Zimmerer succeeded Von Soden. Von Zimmerer's reign was marred by a devastating scandal. During his absence, Kleist, his chancellor, ran into difficulties with the Dahomeans who had assisted the Germans in penetrating the Cameroon hinterland. He underpaid and maltreated them. To the astonishment of his colleagues, he publicly had the wives of the Dahomean soldiers whipped and also "had the female

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<sup>8</sup>Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroons From Mandate to Independence, University California Press 1964, p. 25.

<sup>9</sup>Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons, 1884-1914, p. 180.

convicts brought to him from the prison at night for his sexual gratification".<sup>10</sup> These acts "shocked both the troops and the general public -- and he was convicted by the Special Disciplinary Court of Potsdam".<sup>11</sup>

Kleist's successor, Jesco Von Puttkamer, was no better. He considered himself a 'realist' in administrative matters, re-enforced corporal punishment and supported Europeans to keep Cameroonian prostitutes."<sup>12</sup> Complaints were filed against him and he went the way of Kleist in 1902.

In December 1903 the 'Koloniarat' issued a decree creating a Council replacing the Advisory Council. The new council which officially came into being on November 14, 1904 had no Cameroonian representative, it consisted of three traders, two planters, one Catholic and one Protestant missionary. The Governor was, however, above this "all-white" Council. Although Bues was the capital, the Council met in Douala. This Council, the "Gouvernement", touched upon every question of importance with "a bearing on budgets, administration, transportation, communication -- - and native commercial competition with whites."<sup>13</sup>

The German administration in Cameroon was protected by the 'Polizei-truppe', or Police Force composed of Dahomeans, Hausas, Sudanese and Togolese. In 1895, a regular colonial troop, or 'Schutztruppe' was created. Its creation ushered in new social problems and aggravated the existing

<sup>10</sup> Jean Suret-Canale, French Colonialism in Tropical Africa 1900-1945, Pico Press, New York, p. 90.

<sup>11</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroons From Mandate to Independence, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroon, 1884-1914, p. 189.

ones. The troops attacked unarmed natives in order to settle old scores, women were raped and some became the wives of the 'Schutztruppe' who were not married.

#### German Court System in Cameroon

Cameroon, under German administration, was governed by German Laws. The natives and the whites had separate courts. The 'Bezirksgericht' was for the whites. It was the Court of First Instance presided over by a judge, the 'Bezirksrichter', assisted by two or four lay assistants, 'Beisitzers'. The 'Obergericht' was the Court of Second Instance for the whites. It comprised the High Judge, 'Oberrichter', and four lay assistants; it had the final judgment. Whites were never imprisoned in Cameroon. For the Cameroonian, the Court of First Instance was composed of the native chiefs who passed judgment according to native laws. The native chiefs presided over civil cases where the offense was not above 100 marks or with regard to criminal cases, the penalty was not above 300 marks or about six months imprisonment. Appeals from the Court of First Instance could be sent to a second tribunal which could be attended by the Governor or his representative. It did not judge cases punishable by death.

The commonest form of punishment was whipping which was done in the presence of a doctor or medical personnel; women were exempted from whipping. The death penalty was given only after the approval of the Governor but in most cases the culprit was fined. The next of kin was usually punished if a culprit escaped and in some instances chieftains were held responsible for the escape of a culprit.<sup>14</sup> Germany's principal

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid, p. 205.

interest in Cameroon was economic and all German administration was geared to the attainment of that goal.

### Economic Development

In order to achieve their economic goal, the Germans instituted the 'Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komittee', Colonial Economic Committee, in 1898 which was a child of the 'Committee for the Importation of Products from German colonies founded in 1897. Its prominent members were Professor Wohltmann, Thormahlen of the Hamburg trading firm and Scharlach of the 'Gesellschaft Sud-Kamerun'. The Colonial Economic Committee was funded by the Colonial Society, the Ministry of the Interior and Contributions from the public. It designated sub-committees to study special problems. The 'Die Botanische Zentralstelle', Central Botanical Bureau, "functioned chiefly as a kind of clearing house for scientific research".<sup>15</sup> This center experimented with plants received from all over the world and in a branch in Victoria, the Botanical Garden, experimented on hundreds of plants.

Since Germany's overriding interest in Cameroon was economic, the German government made use of the country's natural resources. In this respect, the opening up of plantations was paramount to the German's drive in Cameroon. Prior to the German colonization of Cameroon, rubber, palm oil and palm kernels were the primary products cultivated by the natives. The first German plantation was set up by the Woermann and Jantzen and Thormahlen firms. By "January 1st, 1913, 195 whites were listed as engaged in planting in the Cameroons. At that time the number of plantations was

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Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroon 1814-1914, p. 175.

58 and the number of native workers on plantations was 17,827.<sup>16</sup> These plantations which were found in and around Victoria and on the slopes of the Cameroon Mountain covered an area of about 100,000 hectares. The White planters encountered difficulties with the natives in matters of landownership. This was because the natives failed to realize that once they had sold a piece of land, they no longer had any access to it. To the natives, they still had the right to hunt on the piece of land. Secondly, most of the natives, especially the Bakweri people, were reluctant to work. A third difficulty was the transportation of the products since Cameroon had a poor communication network and the Doualas were not particularly happy with the breakdown of their role as the middleman between the whites and natives further inland.

In order to overcome the problem of communication, railways and roads were constructed. Since road construction was more difficult and expensive, attention was geared towards rendering the few rivers navigable and building railways. On May 4, 1906 the scheme for building railways was given financial support and the first railway, the 'Nordbahn' was started which was intended to run from Bonaberi to Nkongsambo covering a distance of 160 kilometres. In 1910 a second railway line, the 'Mittlelandbahn', running from Douala to Widimenge on the Nyong River was started and completed in June, 1914. In 1913 the 'Nordbahn' transported 37,000 tons of goods and the 'Mittlelandbahn' transported 3,000 tons.<sup>17</sup> The natives resented the construction of the railways, especially the Doualas because

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 249.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Chot (Ed.), Le Cameroun, aspect geographique, historique, touristique et administratif du territoire, Paris, Editions Alepie, 1954 p. 41. Cited as Le Cameroun, Les Documents de France.

it necessitated, either directly or indirectly, the expropriation of their land and they were also reluctant to undertake the strenuous manual labour required under trying conditions. The construction of railways, roads, and the improvement of river navigation opened markets in Cameroon for both the Whites and the natives. While the Whites imported steel, iron, machinery, food and medical supplies, the natives imported cloth, liquor, arms, gun powder, perfumes, watches, pipes, bracelets, red caps, umbrellas and rice.

The improved means of communication also stimulated agriculture. In this connection, the Colonial Economic Committee collaborated with the Central Botanical Bureau. The products which were of interest to the Germans were palm oil and kernels, banana, cocoa, coffee and rubber. The Sud-Kamerun company and the Nord-west Kamerun company were the two prominent companies in Cameroon after the 1890s. The Sud-Kamerun was capitalized at 2,000,000 marks and was established on December 8th, 1898. It was dominated by Belgians and a Belgian, Colonel Thys, was the Vice-President. Its initial headquarters was in Brussels but was later on transferred to Hamburg. The company was allocated 72,000 square kilometres of land in Cameroon which it devoted to rubber exploitation. The Nord-West Kamerun company was founded on July 31st, 1899 and controlled an area of 80,000 square kilometres of land in Cameroon. The company was to allocate 100,000 marks for the construction of roads, canals, railways and establishment of plantations in Cameroon.

The Germans needed palm oil for soap and candle manufacture and the Victoria Botanical Garden experimented on palm seeds so as to produce the most suitable palm tree for Cameroon. In 1908 a soap factory was

established in Douala. "As late as 1912, the larger amount of palm products exported from the Cameroons was produced by natives."<sup>18</sup> Cameroon produced the highest quality of cocoa used in Germany although the quantity was affected by the cocoa plant pest and the blight. Rubber, however, was the most important export and the 'heveo brasiliensis' was the most widely grown specie of rubber. In 1912, the total value of cocoa was 11,472,223 marks;<sup>19</sup> smaller quantities of tobacco, coffee and kola nuts were also produced. The Germans were rewarded for their interest in the economy of Cameroon because "for most of the years in the period 1896-1908 the Cameroons were first among all German colonies in Africa in the amount of her exports. To Germany's total colonial trade of 240,208,483 marks, the Cameroons contributed 40,568,000 marks".<sup>20</sup> The exploitation of German plantations in Cameroon was done by the Woermann firm which started operating in Cameroon in 1868 and the Jantzen and Thormaelen Company which began operating in Cameroon in 1875.

In order to enable the Cameroonians to facilitate the German 'mission' in Cameroon, elementary education in writing and reading was provided for the natives. Under Governor Soden, two teachers were sent to Cameroon in 1887. The curriculum included the teaching of arithmetic, reading and writing German, some religious instruction and agriculture. In 1887 the first German teacher, Theodor Christaller, arrived in Cameroon and with the collaboration of the King Bell family of Douala, he laid

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<sup>18</sup> Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons 1884-1914, p. 260.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 269.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 280-283.

the groundwork for the establishment of schools in Cameroon. King Bell provided land for building of a school which started functioning in 1888. In 1890, another school at Deido, Douala, was begun with twenty-five pupils and after that another school was established at Victoria due to the influence of a Cameroonian Baptist missionary, Pastor Joseph Wilson. Governor Soden's successor, Von Puttkamer, retarded educational development in Cameroon because of his dislike of the Douala people - he objected to the teaching of the Douala dialect in Victoria. In 1906, another school was opened in Garoua headed by a Cameroonian from Victoria. The school at Garoua soon ran into difficulties because the Muslims thought that the introduction of education would undermine Islam if Christianity was also taught. In order to avoid this, the German resident-commissioner in Garoud, Strunel, ruled that the Muslims should study their own religion and "be compelled to attend religious services in the local mosque every Friday."<sup>21</sup>

In 1907, Douala housed a conference on the educational situation in Cameroon. It was decided that European languages, except German, should not be taught in the schools and the Douala dialect should also be discouraged in schools. The refusal of the use of the Douala dialect was on the grounds that "The wider use of that language would increase the influence of the Douala people, who had become a serious problem to the Government."<sup>22</sup> In 1911, German was given priority over the other subjects

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, p. 356, This was probably due to the fact that the German regarded maintaining and promoting Islam in North Cameroon as an essential institution to be used to solidify their rule - religious connections were very important especially since the Kaiser (William II) was regarded as the 'champion of Islam' and he had supported the construction of the Berlin-Bagdad railway.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. p. 356.

and a tuition fee of six marks was required in Douala. In order to enable mission schools to get government aid to teach German, they had to adhere to the government school plan and the amount was determined by the success of the students in passing official examinations in German. In 1910, an agricultural school was opened at Victoria in order to train Cameroonians for agricultural work in the colony. The requirements for admission included a knowledge of German and proof of a completed school course either in a mission or government school; the candidate had to sign a contract with the government to remain in school for two years and work with the government for five years after completion. If the candidate left school before completion he was subjected to a yearly payment of 200 marks to the government. In order to increase agricultural yields, planters were taught techniques of tropical agriculture and prizes were offered for the solution to specific agriculture problems by the Colonial Economic Committee of the Colonial Society. The use of forced labour by the Germans in their economic undertakings was strongly resented by the natives but to no avail. Forced labor was widely used by the Germans especially in the plantations.

In some cases, the native workers, who were generally underpaid, had to trek several miles to the plantation. Some plantation owners "shanghaied (the) laborers, shackled them together, and marched them long distances to work." Because the native worker was usually taken to a new and unfamiliar environment he more often than not, was a victim of loneliness and homesickness. Those who were more unfortunate to work in the malaria-infested areas usually returned home to die of the disease. The lack of adequate food, poor shelter, overwork, disease and little or no medical

care led to many deaths. An idea of the extent of the death-rate can be deduced from a decree in 1900 which stipulated that every plantation was to have its own cemetery.

#### "Resistance" to German Rule

The Germans soon ran into difficulties in Cameroon because of the policies which they implemented and which were strongly resisted especially after 1900. Since the 1890s, the Germans had been unwilling to provide measures and institutions such as a council which could improve the political, social and economic wellbeing of the indigenous population because some German officials "saw in the creation of such an institution the beginnings of a movement sure to end in the independence of the colonies"<sup>23</sup> which was what Germany was not prepared to grant. The Germans did not envisage political independence for the natives. The traditional system was left more or less untouched except those portions of it which were not in conformity with the Whiteman's civilization and did not enable them to exploit the land and the natives. The policy of the Germans led to hostilities between them and the natives.

The most objectionable German policy which rallied the Cameroonian was that affecting land ownership. The German-Douala Treaty of July 1884 gave no land to Germany as the natives understood it. In 1888 Von Soden was commissioned to determine the conditions under which the whites could obtain land. In June 1896, an Imperial decree labeled all unoccupied land as crown land. As from 1902 land commissions were appointed to determine

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<sup>23</sup> Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons, 1884-1914, p. 188.

the native's land needs, and to set up boundaries between the land owned by whites and that owned by natives."<sup>24</sup> This enabled the Germans to claim all unoccupied land which aroused the Douala people. By an act of expropriation in 1910, the Douala natives were removed from their land to a new site cut off from the European quarter so as to improve the health conditions and to prevent land speculation. Since the Douala monopoly on trade as the middleman had been broken up, most of the natives had given up trading; they looked on land as their only source of income. Any expropriation was therefore bound to lead to violence and despite the opposition to the act by many whites in Cameroon, both traders and missionaries, the government carried on with its plan. To this grievance was added the fact that around Victoria, the Germans failed to compensate the rightful owners whom they had displaced from a piece of fertile land of about forty square miles.<sup>25</sup> In November 1911, the Douala natives filed a protest with the Reichstag which did not deter the Germans from putting the Act of Expropriation into effect in 1912.

On January 15, 1913 King Manga Bell sent another petition to the Reichstag since the Act of Expropriation was a violation of the 1884 German-Douala treaty. The Reichstag rejected the petition; and King Manga Bell was fired from its employment by the German Government. The Germans refused to allow in Cameroon a native delegation to go to Germany to present the views of the Cameroonians but Ngoso Din was secretly sent to Germany. In 1914, King Manga Bell, Ngoso Din and a number of Cameroonian

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 401.

<sup>25</sup> Sanford, H. Bederman, The Cameroons Development Corporation Partner in National Growth, Bota-West Cameroon, 1968, p. 14.

chiefs were arrested for allegedly seeking the help of England and France against Germany. On August 7th, 1914 the trials of Manga Bell, Ngoso Din and the other arrested chiefs were begun and ended on August 8th, 1914 with the executions of King Manga Bell and Ngoso Din.<sup>26</sup> This was followed by a series of arrests and executions of prominent chiefs such as chiefs Martin Samba of Eboloa, Mandola of Grand Batanga, the chiefs of the Lamibe of Kalfu and Mindiff and five dignitaries from the Court of Maroua.<sup>27</sup>

However, this alleged plot, the 'Douala Affair' has never been fully proved. It is likely that the 'plot' was a fictitious excuse used by the Germans to terrorize the local population and force the Doualas to accept the expropriation of their land. The German authorities had earlier forbidden the use of pidgin English and also declared it 'a crime against the state' if anyone was caught speaking pidgin English instead of German. The high tension which reigned in Douala before 1914 following the expropriation of land and the German draconian laws make it probable that the Germans wanted to impose law and order at all cost<sup>28</sup> and "there can be no doubt of the fact that one reason for the difficulty with the Douala people was that many of those intelligent natives could read and write and had some ideas of their rights, which they defended shrewdly and often with a wit superior to that of ill-tempered officials placed above them."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The summary treatment of King Manga Bell, Ngoso Din and those arrested could be explained by the fact that with the eruption of the First World War in July 1914, Germany wanted to put her house in order as quickly as possible.

<sup>27</sup> Jean Suret-Canale, French Colonialism in Tropical Africa, p. 113.

<sup>28</sup> Englebert Mveng, Histoire du Cameroun, Présence Africaine, Paris, 1963, p. 300.

<sup>29</sup> Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons 1884-1914, p. 361.

Following the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 between the Allies and the Central Powers, Britain and France clashed with Germany in Cameroon in 1914. On September 27th, 1914 an Anglo-French force led by General Dobell captured Douala. By March 4, 1916 Cameroon had been taken over from the Germans and an agreement was signed in London in March 1916 dividing Cameroon between Britain and France. According to the 1916 treaty, the Franco-German treaty of 1911 which had extended the boundary of Southern Cameroon to the South of Spanish Guinea thereby adding about 100,000 square miles of territory to the total area of Cameroon was repudiated and in 1919 Germany officially handed over all the area to France. Britain and France partitioned Cameroon with France having four-fifths of the total area and Britain one-fifth composed of two disconnected pieces of territory bordering Nigeria. In April 1916, General Joseph Georges Aymerich was named the French Commissioner in Cameroon and a British Order in Council appointed Dobell Commissioner in the British Cameroons.

With these arrangements, German rule in Cameroon was brought to a close. A rule which had started in 1884 and ended in 1916 in fact and in name after having exposed Cameroon to Western culture and thought which were to have a great impact on the Cameroonians during the nearly half a century British and French rule from 1916 to 1960.

### Political Impact of German Rule in Cameroon

The Germans successfully took the first step to unite the Coastal, central and Northern Cameroonians into a single cohesive unit. The Germans gave Cameroon a myth<sup>30</sup> of some value and were responsible for the groundwork of a modern state as was seen in their railway system, roads, buildings (of which the most prominent is the former Prime Minister's lodge at Buea) and "the collection of agricultural plantations that still dominate the economy of West Cameroon."<sup>31</sup> The Germans instilled in the minds of the Cameroonians the sense of obedience and respect for authority while "some of the German's repressive policies.....fostered protest movements containing the seeds of future political action."<sup>32</sup> The German rule in Cameroon enabled the politically conscious Cameroonian to regard the division of Cameroon in 1916 into French and British zones as 'od interim' for the era of German rule reminded him of "a half-mythical golden age when the Cameroons were one."<sup>33</sup> The struggles for re-unification and independence were to dominate the period of French and British Administrations in Cameroon from 1916-1960 especially in the 1950s. The anti-independent

<sup>30</sup> When French and British Cameroonians were demanding the reunification of French and British Cameroons, they emphasized on the fact that Cameroon was a united country under the Germans. The pro-reunificationists exploited this self-created 'myth' of "once a single Cameroon."

<sup>31</sup> Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons, 1884-1914, p. 70. The unification of East and West Cameroon in 1972 abolished the division of Cameroon into West and East. A unitary state was introduced which is divided into seven provinces. The former West Cameroon is divided into the South-West and North-West provinces.

<sup>32</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon From Mandate to Independence, p. 36.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

British and French policies in their respective zones of control were to lead to hard times for their administrators and the birth of terrorist activities in the French Cameroons.

## CHAPTER III

### CAMEROON AS MANDATED TERRITORY OF FRANCE AND BRITAIN

In May 1916, after the defeat of Germany in Cameroon, Britain and France signed the treaty of London partitioning Cameroon between them. After the First World War, the League of Nations recognized the 1916 treaty of London concerning Cameroon which under the League of Nations became a 'B' mandate; the provisions of Article XXII.5 of the Covenant of the League of Nations stipulated that the holder of a 'B' mandate must be:

responsible for the administration of the territory under condition which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion, subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals, the prohibition of abuses such as the slave trade, the drug traffic, the liquor traffic, and the prevention of the establishment of fortifications or military bases, and of the training of natives for other than police purposes and the defense of territory, and will secure equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other members of the League.

This was in accordance with Article 119 of the Treaty of Versailles signed on June 28th, 1919 by which Germany renounced all her colonies in favor of the Allies and the Associated Powers.<sup>2</sup> The former German colonies were thus placed under the sovereignty of the League of Nations

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<sup>1</sup> Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, B.R. 515, Geographical Handbook Series, French Equatorial Africa & Cameroons, 1942, p. 270. Henceforth cited as French Equatorial Africa & Cameroons.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Cornevin, L'Afrique noire de 1919 à nos jours, Presses Universitaires de France, 1973; p. 11.

and administered by the Allies, mostly Britain, Belgium and France, as mandated territories of the League of Nations. The portions of Cameroon taken by Britain and France according to the May 1916 treaty between them were left unaltered.<sup>3</sup>

#### French Cameroun 1916-1960

French political and administrative rule in French Cameroun greatly influenced the lives of the natives. French rule in Cameroon was based on a series of decrees by the French Government. These decrees appointed French Commissioners<sup>4</sup> ('Commissaire de la République'). The High Commissioner was the repository of power in Cameroun, he had the supreme direction of all services - both civil and military and was responsible for the policy of defence although he was not in personal command of the naval, military or air forces. He was the only liaison with the French Ministry of the Colonies. He was assisted by a Secretary-General, a Cabinet, Directors, 'chefs de service' and by a 'Conseil d'Administration.' The 'Conseil d' Administration' comprised ten members, two of whom were resident French citizens and two 'sujets' nominated by the Commissioner. This Council was purely advisory.

#### French Political and Administrative Rule

With slight limitations, France governed Cameroun as though she were her colonial possession and not a mandated territory. The French

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix C for a map of Cameroon showing British and French Cameroons.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix D, for a list of the French Commissioner and High Commissioners in Cameroun from 1916 to 1959.

policy was governed by "the French general principles of subordination, centralization and uniformity"<sup>5</sup> which was one of either 'assimilation' or 'association'. "'Assimilation' had only a negative meaning: It suppressed or ignored the political structures that were truly African and the African culture, replacing them by colonial structures and colonial education which were indeed 'French' but profoundly different from what existed at the same level in France itself."<sup>6</sup> The 'assimilationist policy of de-culturalization is well-marked in Douala today where the Doualas adore all that is French. In fact, signs such as "A Douala comme a Paris" which is a common sign in Douala gives a good picture of French deculturalization of the indigenous population in the big towns. While education in France enabled French citizens to acquire the right to vote, in Cameroun the natives were divided into 'sujets français' and 'citoyens français'. This policy of 'assimilation' was not geared towards self-administration where French Cameroonians "would participate in the Central government of a French Republic dominated by the French."<sup>7</sup>

Cameroun was divided into nineteen districts headed by administrators who were assisted by sub-administrators. The administrators in the North and South were given different powers because the problems created in the North by the dominant role of the Sultan, 'lamidos', and the poor rapport between the Muslims and the pagan tribes, 'Kirdis', were different from the problems in the Christianized South where the economic changes

<sup>5</sup> French Equatorial Africa and Cameroons, p. 253.

<sup>6</sup> Jean Suret-Canale, French Colonialism in Tropical Africa, p. 83.

<sup>7</sup> David E. Gardinier, Cameroon: United Nations Challenge to French Policy. Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 1.

influenced the inhabitants to undermine the powers of the local chiefs and consequently, in most cases, the administrator had to deal directly with individual problems.<sup>8</sup> Each district had a 'Conseil des Notables' whose members were "appointed by the Commissioners from locally prepared lists of suitable individuals".<sup>9</sup> The Council usually met twice a year and the chief function was to represent and promote official French views. 'Artificial' chiefs were also appointed by the French to simplify the administration. The overriding qualification was the willingness to execute pro-French policies. Three grades of chiefs were recognized: the first grade was the 'lamibes' or 'chefs superieurs'; the second grade was composed of chiefs of cantons and the third grade were village chiefs and 'chefs de quartier.'

The French also transplanted their legal system in Cameroun but with profound modifications to favour the Europeans. All residents in Cameroun, Africans and Europeans, were governed - in theory - by the same legal code which was French. In executing justice, a distinction was usually made between Europeans and the indigenous. The French Cameroonians who were subjected to native customs were termed 'sujets français' while French citizens were 'citoyens français'. 'Citoyens' were those who "have acquired French citizenship by birth or by naturalization and include natives who have been admitted to it. Native candidates must be 18 years old, monogamous, of civilized habits, educated (themselves and their children) in French, and have given evidence of devotion to French interest.....and

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<sup>8</sup> Robert Chot (ed.) Le Cameroun, Les documents de France, p. 64.

<sup>9</sup> French Equatorial Africa and Cameroons, p. 274. In 1949, membership of the the Council of Notables was enlarged to include representatives of labour unions traditional associations and cooperatives.

have performed their military service. Holders of the 'Medaille Militaire' or 'Croix de Guerre' can obtain naturalization by simple declaration."<sup>10</sup>

The Procurator - General of the Court of Appeal at Yaounde was responsible for the administration of justice. A decree of 1927 authorized the local chiefs and 'notables' to participate in cases of civil matters; local chiefs were granted the power of conciliation but if they failed to reconcile the participants, the civil matter was taken to the tribunal of First Instance. If it also failed to settle the civil matter, it was handed over the Tribunal of Second Instance; if it was unable to solve it, it was finally sent to the 'Chambre d'Homologation' which was the highest French law court. The 'Chambre d'Homologation' was presided over by a professional French judge and two assessors chosen by the Commissioner of the Republic upon recommendation of the Procurator-General. One of the assessors was a European and the other an African. The 'Chambre d'Homologation' "reviewed the record only and could recommend revision or annulment after so doing."<sup>11</sup>

Through the 'indigenat', the French administrators were empowered to punish Africans without recourse to a court of law. "The 'indigenat' is a collection of legal dispositions permitting immediate repression (without judgement).....The infractions varied according to the period and the territory, but the commonest ones being the refusal to pay tax, or perform prestations, not observing hygienic rules, public disorder, etc."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> French Equatorial Africa and Cameroons, p. 275.

<sup>11</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon. From Mandate to Independence, p. 103.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Cornevin, L'Afrique noire de 1919, a nos jours, p. 71. (The translation is mine).

In 1920, it authorized the imprisonment for as long as ten years but in 1940 it was limited to five days or a fine of 100 francs. A decree of April 11th, 1951 replaced the Supreme Court of Appeal with a Court of Appeal in Cameroun sitting in Yaounde. This court was similar to the Metropolitan Court of Appeal.<sup>13</sup> A criminal court was installed at Douala with powers to look into crimes committed by both Africans and Europeans.

#### Cameroun Economy under French Rule

French rule in Cameroun was based chiefly on economic developments and was meant to benefit mostly France. France inherited from the Germans in Cameroun, railroads, harbours, roads and plantations which were producing a variety of tropical crops for export.<sup>14</sup> Albert Sarraut's prime theme, 'la mise en valeur',<sup>15</sup> was forcibly implemented at times, at the expense of the health of the natives. For instance, in the construction of the Douala-Yaounde railway line, human labour was so much abused that some natives died while others escaped to the British Cameroons. The natives had to work for long hours under the debilitating equatorial climate with inadequate medical care and food. In order to implement the 'mise en valeur' drive advocated by Albert Sarraut, the communication system was improved.

<sup>13</sup> Edward Mortimer. France and the Africans 1944-1960. A Political History. Walker and Company, New York, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> Gifford, P., and Roger Louis, W.M. (eds.) France and Britain in Africa. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1971, p. 518.

<sup>15</sup> This was basically the economic development of French colonies by France in such a way that France received the maximum benefit.

The macadamisation of roads in Cameroun by the French actually began in 1939 when the roads in Douala township were macadamised; this was followed shortly by the NKam-Bafang road. This project which was suspended during the 1939-45 war was resumed after the war in two principal directions: The North line running Douala-Bonaberim-Loum-NKongsamba-Bafang-Foumban-Banyo-Tibarti-N'Gaoundere-Garoua-Maroua-Fort Foureau and the Eastern line running Douala-Eder-Yaounde-Bertoua-Boulai (towards Bouar and Bangui).

Priority was given to roads emanating from ports such as Douala and Garoua or to railway terminals such as NKongsamba and Yaounde. The construction of roads was given to the 'Enterprise Razel Freres' (a road construction company which is still constructing roads in Cameroon today) and the 'Societe d'Entreprise Chimiques at Routieres au Cameroun'. Ports such as the Douala, Kribi and Garoua were also extended and improved.

The need for the transportation of perishable and fragile goods encouraged air traffic which gathered momentum after 1952. About eighty tons to one hundred tons of meat were carried monthly from the N'Gaoundere aerodrome to South Cameroun and Gabon. Cameroun was linked to the outside world by the 'Societe Nationale Air France', (Union Aeromaritime des Transports Aeriens (U.A.T.)) and the 'Societe des Transports Aeriens Inter-continentaux (T.A.I.)'; these airlines were also responsible for some of the domestic flights.<sup>16</sup> Other airlines such as 'la Societe Transatlantique Aeriens (S.T.A.) and 'les Transports Aeriens Camerounais were also responsible for inter-African and domestic flights. The principal airports in Cameroun were Douala, Yaounde, N'Gaoundere, Garoua, Maroua, Kribi and Foumban.

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<sup>16</sup> Robert Chot (ed.) Le Cameroun, Les Documents de France, p. 26.

Under the French, the railway system was improved and the existing German lines were extended. From 1921, the French Government started reconstructing and setting up new lines. This project was under the direction of the French Army Corps of Engineers. The Northern lines was started from Bonaberi to M'Bang, N'Jambe, Penja, Lum Chantiers and Lum. The central line was constructed up to Otele which finally reached Yaounde. A Ministerial 'Arrete' of July 17th, 1942 put the railway services under the 'Regie des Chemins de Fer au Cameroun' which was administered by a Council of eighteen members and a Directory Committee of six members. The improvement, extension and construction of the railway lines, for instance the Douala-Yaounde line were accomplished under very trying and, at times, inhuman conditions through corvée for long hours with subsistence wages which cost many lives and led to unrest and mass exodus of the natives to the British Cameroons. They had to work, in some cases, from 6 AM, to 6 PM under rain and sun with inadequate rest. To most of the natives in the Bassa and Bafang regions, crossed by the railway line, the construction of the railway demanded so much sheer human force that their only alternative of survival was to escape to the British Cameroons. For instance, in 1944 about 86 percent of the recruited workers in the Bafang sub-division of the Bamileke region deserted mostly to the British Cameroons.<sup>17</sup>

The cause of the dissatisfaction and desertion was well diagnosed by a French administrator who in 1943 wrote:

<sup>17</sup> Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, Pan Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1966, p. 156.

"La question de la main d'oeuvre demeure zinc des principales causes du mecontentment qui existe parmi la population autochtone.. Elle a eu pour repercussion le depart en zone anglais de nombreux indigenes originaires des chefferies limitrophes au Cameroun britannique."<sup>18</sup>

The 'corvee' and the inhuman treatment was to encourage mass opposition to French rule, a policy which was to be politically exploited after 1948 by the "Union des Populations du Cameroun (U.P.C.). Notwithstanding the cost. The improvement of the railway system was clear; between 1938 and 1951 there was a marked increase in railway transportation in terms of tonnage of goods and number of travellers carried.

The overall improvement in the means of transport contributed to the increase of crop production. The principal crops were cocoa, coffee, bananas, palm oil, palm kernels and groundnuts; stock farming was also undertaken.

Cocoa was the principal export crop. The cultivation of cocoa was entirely in the hands of the natives. In 1937 Cameroun produced 27,000 tons of cocoa and in 1948 a 'cocoa station' was established in Nkoemvone to study and improve on the cocoa plant. Coffee cultivation was also undertaken and it was strongly supported by the Government in Ebolowa, Nkongsamba and Dschang. Two types of coffee were (and are still) cultivated namely the Arabica and the Robusta on the high plateaus of the Bamileke and Bamoum lands. In 1937 4,000 tons of coffee were harvested, in 1951 it was 10,000 tons and in 1952 it was 13,000 tons. Banana plantations were found on the volcanic zones of Mbanga, Penja and Nyombe. In 1939 about

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p. 157.

28,000 tons were exported, in 1950 the amount was 50,000 tons and in 1952 it was 55,000 tons with France being the principal beneficiary. The 'Compagnie des Bananes, S.A.' established in 1922 was responsible for the selling of Cameroun's bananas in France.

Palm tree plantations were located in the Southern part of French Cameroun. The "Institut de Recherches, pour les Huiles et Oleagineux (I.I.R.H.O.)" was responsible for the construction of two palm oil factories in Dibombari and Edea. Cotton cultivation was restricted to North Cameroun because of the suitable climate. The 'Compagnie Francais pour le Developpement des Fibres Textiles (C.F.D.T.)' undertook the responsibility of the cultivation of the crop. The cultivation of tobacco for export was started in 1946. The 'Mission Metropolitaine des Tabacs de Coupe' and the 'Societe' J. Bastos'<sup>19</sup> were responsible, in collaboration with the Administration, for the entire production of cigarettes and cigars although the natives were responsible for about nine-tenths of the cultivation. Groundnuts were grown on the Bateke plateau and about 12,000 tons were harvested in 1937.

France benefited, generally, from her economic interests in Cameroun especially because France exploited cheap native labourers who were paid pathetically low wages after long and strenuous working hours.

#### Consequences of French Rule in Cameroun 1916-1940

The educated native 'elites' were refused advancement to high positions in local government or in the Central Civil Service. Education

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<sup>19</sup> The 'Societe' J. Bastos is the sole manufacturer of commercial cigarettes in Cameroon today.

was left mostly in the hands of missionary societies. For instance, in 1937 there were 85,000 Cameroonian children in Mission elementary schools with the French Roman Catholic Mission accounting for 35,000; the American Presbyterian accounting for 31,500; the French Protestant accounting for 18,000 and the American Adventist 500. The government schools had only 10,000 pupils.<sup>20</sup> By 1945, there were about seventy village schools in Cameroun, ten regional schools, a higher school at Yaounde and a Nursing School ('Ecole des aides de Sante') at Ayos. In 1944, there were three French inspectors of schools in Cameroun, thirty-eight European school teachers - ten of whom had no diplomas and two hundred and fifty African monitors.<sup>21</sup>

The employment of Cameroonians was hedged with many restrictions. An 'arrete' of September 14th, 1938 stipulated compulsory medical examination for would-be employees who were not to work out of their sub-division "without a permit and a written contract approved and countersigned by a government officer."<sup>22</sup> This, to the natives, did not speak well of the French since the requirement of a medical examination meant excessive force and fitness was necessary to successfully perform a job. The 'permit' was regarded as a means of forcing the natives to work in the European plantations which in most cases, paid very low wages; the natives were prevented from getting a better paid job elsewhere since in

<sup>20</sup> David E. Gardinier, Cameroon, United Nations Challenge to French Policy, p. 27.

<sup>21</sup> Jean Suret-Canale, French Colonialism in Tropical Africa, p. 386. A monitor in the context was a native trained to teach but who was not fully qualified. He could not teach in any school in France.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

most cases the 'permits' were never given; they were forced, without the 'permits', to work for the railway construction company or for a European plantation owner, neither of which was of any appeal. In 1938 about 4,264 natives were working on contract and 42,000 as day-labourers.

The ownership of land was controlled by a series of 'arretes' of September 15th, 1921 and October 12th, 1938 which divided the land into four groups: Land controlled under a title either by registration in the German 'Grundbuch' or otherwise. These lands could be freely alienated whether owned by the natives or Europeans provided they were not held by the Germans before the release of the 'arrete'. The second group included lands owned by natives for which no written title existed and these lands, with some reservations, could be alienated. Thirdly, the native reserves and fourthly the 'domaine prive' comprising Government land, unoccupied land or unused land for ten years and lands which were 'vacantes et sans maître' - 'vacant and without owner'.

The French system of taxation in Cameroun was based on the capitation tax which was imposed on all men and women and "in two Northern districts on children over twelve"<sup>23</sup> and the 'prestation' which was a system through which all male Cameroonians worked compulsorily for the government without pay for ten days in a year. The natives seriously hated the 'prestation', especially its method of application by the chiefs. The 'prestation' increased the dislike for all that was French for it was strictly a tax in labour for public works levied through the chiefs and redeemable in cash. The chiefs took the application of the 'prestation' as an opportunity

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<sup>23</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroons. From Mandate to Independence, p. 97.

to take revenge on their enemies. Since the service was usually of a short duration, provisions for health, nutrition, housing or transport were often grossly neglected. In some cases, forced labourers had to travel long distances from the recruiting centers to their place of work - more often than not at their own expense.

The lives of the natives, during French rule until 1944, were "governed by the system known as the 'indigenat' which virtually deprived them of the liberties of criticism, association, and movement and gave to the French administration power to inflict disciplinary penalties, without trial, for a wide range of minor crimes."<sup>24</sup> Apart from the general application of the 'indigenat', the Cameroun native was also subjected to the most extreme provision of the 'indigenat' which allowed imprisonment without trial for up to ten years. The systems of taxation, land-ownership, the 'indigenat' coupled with the complete absence of outlets to express grievances, protests and political aspirations were causes for dislike for the French rule which was voiced in various degrees of intensity by the emergence of 'outlets' after the Second World War 1939-45.

The situation was aggravated when the Doualas raised the question of their expropriated land.<sup>25</sup> After 1926, the Doualas intensified the campaign on their expropriated land and addressed petitions to the government declaring the German Act of expropriation null and void

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<sup>24</sup> Thomas Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa, New York, 1957, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> See page 22 on the question of the 'expropriated land'.

and demanding the return of their lands. When the government turned a deaf ear to the petitions, unrest broke out and the Douala chiefs started talking of national autonomy for Cameroun, a sovereign Cameroon Kingdom and the French maltreatment of Africans.<sup>26</sup> This was the first signal of Cameroonian nationalism which was to assume a greater dimension in the 1950's.

During this period of French administration, the seeds of future party politicking in Cameroun were being sowed. In 1937 the 'Union Camerounaise' led by Ahmadou Abidjo, was founded. Its first major political move was a petition to the League of Nations demanding the conversion of Cameroun from a 'B' mandate to an 'A' mandate. Its prestige was further enhanced when in 1938 the union drafted letters to Franklin Roosevelt, President of the United States, Neville Chamberlain, British Prime Minister, and Edouard Daladier, French Prime Minister, objecting to the possible return of Cameroun to Germany. In the 1920s and especially in the 1930s, Germans demanded with increasing frequency the return of the colonies taken from them by the Allies at the treaty of Versailles in 1919. This demand was unofficially promoted by Germans who were supporters of the old Colonial system and "gradually drew around them the new blood of the Nazi regime".<sup>27</sup> Although the German government did not officially approve it, it secretly gave them the green light to go ahead.

The Germans demanded the return of the colonies on economic grounds. To them, the economic pressure due to the lack of space, the excessive

<sup>26</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon, From Mandate to Independence, p. 115.

<sup>27</sup> Lewin Evans, The Germans and Africa, Cassell and Company Limited, Printed by Greycaine Ltd, 1939, p. 339.

industrialization, the need for large foreign markets and the need for raw materials could only be solved if Germany had her colonies back. "It is stated, moreover, that the Versailles Treaty deprived her of her colonies by illegal and immoral methods."<sup>28</sup> On January 17th, 1936, Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the German Minister for Propaganda, reiterated the German position on the colonial issue when he said:

"We are a poor nation. We have no colonies, no raw materials. But we must tell the other nations that the time must come when we must demand our colonies back. We are beggars; The others do not need the colonies which they have taken from us."<sup>29</sup> On January 26th, 1936 Hitler officially approved the campaign for the return of the German colonies in a speech at Munich. He said that the white race, because of its heroic conception of life was made to rule and the size of the German population warranted colonies to absorb some of the population. This increased pro-German sentiments in some former German colonies and Cameroun was not an exception which perturbed the French administration in Cameroun. On February 21st, 1938 Hitler emphasized the need for the return of the former German colonies on the grounds of the increasing size of the German population and he made it clear that "nothing short of a redistribution of colonial territory will satisfy the German claim for her place in the sun."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 341.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. The chief agencies of German colonial propaganda during this period were the "Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft", "Reichskolonialbund" and "Kolonial Politisches Amt." Journals such as "Afrika Nachrichten" published at Leipzig were fairly aggressive and were committed to the policy of expansion.

<sup>30</sup> Emir Zimmerman, The German Empire of Central Africa. As the Basis of a New German World-Policy. Translated from the Original German, New York, George H. Doran Company. p. XXXI.

The German demand for the return of her colonies drove the French administrators in Cameroun to mete out serious punishment to pro-German supporters and to support all anti-German elements. In 1938 the vanguard of party formation in Cameroun, the 'Jeunesse Camerounaise Francaise (Jeucafra)' was formed by Paul Soppo Priso<sup>31</sup> who was strongly supported by the government. The party meant to frustrate Germany's demand for the return of Cameroon to her and defeat those Cameroonians who wanted Cameroon to be returned to Germany. The threat to French rule in Cameroun in favour of German rule was real especially when some German-educated Cameroonians spoke in favour of Germany. A Douala newspaper, 'M'Bale-Verite', actively supported by Richard Manga Bell of the Douala Bell's family and Gaston Kingue-Jong, developed a pro-German attitude. The French government reacted violently and political suspects were rounded up and sent to the Mokolo prison in North Cameroun. This was essentially why Richard Brunot, the Governor-General, gave his blessing to the formation of Jeucafra. Jeucafra, however, also provided a forum for the 'newborn' Camerounian politicians to demand equal political rights for Cameroonians and better treatment. The formation of Jeucafra was to lead to the birth of political parties in Cameroun after the second World War especially as the natives were looking for any means to express their grievances on the 'prestation', taxation, 'indigenat', landownership and forced labour. France, unknowingly,

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<sup>31</sup> Paul Soppo Priso was born in 1912. After the 1939-45 war, he grew up as a prosperous contractor for public works and buildings. In 1952 he was elected to the Territorial Assembly and a year later, he became its president when he defeated Dr. Aujoulat. He served as a member of the Assembly of the French Union in Paris. He founded the 'Mouvement d'Union Nationale'. He retired from politics in the early 1960s and he is probably the richest Camerounian alive today.

by 1940 had created a situation in Cameroun which after 1945 was to lead her into serious confrontations with genuine Cameroonian wishes especially from the still-to-be-formed, 'Union des Populations du Cameroun (U.P.C.)'.

#### French Colonial Attitude and Cameroun 1939-1945

The French colonial policy before the outbreak of the 1939-45 war was geared towards the solidification of the French empire. French colonial policy was influenced by the 'mise en valeur' doctrine advocated by Albert Sarraut<sup>32</sup> which was basically to enable France "escape the financial consequences of dependency on other states for raw materials."<sup>33</sup> This policy suffered a serious setback, from which it never recovered, during and after the Second World War. The coming of the war in 1939 and the subsequent capitulation of France in June 1940 had serious consequences on French dealings with her colonies. Before the war, French colonists, like their European counterparts, thought of colonies only in terms of economic advantages to the 'mother' countries.

The defeat and capitulation of France in June, 1940 brought to the surface two principal French thoughts with regard to French colonies: General Charles de Gaulle and the Free French Movement - who were those who rejected the capitulation of France - held that France and her colonies had a common sovereignty and to them the defeat of France in 1940 was not her collapse since her colonies had not been defeated; to them the war

<sup>32</sup>Albert Sarraut was the French governor-general of Indo-China from 1911 to 1920 and the French Minister of Colonies from 1920 to 1924.

<sup>33</sup>Bruce D. Marshall, The French Colonial Myth and Constitution-Making in the Fourth Republic, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1973 p. 45. Henceforth cited as The French Colonial Myth.

should be continued from the colonies. The second thought came from the Vichy government and its supporters. To them, French colonies were subordinates to the interests of Paris and consequently they should share in the defeat of the metropole.

The 1939-45 war enabled the French colonies, like all the other colonies, to demand more autonomy from France and it set in motion a series of political movements in the colonies which were to culminate in their achievement of independence. The importance of the French colonies in the French war effort can be deduced from de Gaulle's statement on June 18th, 1940 when he said:

"France is not alone! She has a great empire. Together with the British Empire, she can form a bloc that controls the seas and continue the struggle."<sup>34</sup> With this in mind, he wanted to prevent the French colonies from submitting to the dictates of the Vichy government which he attacked for having relinquished France's essential interest in time of danger and thereby destroying her honour and status as a world power. He supported and orchestrated the overthrow of pro-Vichy governments in French colonies. A case in point is the 1940 coup in Cameroun by Commandant (later General) Philippe Le Clerc.

#### De Gaulle's Coup in Cameroun 1940

On August 5th, 1940, de Gaulle sent General le Clerc and Captain Didier de Boislambert to Cameroun to topple the government of Richard Brunot who had been forced by circumstances to succumb to the Vichy government.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 80

On August 26th, 1940 LeClerc and Boislambert with twenty-four companions arrived in Douala from Tiko, and with the aid of a British agent, Major Allen, they seized most of the important offices and won over the French population. On August 27th, LeClerc declared Cameroun part of the Free French Movement:

I have taken, beginning today 27 August and in the name of the General, the post of General Commissioner....Cameroun proclaims its political and economic independence<sup>35</sup> ...to continue the struggle at the side of the Allies, under the orders of General de Gaulle until complete victory - this 'de Gaulle coup' was not limited to Cameroun; other French Equatorial African colonies were also affected.<sup>36</sup>

The Free French Movement, following massive support from the United States and Britain, eclipsed the Vichy government as the ruler of France before the end of 1944. However, the near collapse of the French economy in 1940, the necessity of preserving the integrity of France and the rising demand for self-government by Africans compelled de Gaulle to institute reforms to consolidate the French colonies and revive French prestige and glory. This ultimately led to the Brazzaville Conference.

#### The Brazzaville Conference 1944

The Brazzaville Conference, January 31st - February 8th, 1944, dealt mostly with French colonies in subsaharan Africa. General Charles de Gaulle attended the opening ceremony. The conference was composed of French

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<sup>35</sup>This did not mean political independence for Cameroun but Cameroun's political and economic independence from the French Vichy government. Cameroun was still a 'colony' (mandated territory) but now under the Free French Movement.

<sup>36</sup>Weinstein Brian, Eboué, New York, Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 247.

colonial administrators, trade unionists and a bishop who was thought qualified to advance the African point of view since "no Africans were actually members of it."<sup>37</sup> The aim of the conference was to coordinate economic and political developments of the French African territories. The Conference called for the elimination of the corvée, the application of a labour code which would extend to the natives the rights enjoyed by French citizens in the French labour code such as the right to form trade unions and professional organizations, determine wages and working hours; it called for the suppression of the use of local spoken dialects in educating the natives in private as well as in public schools;<sup>38</sup> education in the colonies must be in French and it also recommended the revision of the educational system so as to enable the training of Africans for higher positions in the colonial administration.

Although the policy of 'assimilation' was supported, the Conference suggested "administrative decentralization as a policy and political assimilation as a goal."<sup>39</sup> It also recommended that the territories should have a voice in the new French Constitution which was to be drawn up, and Africans should have an increased participation in the political organs of the French Republic. Since, traditionally, the French had regarded African culture, traditions and institutions as being inferior, and which should not be preserved, it was proposed that the traditional political institutions which were good should be adopted in order to further political and economic progress.

<sup>37</sup> Edward Mortimer, France and the Africans, 1944-1960, p. 49-50.

<sup>38</sup> Local interests were, therefore, defeated.

<sup>39</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroons, From Mandate to Independence, p. 134.

From the Brazzaville Conference emerged increased african demands for social, economic and administrative changes; more positions in the administration were opened to the Africans; forced labour was suppressed; a uniform penal code replaced the 'indigenat', trade unions were established and finally the changes enabled the colonial peoples to assist in the restructuralization of French political institutions in the 1946 French Parliament as was outlined in the French Constitution of 1946. In the end, however, the ultimate aim of the Brazzaville Conference was to reassert the predominance of the metropolis by safeguarding French sovereignty and restoring her national prestige<sup>40</sup> - which it did but for only a short time.

#### French Colonial Policy vis-a-vis Cameroun 1939-45

The colonial attitudes adopted by France between 1939 and 1945 affected Cameroun tremendously. The effect of the war was partly responsible for the tremendous wave of native nationalisms which swept through Africa after 1945 and Cameroun was not left untouched. During the war, Cameroun was unable to depend heavily on Paris for economic assistance; control from Paris was weakened; emotional and political movements towards independence were stimulated while the disruption of normal French financial and administrative channels to her colonies meant that Paris had to depend heavily on indigenous elites. The events of August 26th and August 27th 1940 in Cameroun masterminded by the Gaullists finally convinced the Cameroun elites that they could also rise against the administration.

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<sup>40</sup>Bruce D. Marshall, The French Colonial Myth, p. 119.

The success of the "de Gaulle's Coup" enabled de Gaulle to inform the Secretariat of the League of Nations that he had taken "over administration of the Cameroon under French Mandate, together with the powers and obligation this Mandate entails."<sup>41</sup> When de Gaulle later on visited Cameroun and held talks with indigenous and French leaders, a new spirit of political consciousness developed in the minds of the enlightened indigenous elites which was confirmed by the recommendations which emerged from the Brazzaville Conference.

After the official demise of the League of Nations on April 18, 1946, its mandated territories were taken over by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations Organization. Article 76 of the United Nations Charter on Trust Territories stipulated the objectives of the trusteeship system as being:

to promote the political, economic, and social and education advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its people concerned, and as may be provided by the terms of each trusteeship agreement...<sup>42</sup>

On November 5, 1946 France presented to the Trusteeship Committee the agreements for the Cameroons and Togo. Following the agreement France governed Cameroun as a trust territory of the United Nations Organization with full political power over Cameroun. Although India and the Soviet Union criticized the agreement because it gave France full political control over Cameroun, the General Assembly of the U.N. accepted it on December 13, 1946 after Douala Manga Bell<sup>43</sup> had supported it.

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<sup>41</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon, From Mandate to Independence, p. 132.

<sup>42</sup> Edward Mortimer, France and the Africans, 1944-1960, p. 115-116.

<sup>43</sup> Douala Manga Bell was one of Cameroun's representatives to the French National Assembly in Paris.

## CHAPTER IV

### FRENCH CAMEROUN TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE 1946-60

#### The French Constitution of 1946

The French Constitution of 1946, in adopting the recommendations of the Brazzaville Conference of 1944, reserved a 'favourable' position to French Oversea Territories which were grouped into Associated States and Associated Territories to which French Cameroun belonged. Following the recommendations of the Brazzaville Conference, French Oversea Territories provided sixty-four colonial representatives out of a total of 586 representatives to the 1945 French Constituent Assembly.<sup>1</sup> Thirty-six of the sixty-four colonial representatives were elected by French citizens in the first electoral college, twenty-four were elected by the 'subjects' in the second electoral college and four on common electoral rolls. Out of the sixty-four, French Equatorial Africa and Cameroun elected six. The Associated Territories participated in the French Union<sup>2</sup> but not in the High Council. The inhabitants in French Territories were granted voting rights in the French National Assembly and in the Council of the Republic.

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<sup>1</sup>This was a clear change of French colonial attitude since the importance of having colonial representatives in assisting in French colonial policy was recognized. In 1936, all the colonies were represented by a total of only nineteen deputies who were elected by French citizens.

<sup>2</sup>The concept of a French Union was formulated in 1946. It comprised France and all her colonies.

As a consequence of the French Constitution of 1946, French Cameroonian were given the right to elect representatives to the French National Assembly and to the Council of the Republic. The creation of the opportunity to elect representatives to these political institutions had a political aftermath in French Cameroon. The process of electing representatives was to stimulate the rise of political groups and parties while the extension of suffrage and citizenship by the Constitution helped in cultivating nationalistic ideas in the French Comeroonians.

#### French Political Administration in Cameroun

Although the 1939-45 war weakened France politically and economically, French critics against decolonization held stubbornly to the glory of French grandeur and empire since they felt that the decolonization of French colonies would mean the decadence of France. This view against decolonization was opposed to the statements made by leaders of nations fighting the Axis Powers when they talked of freedom from all evils including exploitation. France's political decisions in Cameroun from 1946-1960 were to a large extent strongly influenced by her obligations to the United Nations and by her weakened military status. Three groups of anti-colonial policies existed in the United Nations. These were the Soviet Union which wanted to free colonies so as to spread international communism, the Latin American countries which were sympathetic towards colonies and finally the newly independent Asiatic and African countries. French policies in Cameroun after 1946 were also influenced by the wars in Indo-China and Algeria; by the demands of the Afro-Asian Bandung Conference of 1955 calling for decolonization; by the independence of former French protectorates in Tunisia and Morocco; by the civil strife in France after the

Second World War and finally by the 1952 electoral victory of the independence party of Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana.

As a consequence of the 1946 French constitution, elections were held in Cameroun in November 1946 for the National Assembly and in December 1946 for the Territorial Representative Assembly. Although the elections were fought on individual personalities rather than on the basis of political parties, two tendencies dominated the elections namely the evolutionary tendency which

included those Cameroonians who though not entirely satisfied with the framework for political advancement offered by the policy of assimilation were willing to work within it for the time being

and

the revolutionary tendency which included those Cameroonians who were dissatisfied with the framework to the extent that they were determined to have French policy altered in order to permit a political evolution towards self-government and independence.

In the end, those representing the evolutionary tendency emerged victors for the National Assembly; four deputies were elected: Dr. Louis Paul Aujoulat<sup>4</sup>, who at the time was the president of the Territorial Assembly in Cameroun; Mr. Douala Manga Bell; Mr. Georges Mo Linatti and Mr. Jules Ninine. Of the four deputies, three were for the Second College.<sup>5</sup> Three

<sup>3</sup>David E. Gardinier, Cameroon, United Nations Challenge to French Policy.

<sup>4</sup>Dr. Louis Paul Aujoulat was born on August 28th, 1910 in Saida, Algeria. He came to Cameroun in 1938 as a French physician and lay missionary. Between 1945 and 1955, he represented Cameroun in the French National Assembly. He once served in the cabinet of France's Premier Mendes-France as Secretary of State for Overseas France. He was also in the Cameroun Territorial Assembly. He founded the 'Bloc Democratique Camerounais'. In 1957 he retired to France.

<sup>5</sup>The French settlers and naturalized native citizens formed the First College and the natives voted in the Second College.

Senators were elected to the Council of the Republic of which two were for the Second College and five advisers to the French Union of which three were in the Second College. The members of the Cameroun Territorial Assembly were elected by the same electors who elected those to the French National Assembly. The Territorial Assembly was composed of fifty members of which thirty-two were 'representing' Cameroonians and eighteen were representing the French citizens in Cameroun. The Territorial Assembly met once a year in two ordinary sessions although extraordinary sessions could be held. This Assembly had direct contact with the French Minister of Colonial Affairs.<sup>6</sup>

#### Party Politics in Cameroun 1945-1960

The formation of political parties and the strengthening of the spirit of nationalism in French Cameroun were the consequences of the promotion of indigenous elites to posts of authority, the return of ex-service men who brought new ideas and resented the maltreatment of Africans by whites, the concentration of indigenous workers at the ports and railways which gave an unconscious sense of workers' movement, the suffering experienced during and immediately after the Second World War which created the need for a change of the 'status quo' and the legalization of the formation of labour movements and professional organizations following the recommendations of the Brazzaville Conference.

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix E, for a list of government administrators in French Cameroun after 1945 and the administrators representing Cameroun in the various political institutions.

The government-sponsored 'Jeunesse Camerounaise Francaise (Jeucafra)' was the only political party in Cameroun before 1945.<sup>7</sup> The scarcity of goods in Cameroun in 1944 as a consequence of the direction of factors of production towards sustaining France in the war, the rising inflation and the administrative support of the right of labour organizations and strikes led to the rise of trade unions.<sup>8</sup> The legalization of labour movements enabled French labour movements to establish branches in Cameroun. In 1944, a communist-oriented French trade union established its branch in Cameroun under the name of 'Union des Syndicats Confederes du Cameroun (USCC) with Charles Assale as one of its architects. The aims of the Union, like all other trade unions, were to demand wage increases for its members, good working conditions and better working hours. Its first major activity against the Labour code led to clashes between the militia and unionists in Douala in 1945 in which nine people were killed and twenty wounded.

This event spurred the Jeucafra into active politics and in September 1945 it presented a series of proposals to the administration calling, among other things, for the removal of European traders from the rural areas and local markets, the election of regional councils and the Camerounization of cadres - a Jeucafra delegation was sent to Paris to present the proposals. Afterwards, the Jeucafra relinquished its name and adopted the 'Union Camerounaise Franciase (Unicafra)'. French political parties, wanting to have branches in Cameroun, increased the birth of

<sup>7</sup> See page 42 for the origin of the Jeucafra.

<sup>8</sup> This was in keeping with one of the recommendations of the Brazzaville Conference.

political parties in Cameroun. For instance, the 'Rassemblement du Peuple Francaise (RPF)' and the French Communist Party were instrumental in the birth of the 'Rassemblement Camerounais (Racam)' and the 'Union des Populations du Cameroun (U.P.C.)' respectively.

The failure of the 1945 strike organized by the USCC was largely because it based its appeal on the Marxist doctrine of class struggle which lays emphasis on a consistent class struggle between the exploiting bourgeois class and the exploited proletariat class which would ultimately lead to a proletariat victory. This message of class struggle had no appeal to the average French Cameroonian who was ignorant of class consciousness or class struggle and could not identify the indigenous bourgeois class from the proletariat class - if at all there was an indigenous bourgeois class in Cameroun in 1945! In April 1948, some of the more militant labour leaders: Reuben Um Nyobe<sup>9</sup>, Ernest Ouandie<sup>10</sup> and Abel Kingue

<sup>9</sup> Um Nyobe Reuben was born in 1913 in Boumnyebel in Sanaga-Martime Region. After having attended schools in the Bassa area, he was admitted into a Teacher's Training School at Sangmelima. In 1947 he entered active political life and founded the U.P.C. in 1948. When the U.P.C. was banned in French Cameroun in 1955, he organized terrorist activities to force the French administration to grant Cameroun independence and reunification with British Cameroons. On September 13th, 1958 he was killed in a skirmish with government troops near Boumnyebel.

<sup>10</sup> Ernest Ouandie was born in 1924 in the Bamileke division of Cameroun. He was educated locally and took up teaching in 1940. He was educated locally and took up teaching in 1940. In 1948 he helped in founding the U.P.C. and was its Vice-President in 1952. When it was outlawed in 1955, he went to the British Cameroons, Egypt and Ghana. He returned to Cameroun clandestinely and took up terrorism in support of the U.P.C. In August 1970, he was captured at Mbanga and executed on January 15th, 1971.

founded the 'Union des Populations du Cameroun'. Dr. Felix-Roland Moumie<sup>11</sup> later joined them.

The 'Union des Populations du Cameroun (U.P.C.)' enhanced its influence by gaining the support of the influential Douala-dominated organization, the 'Ngondo', and the Bamileke Traditional Association, the 'Kumsze', although in less than four years they were to turn against it. The U.P.C. was a pro-communist party and was the first real Cameroonian nationalist party. It had two principal objectives: (1) The independence of French Cameroun and (2) its reunification with the British Cameroons. The ignorance of the average Cameroonian on the meaning and implication of the trusteeship and the lack of political understanding of the importance of unification coupled with the anti-U.P.C. policies of the administration retarded its progress. Although meetings were organized between the U.P.C. and other parties in the British Cameroons to plan a common strategy towards achieving unification, the U.P.C. failed to get massive support from the populace.

Before 1956 the U.P.C. was a well structured, organized, disciplined and vocal party. It established committees (even after 1956) in villages and in 'quarters'. It was directed by the Central Executive Committee. The members were elected by the Congress of the party and it comprised a Political Bureau, Secretariat and Treasury. In order to widen its areas of influence, it created sub-organs such as 'Les Amis du Progres' in

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<sup>11</sup>Dr. Felix-Roland Moumie was born in 1926 at Foumban. He went to the 'Ecole Normale William Panty' near Dakar, Senegal where he had his medical degree. He returned to Cameroun and joined the U.P.C. When it was banned, he took refuge in British Cameroons, Cairo, Conakry and Accra. On November 3rd, 1960 while in Geneva, he died of poisoning under mysterious circumstances.

Yaounde, the 'comite Feminin de 'U.P.C.', 'La Voix du Peuple Bafia', the 'Jeunesse Democratique Camerounaise', the 'Amis des Nations Unis', the 'Comite du defense de la paix' and the 'Comite pour le regroupment des forces nationalistes'. With its monthly newspaper, the 'Voix du Peuple du Cameroun' followed by a weekly, 'L'Etoile', a bimonthly, 'Lumiere' and a youth bulletin 'La Verite', the party widely publicized its aims while the sub-organs acted as propaganda machines. In order to contain the influence of the U.P.C. in the Bamileke area, a pro-government 'party', the 'Union Bamileke' was founded in 1948 which gave rise to other anti-U.P.C. groups such as the 'Evolution Sociale Camerounaise (ESOCAM) in 1949 and the 'Renaissance Camerounaise' at Abong-Mbanga. In order to foster its policy of unification with the British Cameroons, a Douala resident in the British Cameroons, Mr. Jabea R.K. Dibongue<sup>12</sup>, under the auspices of the U.P.C. formed the French Cameroons Welfare Union to spread the unification theme in the British Cameroons.

#### The 1951-52 Elections and Their Effects

In 1951, the French Cameroonians and French citizens in Cameroon went to the polls to elect representatives to the French National Assembly and in 1952 to elect representatives to the Territorial Assembly. As a consequence of the recommendations of the 1944 Brazzaville Conference and the 1946 French Constitution, French Cameroonians of both sexes, "allant

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<sup>12</sup>Jabea R.K. Dibongue (1896-1963) came from the Akwa clan of the Douala people. He was one of the most enlightened young elite during the period of German administration in Cameroon. In 1911 he won the coveted Governor PuttKamer Prize as the top student in 'Kamerun'. By 1916 he had been the highest ranking African in the Kamerun government.

des notables aux titulaires d'une patente, en passant par les chefs coutoumiers, les propriétaires, les titulaires d'un permis de chasse ou de conduire ou, plus généralement encore, les mères de deux enfants et tous ceux qui savent lire"<sup>13</sup> were given the opportunity to vote.<sup>14</sup> The 1951 and 1952 elections set in action a political contest involving all the political parties in Cameroun. Despite the 'intensive' campaign of the U.P.C., it was defeated in both elections. The U.P.C. candidates did very poorly, especially Um Nyobe, due to 'administrative harassment.' In the elections, the 'Bloc Democratique Camerounais' led by Dr. Louis-Paul Aujoulat easily won over the U.P.C. Since it had the support of the government indirectly and had great politicians like Andre-Marie Mbida<sup>15</sup> from the South and Ahmadou Ahidjo<sup>16</sup> from the north. With the victory of

<sup>13</sup> Robert Chot (ed), Le Cameroun, Les documents de France, p. 63.

<sup>14</sup> The number of French Cameroonian electors by 1952 had increased from 12,000 in 1945; 41,000 in 1948 to 532,000 in 1951.

<sup>15</sup> Born in 1919 at Endinding in the Nyong-et-Sanaga District, Andre-Marie Mbida worked from 1945 to 1950 as a legal secretary. In 1952 he was elected to the Territorial Assembly and between 1953 to 1956 served as councillor in the French Union. In 1956 he was elected deputy to the French National Assembly. In 1957 he became the Premier of the first Cameroonian government of French Cameroun. In 1958 he was defeated in the Assembly and went into self-exile to Cairo and Conakry. Following a general amnesty, he returned to an independent Cameroun in 1960 but in 1962 he was arrested for an alleged conspiracy against the government. He was released in 1965 and 'retired' from politics.

<sup>16</sup> Ahmadou Ahidjo, the son of a Fulani chief, was born in May 1922 at Garoua. He was educated locally and at a secondary school at Yaounde. In 1941, he was a post office radio operator and later on became the leader of the 'Jeunes Musulmans' movement, and was elected to the Territorial Assembly in 1947. In 1953 he was elected to the Assembly of the French Union and became its Vice-President in 1956. In 1957, he was Vice-Premier in Mbida's government. The founder of the 'Union Camerounaise', he became the Premier in 1958 and later on the President of the independent Cameroun in 1960. He reunited the Cameroun Republic with the British Southern Cameroons in 1961 and successfully transformed the Federal Republic of Cameroun into a United Republic in 1972. He is a reserved, modest, courteous, pleasant and astute politician.

the 'Bloc Democratique Camerounais', Dr. Aujoulat became the President of the Territorial Assembly - a post which he held until he was replaced by Soppo Priso in 1953. Um Nyobe despite his defeat in the 1951-52 elections continued his policies with unflagging determination. He used the U.N. to publicize the proposals of his party.

The long political inactivity of the Cameroonian was finally ended after 1952 when the U.N. granted audience to the Secretary-General of the U.P.C. Un Myobe, after having led a twenty-six man U.P.C. delegation to a Manerun United National Congress (KUNC) meeting at Kumba in the British Cameroons in December 1951, went to New York in 1952 to present his 'case' before the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations.

#### The U.P.C. is banned

In 1954 Roland Pre replaced Andre Soucadaux as the French High Commissioner in Cameroun. The arrival of Roland Pre meant the end of the legality of the U.P.C. for unlike his predecessor, Pre was opposed to all political parties in Cameroun and restricted the powers of the Territorial Assembly. This played directly into the hands of the U.P.C. whose members resorted to violence. Pre's actions were directed mainly against the U.P.C. whose members were accused of spreading false rumours about Europeans behading Cameroonians and that the vaccination in the Bamileke region was meant to decrease its population - the U.P.C. dismissed the accusations as being false and unfounded. Roland Pre's anti-U.P.C. policies included the transfer of U.P.C. 'functionnaires' (workers with the Administration) to remote areas and the refusal of public facilities to U.P.C. Committees. In March 1955, Pre in one of his miscalculated anti-U.P.C. policies transferred Dr. Felix-Roland Moumie to Douala an action which acted as a bommerang

since it gave Moumie a wider area in which to work for U.P.C. goals. As if inspired by the government, in April 1955 the five Roman Catholic bishops in Cameroun wrote a letter which was read in all Catholic churches in Cameroun on Easter Sunday condemning the U.P.C., its methods, its ties with atheistic communism and its hostile attitude towards the Catholics.<sup>17</sup>

The policy of Pre, the Catholic bishops in Cameroun and the refusal of Paris to abandon its policy of assimilation and set a time-table for the granting of independence to Cameroun transformed the U.P.C. into a hard, violent and zealous anti-colonial party. On April 22, 1955, the U.P.C. and some trade unions declared the end of French rule in Cameroun and proclaimed a sovereign state; preparation for the election of a Constituent Assembly under United Nations supervision was proposed. Tension mounted high in the Bamileke, Mungo, Nyong-et-Sanaga and the Sanaga-Maritime regions and in May 1955 it boiled over into armed uprisings against the government and its supporters. Houses were destroyed, barricades were erected, the Territorial Assembly building was attacked and both Africans and Europeans were looted and attacked. The government reacted violently and the mass uprising which the U.P.C. leaders had expected failed to materialize partly because the government's anti-U.P.C. policies were successful but most important because the uprising was neither well-planned nor well-coordinated. When the dust finally settled, the total bill of the uprising was about twenty-six people dead, 176 wounded, millions of francs worth of property destroyed and 637 people indicted for various acts of violence or destruction.

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<sup>17</sup> It is not really true that at this period, the U.P.C. was anti-Catholic.

On July 13th, 1955 the U.P.C. and all its affiliated trade unions were banned in Cameroun! Um Nyobe, Felix Moummie and Ouandie escaped to the British Cameroons. When a U.N. visiting mission arrived in Cameroon in October 1955, it was presented with a picture which did not speak well of the demand for independence or self-government - "The administration, the U.P.C. and the local politicians all appeared divided and hesitant, and the visiting mission felt that if Cameroonian unity were not immediately threatened, it was at least jeopardized"<sup>18</sup> especially as there was a violent anti-U.P.C. sentiment in North Cameroun. Although the U.P.C. was banned, it continued with its policies in Cameroun clandestinely.

#### Cameroun and the "Loi-Cadre" 1956-60

After the May uprising, Cameroonians in the Assembly asked the French National Assembly for a general amnesty in order to pacify the U.P.C., its supporters and its sympathizers but no positive immediate reply was received. In 1956, Dr. Aujoulat was defeated by Andre-Marie Mbida in the race for the French National Assembly.

Partly because of the U.P.C. - inspired unrest in Cameroun, the French National Assembly drafted a series of constitutional reforms for Cameroun in June 1956 known collectively as the "Loi-Cadre." According to the "Loi-Cadre", Paris accepted to inaugurate institutional reforms by decrees after consultations with the Territorial Assembly and the Assembly of the French Union. France also accepted the political developments in Cameroun if they suited Cameroun and finally elections to all assemblies

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<sup>18</sup>Victor. T. LeVine, The Cameroon From Mandate to Independence, p. 157.

in Cameroun were by universal adult suffrage and fram a single electoral college. These reforms did not, however, mean that France had accepted to prepare Cameroun for independence. In fact, steps were taken by France to prevent the independence of Cameroun and the dominant position of Paris was written into the "Loi-Cadre" reforms. The French Parliament retained supreme powers over legislation and "its laws continued to take precedence over decisions by territorial assemblies."<sup>19</sup> The state public services including the 'commandants des cercles' (district officers) functioned free from territorial control. In April 1957, by decree 57-495 Article 17, the French government was empowered to dissolve African Assemblies and also to annul their decision.<sup>20</sup>

As a consequence of the "Loi-Cadre", the Territorial Assembly elected in 1952 was dissolved in November 1956 to make way for fresh elections in December 1956. The U.P.C. leaders were allowed to participate but they decided to go "underground to prepare...against the forthcoming elections."<sup>21</sup> The dominant role of Paris in Cameroun, the anti-U.P.C. policies of Pre's government and the 'harrassement' of U.P.C. candidates during the 1951-52 elections were still fresh in the minds of the U.P.C. leaders coupled with the refusal of the National Assembly to grant a general amnesty. These factors were instrumental in the U.P.C.'s rejection of the 1956 elections. The U.P.C.'s rejection was intensified by the rejection

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<sup>19</sup> Ruth Schachter Morgenthau, Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1964, p. 72. Henceforth cited as Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon, From Mandate to Independence, p. 159.

of the "Loi-Cadre" by Soppo Priso on June 6th, 1956. Soppo Priso also called for the unification of the Cameroons, reconstitution of the Assembly through universal suffrage and a general amnesty but his cries fell on deaf ears - only the U.P.C. welcomed his proposals.

The U.P.C. campaigned against voting and carried out acts of sabotage. In December 1956 clashes erupted in Douala and Yaounde between pro- U.P.C. and anti - U.P.C. supporters which claimed the lives of Dr. Charles Delangue, the first Cameroonian chief-physician, and Samuel Npoumah. The U.P.C. was very active in the Sanaga-Maritime region where violent acts of sabotage were perpetuated between 1956 and 1957. When order was finally restored, it was alleged that the Sanaga-Maritime region suffered a decrease in population of about 2,500 people as a direct result of the confrontations between U.P.C. supporters and anti-U.P.C. supporters backed by French and Cameroonian troops. These clashes, however, did not prevent the elections from taking place.

A new Territorial Assembly was elected in December 1956. It was composed of the 'Union Camerounaise (UC)' from the north led by Ahmadou Ahidjo and Arouna Njoya winning thirty seats, the 'Democrates Camerounais' from the Center led by Andre-Marie Mbida winning twenty seats, the 'Paysans Independents' from the West led by Mathias Djoumessi and Michel Njine winning nine seats and the 'Action Nationale' from the coast winning eight seats. The Assembly started working on a proposed statute for Cameroun and in January 1957 the statute was accepted with a vote of 59 to 8; it was officially put into operation on April 4, 1957.

The statute enabled Cameroun to acquire a constitution but the French High Commissioner in Cameroun was responsible for defense, external

relations with France and with other countries and he was empowered to choose the Prime Minister who had to be invested by the Assembly. On May 9th, 1957 the Territorial Assembly took the title of the 'Assemblee Legislative du Cameroun' and later in the year a Cameroonian flag, a national anthem and motto were adopted. On May 15, 1957 Andre-Marie Mbida was sworn in as the Prime Minister of the Cameroun heading a Coalition Government comprising members from all of the above named parties except the 'Action Nationale'. In June 1957 the statute was formally inaugurated and "Cameroun was now a state under Trusteeship but outside the French Union although like Togo it continued to be represented in the French Parliament."<sup>22</sup>

#### Cameroun Under Mbida

Mbida's government was born in an atmosphere of general instability and was short-lived because of Mbida's personality and policies. Cameroun was still terrorised by the U.P.C. and Mbida opted for stringent methods against the U.P.C. He decided to run the government without consulting his ministers. In politics, he made the 'fatal' error of insisting that Cameroun was not yet ripe for independence and to him the reunification issue was a far-fetched idea which was unforeseeable in the near future. These ideas, coupled with his rejection of a general amnesty were in great contrast to what all the other political parties and some members of his government wanted. The U.P.C. stepped up its incessant opposition to the government especially on Mbida's views on independence and unification.

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<sup>22</sup>Edward Mortimer, France and the Africans 1944-1960, p. 246,

Moves to pacify the U.P.C. led Um Nyobe in July 1957 to write a letter to Premier Mbida and the High Commissioner stating that terroristic activities would cease if the existing elected Assembly were dissolved, a new election arranged, a general amnesty granted and Cameroun was assured immediate independence.

When his conditions were rejected, violence flared up on September 5th, 1957 in the Sanaga-Maritime region which coalesced with the Bamileke peasants' uprising against the Administration which wanted to depose a young-reforming Bamileke chief in favour of an old, traditional, conservative, government puppet. Mbida personally went to Um Nyobe's village, Boumnyebel, to convince the population to support the government but his trip was anything but successful. In order to contain the U.P.C. terrorists, he appealed to Paris for more French troops and when his request was granted, his government responded with stern brutality against the U.P.C.

#### Fall of Mbida

In January 1958, Mbida issued his ten-year program which called for political, economic and social developments; after which the question of independence could be considered. On February 7th, 1958 the French National Assembly passed the amnesty bill but unfortunately it came too late to enhance Mbida's influence. His rejection of reunification and procrastination on independence led to the resignation of some of his ministers especially those from the 'Union Cameroonaise' led by Ahmadou Ahidjo. When Mbida decided to nominate their successors, the new High Commissioner, Jean Ramadier, was reluctant to confirm them although in the end he did. Ramadier, who had arrived in Cameroun with a strong political dislike

for Mibida, masterminded the resignation of Mbida on February 18th, 1958.

Mbida was succeeded as Premier of Cameroun by Ahmadou Ahidojo. Mibida flew to Paris to plead his case before the French government but his only consolation was the replacement of Jean Ramadier by Xavier Torre.

In January 1959, Mbida escaped to Conakry, Guinea, allegedly in fear of being assassinated by U.P.C. terrorists yet strangely enough, he was in close touch with U.P.C. leaders like Dr. Felix-Roland Moumie during this period.

## CHAPTER V

### CAMEROUN UNDER AHIDJO AND THE PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE

On February 19th, 1958, following the resignation of Mbida, Xavier Torre invested Ahidjo as the new Premier of Cameroun. A coalition Government was installed composed of the 'Union Camerounaise' led by Ahidjo which provided two ministers, the 'Action Nationale' which also provided two ministers, the 'Paysans Independents' with one minister, one unattached minister and three others appointed outside the 'Assemblee Legislative du Cameroun (ALCAM)'.

#### Ahidjo's Policy 1958-60

Ahidjo advocated independence and reunification, full internal autonomy and "national reconciliation and co-operation with France in an atmosphere of reciprocal cordiality and confidence."<sup>1</sup> He summarized his programme in the terms 'Cameroonian Unity' which meant not only North and South Cameroun but also unity with the British Cameroons, a 'Cameroonian nation' which meant the achievement of independence within a reasonable time-limit and 'Franco-Cameroonian cooperation in a federation of independent Africa states in turn confederated with the French Republic.'<sup>2</sup> The ALCAM decided to modify the 1957 statute so as to incorporate the

<sup>1</sup> Victor T. Levine, Cameroon. From Mandate to Independence, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> David E. Gardinier, Cameroon, United Nations Challenge to French Policy, p. 84.

element of independence. This was a tremendous shift from Mbida's anti-independent view. Ahidjo decided to open negotiations with France on the independence of Cameroun. Beginning in June, 1958, negotiations, which ran into October, with Paris were begun and France accepted Cameroun's demand for independence advanced by Ahidjo and the ALCAM.

This change in French colonial policy was finally brought about by a number of factors. The concept of a French union formulated in 1946 had been gradually decaying since 1954 and was going down the drain; by 1958, it was no longer politically viable as exemplified by the independence of Indochina in 1954, Tunisia and Morocco. This change compelled some French intellectuals and politicians to speak for greater flexibility of policies towards colonies in the context of the international situation especially as the colonies were making full use of the U.N.O. to demand decolonization and independence. General Charles de Gaulle, as President of the Fifth French Republic, finally bought the decolonization package only after the escalation of the Algerian war for independence, the agony of the French army in Indochina and the policies adopted by Asiatic and African countries at the Bandung Conference of 1955.<sup>3</sup>

The ALCAM agreed on January 1st, 1960 as the date for the independence of Cameroon and on October 28th, 1958 Paris informed the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly - which supervised French rule in

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<sup>3</sup> Some Gaullists argue that de Gaulle spelled out the decolonization of French colonies at the Brazzaville Conference but the colonial policies of France and de Gaulle from 1944 to 1956 were not meant to lead to the independence of the French colonies and I think he accepted granting independence to the French colonies only after the agonies experienced by French troops in Indochina and the Algerian war.

Cameroun - on the independence of Cameroun. Meanwhile the U.P.C. had suffered a major setback following the death of Um Nyobe when he was shot dead by a government patrol on September 13th, 1958 near his birthplace, Boumnyebel. Um Nyobe dead was more of a national hero than Um Nyobe alive since "once dead he became a national hero to whom even supporters of the government could afford to pay lip-service."<sup>4</sup>

When the U.N. decided to discuss the future of the independence of Cameroun, Felix-Roland Moumie accused the Ahidjo government for not being legitimate, that it was a child of Paris, democracy was abused by the government and finally that reunification had not yet been realized via the U.N. Because of these accusations, Moumie concluded, the Fourth Committee should refuse Ahidjo's demand for independence. This led to the suspension of the discussions and in November 1958 a U.N. visiting Mission was sent to Cameroun on a fact-finding mission; by December 6th, 1958 it had gathered enough material to convince the Fourth Committee of the U.N. General Assembly that Cameroun was mature and ready for independence.

Although Ahidjo tried to pursue a reconciliatory policy towards the U.P.C., Moumie and Ouandie insisted on the rejection of his government. In 1958, the U.P.C. group of Moumie moved its headquarters to Conakry where Sekou Toure offered them financial and political assistance. Ahidjo's policy, nonetheless, started yielding fruits after the death of Um Nyobe when Theodore Mayi Matip, Um Nyobe's principal chief in Cameroun, compromised with him and abandoned the 'marquis'. The U.P.C., realizing the achievements of its 'raison d'etre' by a different 'group' degenerated

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<sup>4</sup> Edward Mortimer, France and the Africans 1944-1960, p. 301.

into scattered terrorist groups launching sporadic attacks and committing atrocities - especially Ouandie's group - on civilians.<sup>5</sup>

### Internal Situation 1959-60

The increasing terrorist activities by the U.P.C. was sapping the strength of Ahidjo's government and in order to curb further U.P.C. terrorist activities, the ALCAM in May 1959 gave Ahidjo special powers which, among others enabled him to impose curfew, an internal pass system<sup>6</sup>, censorship of private letters and arrest of suspected individuals. The immense political and financial assistance given by Guinea to the U.P.C. finally drove Ahidjo on June 3rd, 1959 to declare

"M. Sekou Toure has not renounced his dream of colonization. In New York he suggested that the Cameroun be placed under trusteeship. This ridiculous proposal evidently had the disposition it deserved. Now the Guinean chief of state returns to conquer the Cameroun with the aid of his strawmen, Mbida and Mounie. His intentions, instead of being pure, are simple; to provoke troubles in the Cameroun so that his friends can assume power and make the Cameroun....a springboard for his ambitions... We cannot doubt that M. Sekou Toure and his friends want a civil war in the Cameroun."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Even after independence and reunification, life along the Loum, Mbanga, Bafoussan, Bafang and Nkongsamba areas was very insecure especially at night until after the arrests and executions of Ouandie and some remaining activists of the U.P.C. in 1971.

<sup>6</sup>The 'internal pass system' known generally as 'laissez-passer' existed even after independence and reunification well into the early 1970s.

<sup>7</sup>Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon. From Mandate to Independence, p. 181, (Translated by Victor T. LeVine from "La Presse du Cameroun", June 4, 1959, p. 1)

The imposition of curfew, the pass system, arrests on suspicion and a couple of other measures did not deter the U.P.C. from striking again on June 27th, 1959 - Douala, Mbal Mayo, Mabanga, Yaounde and the Sanga-Maritime region right up to the Bamileke areas were attacked by U.P.C. terrorists. The government replied with an all out-attack on suspected terrorists and areas and also created self-defense militia units. At this time, the steam of revolt was gathering momentum in the Bamileke areas in support of the U.P.C. and against the harsh and brutal government repression. Ahidjo, partly because of the support given by the Bamileke's to the U.P.C. terrorists, gradually cultivated a strong distrust for the Bamilekes which led to the dismissal of Michel Njine, Minister of Education, on September 12th, 1959 and Daniel Kemajou from the presidency of ALCAM in October 1959. Although he tried to win over the Bamilekes by touring the Bamileke region, his distrust for the Bamilekes and their region lingered until the late 1960s.

Because of the deteriorating social, economic and, more important, the internal political situations, Ahidjo introduced two bills for debate in 1959. The first bill was to give the government 'pleins pouvoirs' which would enable the government to rule by decree for a maximum of six months. The second would empower a commission to draft a constitution with the assistance of a consultative committee and the charter would then be submitted to a national referendum. The second was the 'projet de loi' which would grant full and unconditional amnesty to all people living in the Sanaga-Maritime and the Nyong-et-Sanaga regions who had committed political crimes. The debate on the 'pleins pouvoirs' was violent and offered an opportunity for opponents to throw insults at one another. A picture of

the tense atmosphere could be gathered from a speech by Tsalla Mekongo from the 'Democrats'. He said:

"Now, as I speak, a state of alert with curfew is in effect in all regions of the South Cameroun; you can't go out at night for fear of being killed; you've heard of executions. Do you want to give the Prime Minister special powers so as to give him the possibility of killing whoever he likes?"<sup>8</sup>

The law, nonetheless, went to the Committee and when it was presented again to the Assembly, arguments against it flared up again. For instance, Daniel Kemajou said:

"The 'pleins pouvoirs'....will permit the government to concentrate in one person's hands all legislative, judicial and executive powers; that is, instead a dictatorship....The Cameroun people are deceived, profoundly deceived. The country is already in agony and M. Ahidjo comes today to ask for 'pleins pouvoirs' to give it the 'coup de grace'! No and again no! Better to die in dignity than live in slavery and dishonour".<sup>9</sup>

The bill was, however, passed by a vote of fifty to twelve with one abstention. Later on a partial amnesty law instead of a full and unconditional amnesty was granted. Ahidjo was able to get the 'pleins pouvoirs' and the 'projet de loi' through the Assembly partly because of the unflagging support from his party, 'Union Camerounaise'. The passage of the two bills, which virtually gave Ahidjo all political powers, tended to harden the U.P.C. especially when a general and unconditional amnesty was

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, p. 186, (Translated by Victor, T. Levine from "Journal Officiel des Debats, Annee Legislatrice 1959-1960).

<sup>9</sup>Ibid, p. 187, (Translated by Victor, T. LeVine from 'Debats, plenary meeting of October, 1959, p. 38-40).

not granted; the bills also meant the further antagonization of the Bamileke and finally it showed the indispensability of support from the 'Union Camerounaise' for the stabilization of Ahidjo's policy. The fifty to twelve vote in favour of the 'pleins pouvoirs' despite the heated debate against it also showed the inconsistency of the politicians and revealed the political maturity of Ahidjo as he succeeded, despite the arguments against it, to convince the Assembly to accept his bills. With the 'pleins pouvoirs', Ahidjo was given the opportunity to give Cameroun a 'coup de grace' which, as events later proved, he dutifully did.

#### Cameroun Achieves Independence

As a result of the findings of the 1958 U.N. Visiting Mission to Cameroun, the U.N. General Assembly on Cameroun was convoked on February 20, 1959. The 1959 statute on Cameroun and the praiseworthy report presented by the 1958 U.N. Visiting Mission spoke favorably for Cameroun independence. The preamble to the 1959 statute affirmed that:

"The present statute....marks the last in the evolution of the Cameroun institutions before the termination of the trusteeship, to occur under conditions stipulated by the charter of the United Nations and the Trusteeship Agreement."<sup>10</sup>

The report of the U.N. Visiting Mission to Cameroun read in part:

"There are certain insufficient grounds....for the holding of new General elections under United Nations supervision before the termination of Trusteeship. Furthermore, the Mission sees no reason why fresh elections to the Legislative Assembly should be a precondition to the attainment of

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 173.

independence. It must be remembered that it was the present Legislative Assembly and Government which demanded and obtained from France the commitment to grant independence on January 1, 1960. It would be ironic if their representative character were to be called to question."<sup>11</sup>

The report by the U.N. Visiting Mission rejected all the demands of the U.P.C. The U.P.C. led by Felix Moumie had demanded the dissolution of the ALCAM, fresh elections and a U.N. time-table for unification. The report strongly supported Ahidjo to the detriment of Moumie. In the presence of twenty-seven Cameroonians representing various parties in Cameroun, the General Assembly's Fourth Committee which was responsible for Cameroun's affairs opened the debate on the independence of Cameroun. The Western bloc supported Ahidjo, the Eastern bloc supported the U.P.C. while the Afro-Asians were defeated. The U.P.C., led by Moumie, called for a rejection of the 'Assemblee Legislative du Cameroun' on the grounds that it was not representative because, it alleged, it did not reflect the 'will' of the Cameroonians and it included Frenchmen who were not Cameroonians. Moumie was supported by Guinea, Ghana, Liberia and Russian. These countries asked for a total and unconditional amnesty and a general election under U.N. supervision before January 1, 1960. On February 27, 1959 Ahidjo refuted Moumie's allegations during the debate that the ALCAM was not representative by making allusion to the fact that it contained opposing candidates and that the amnesty, which had been granted was 'extremely generous'. He was supported by the Western bloc countries and especially by the French representative in the Fourth Committee of the U.N. General Assembly, Mr. Kosciusko-Morizet.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 174.

After all the petitions had been heard, ballots were taken on whether a supervised U.N. general election should be held before independence. Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia and the United Arab Republic (the 'bloc of eight') including all the Arab and African countries in the U.N. led by Russia voted in favour of it while most of the British Commonwealth, Western countries, the U.S.A. and Latin American countries voted against it. All in all, forty-six countries voted against it and twenty-eight voted for it with seven abstentions. On the question of the revocation of the ban on the U.P.C., forty-two voted against it while twenty-eight voted for it with eleven abstentions. On the third question on independence and admission into the U.N.O., fifty-six voted for it, nine against it and sixteen abstained--independence for Cameroun was now a foregone conclusion!

#### Cameroun is Independent!

On January 1, 1960 (with Dag Hammarskjold, the United Nations Secretary-General, representing the United Nations Organization) Ahidjo declared French Cameroun an independent state under the name 'Republique du Cameroun'. Drumming, rejoicing, excitement, fireworks, jubilation and the general sense of 'oneness' which usually characterize the proclamation of independence were marred in Douala and Yaounde when U.P.C. terrorists struck on January 1, 1960 leaving forty Africans and three Europeans dead after clashes with government troops. Despite the clashes, Cameroun entered the club of independent states. "The French Cameroun, then, attained independence not under the aegis of a national movement--but in the care of a loose coalition of regional and ethnic-based parties into whose hands

power had been thrust almost by default."<sup>12</sup> Ahidjo's next important political task was to reunite the independent 'Republique du Cameroun' with the still-to-be independent British Cameroons.

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<sup>12</sup>Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon Federal Republic, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London 1971, p. 21.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE BRITISH CAMEROONS

According to the March 4, 1916 London agreement between Britain and France, Britain acquired one-fifth of the territory of German Kamerun<sup>1</sup> (Cameroon) and this was confirmed by the League of Nations. In 1922, the British Cameroons (also known as West Cameroon to differentiate it from French Cameroun-East Cameroon) was divided into two parts; the Northern part was incorporated into the Northern Province of Nigeria and the Southern part was placed under a British resident. The Southern part, known as British Southern Cameroons, was divided into four divisions: Victoria, Kumba, Mamfe and Bamenda. In due course, British Southern Cameroun was put under the administrative aegis of the Nigerian Southern Province. The main characteristic of British rule in the Cameroons until 1952 was that there was no event of major political importance and the territory was unprogressive compared to French Cameroun.

#### The Economy of British Southern Cameroons

Britain inherited much of the German economic wealth in Cameroon in the form of plantations. In 1924, German properties (plantation) in Cameroun were offered for sale. While in the French Cameroun the properties were bought by British, Cameroonians and French businessmen, in the British

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<sup>1</sup> French Equatorial Africa, p. 250.

Cameroons a London estate agent bought the German plantations for the former German owners.<sup>2</sup> The plantations were quickly bought at various prices; for instance the Moline Estate which comprised 32,067 acres of land, sixty equipped buildings, a fully furnished housing section and a hospital was bought for 22,500.<sup>3</sup> The British half-hearted attitude towards upgrading the plantations after World War I coupled with the Great Depression in the early 1930's and the unwillingness of the administration to finance new projects combined to produce a very poor economic picture of the British Cameroons. Trading links with Britain were weak to the point where it could conveniently be said that before 1952 Britain neglected the British Cameroons. For instance in 1931 Germany received 109,603 worth of products from the British Cameroons while Britain received only 6,341 and in 1937 the British Cameroons imported 47.57 percent of her imports from Germany and only 11.9 per cent from Britain.<sup>4</sup>

After the Second World War, the custodian of enemy property re-expropriated the German property and German's last influential link, trade, with Cameroon was ended. In 1946, the Cameroons Development Corporation (C.D.C.) was created by the British Government to take over and administer most of the former German plantations in the British Cameroons. These plantations produced palm oil and kernels, bananas, rubber and tea. In 1958, the British Cameroons exported 75 percent of its goods to the United

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<sup>2</sup>See Appendix F, for a list of the German plantations in the British Cameroons in 1938.

<sup>3</sup>Sanford H. Bederman, The Cameroons Development Corporation, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup>Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, p. 155.

Kingdom. The economy of the British Cameroons was dominated by the C.D.C.<sup>5</sup> which is still, apart from the Government, the largest employer of labour and producer of goods for export in Cameroon - which accounted for 65 percent of the export tonnage of goods from the British Cameroons in 1958 and 55 percent of the export earnings.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately for the economy of the British Cameroons, until the mid 1950s, the C.D.C. paid its taxes to the Nigerian government. The labour needed in the plantations came from Nigeria and the French Cameroun where the harsh and brutal French labour policy forced the natives to escape to the British Cameroons.

The British Government constructed no efficient communication network in the British Cameroons. The roads were still as they had been under the Germans; air transport and air railway lines were neglected. The first road connecting the grassfield to the forest zone (from Kumba to Mamfe) was completed in 1947. Social services were deplorable and education was something which escaped the British administration. On the eve of independence in 1961, the British Cameroons had no Government Secondary School. Education was sustained by various Missions such as the Catholic, Presbyterian and Baptist. The first secondary school in the British Cameroons was St. Joseph's College Sasse established in the late 1940s by the Catholic Mission to be followed by Protestant College Bali by the Presbyterians. Most British Cameroonian, because of the lack of higher educational opportunities in the British Cameroons, went to Nigeria.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix F, for the statistics on banana, palm products and rubber produced by the C.D.C. from 1947 to 1960.

<sup>6</sup> Johnson R. Willard, The Cameroon Federation, p. 97.

for further education where they mingled with Nigerians and in the 1940s became involved in politics.

### British Rule in the Cameroons 1916-61

Britain adopted a policy of 'indirect rule' in the British Cameroons. The British aim was "to spread British rule and commerce and subject the colonies to British laws."<sup>7</sup> This was facilitated by the presence of local chieftancies ruling the principal tribes such as in Buea, Victoria and in the grassland where the traditional chiefs exercised great authority. In order to simplify the British administration, 'Native Authorities' were established with courts and councils where chiefs meted out punishment more or less according to 'modified' native customs - such as was done by the 'Fons' of Bali, Kom, Basso, Mankon and the chiefs of Buea, Bangwa and Mamfe. Because of very poor means of communication, some villages were never visited by administrative officials.

In 1954 British Southern Cameroons was given a limited degree of self-government as a 'quasi-federal' territory within the Nigerian federation. In 1958, the 'quasi-federal' status was dropped and 'Southern Cameroons was given local autonomy and a Ministerial government with a House of Chiefs. The British legal system replaced the German Imperial legal system although in 1922 certain parts of the territory were still using the German Imperial code. The Senior District Officers (S.D.O.) were given the powers to imprison criminals up to one year while the junior District Officers had the power to imprison criminals for up to

<sup>7</sup> Johnson. R. Willard, The Cameroon Federation Political Integration in a Fragmented Society, Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 78, Cited as The Cameroon Federation.

three months. At the end of each month, a summary of the minor cases were sent to the Supreme Court at Lagos; in serious cases, full proceedings were sent as well. The Supreme Court judge could "confirm, amend or quash sentences or order a retrial, as he thought fit."<sup>8</sup> Remote divisions or areas had no courts and the chiefs were allowed to mete out punishment more or less according to the norms of their societies. The District Officer was responsible for the running of the police detachment and maintaining the roads as well as the general administration.

#### Politics in the British Cameroons 1916-60

Until the late 1940s, British Cameroonian did not strongly identify Britain as the colonial power that had to be kicked out of the British Cameroons. When the British Cameroons was under the administrative aegis of the Nigerian Southern Province, British Cameroons accused the Nigerians, more precisely the Ibos, for their political, social and economic problems.

The first sign of political awareness of the situation in the Cameroons occurred in 1920 when the National Congress of British West Africa found fault with the control of French Cameroun by France without the consultation of the natives. In 1929, the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission briefly looked into a petition on the relations between the British and French Cameroons. Politics, however, did not capture the minds of British Cameroonian until the Cameroons National Federation (C.N.F.) asked Nigeria to plough back some of the British Cameroons' money in the form of actual

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<sup>8</sup>Sharwood B. Smith, Recollections of British Administration in the Cameroons and Northern Nigeria 1921-1957: "But Always as Friends." Durham, N.C. Duke University Press, 1969, p. 19. Cited as "But Always as Friends."

and visible development of the British Cameroons. In 1941, the Cameroons Youths League (C.Y.L.) was founded by Mr. Peter M. Kale and Dr. Emanuel M.L. Endeley<sup>9</sup> in Lagos. It was a right-wing political group advocating a regional status for the British Cameroons. These first British Cameroonian politicians joined with Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria and founded the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (N.C.N.C.).

After the Second World War, the Cameroons Mandate was converted to a trusteeship under the United Nations Organization. The British government wanted the British Cameroons to be integrated with Nigeria since the Richards Constitution (1945) allowed two 'Native Authority' representatives from the British Cameroons namely Chief Manga Williams of Victoria and Fon Galega II of Bali to be appointed into the Nigerian Eastern House of Assembly. This integrationist policy was intensified by the fact that Southern Cameroons had no separate budget, no special public accounts and Lagos was regarded as the capital of the British Cameroons. After the formation of the N.C.N.C., Dr. E.M.L. Endeley returned to Southern

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<sup>9</sup>Dr. Emanuel Mbela Lifaffe Endeley was born on April 10th, 1916 at Buea. His father was a Bakwer; chief. Dr. Endeley was educated at the Roman Catholic Mission School Bojongo and at the Government Secondary School in Umuahia, Nigeria. He went to the Nigerian School of Medicine and after graduation he was assigned to Lagos but was dismissed in 1946 for alleged medical misconduct. In 1947, when he was in Buea, he became the Secretary of the C.D.C. Workers' Union. In 1950 his name was restored to the medical register. He helped found the C.N.F. and in 1951 he was elected to the Eastern House of Assembly and then to the Nigerian Federal Assembly in Lagos, representing the Southern Cameroons. He founded the KNG and was the Premier of Southern Cameroons in 1958 but was defeated in 1959 when he campaigned for integration with Nigeria. He is a well-seasoned politician.

Cameroons with the idea of the reunification of the British and French Cameroons. He was, however, strictly speaking not a reunificationist - "his primary concern was to find political leverage with which to pry the Southern Cameroons loose within but not away from Nigeria."<sup>10</sup> A report by the U.N. Visiting Mission in 1949 confirmed this opinion: "In no case was complete separation from Nigeria demanded, even when requests were made.....for unification with the Cameroons under French administration, they were coupled with a desire to remain within the framework of the Nigerian Constitution. The demand was invariably for a greater degree of autonomy, but on a purely regional basis."<sup>11</sup>

The issue of reunification was the most important political topic in the Southern Cameroons after 1948. In May 1949 seventeen groups from the British and French Cameroons met in Kumba and re-echoed the reunification drive calling for the teaching of English and French in all schools in the Cameroons and the removal of frontier regulations and restrictions between the two Cameroons. In 1951, a conflict of personalities and policies tore the C.N.F. apart and Nerius N. Mbile and R.K. Dibongue withdrew and founded the Kamerun United National Congress (K.U.N.C.). The KUNC adopted a clearer and forthright pro-unification policy than the C.N.F. With Jabea Dibongue as its President-General and Nerius Mbile as its General Secretary, the KUNC worked closely with the U.P.C. As Mbile explained, "We want the Cameroons under French and British Administration to be brought together as in the days of German rule. Hence our adopting the German spelling

<sup>10</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon, From Mandate to Independence, p. 203.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 203.

Kamerun."<sup>12</sup> In 1952 Dibongue and Um Nyobe met at Tiko and accepted convening a meeting at Eseka. From the Eseka Conference emerged the 'Eseka Resolution' which called for "The immediate reunification of the Cameroons, the establishment of a mixed cabinet ('Conseil de Gouvernement'), 80 percent of whose members would be Cameroonians and the fixing of a five-year time table for the granting of independence beginning January 1, 1952."<sup>13</sup>

In 1953, Southern Cameroons experienced a major political crisis, 'The Eastern Region Crisis', which had a great impact on Cameroon politics. On January 28th, 1953 the National Executive Committee of the NCNC decreed a re-shuffling of Ministerial positions which led to a split in the parliamentary party. Mr. Solomon T. Muna,<sup>14</sup> the only representative from British Southern Cameroons as Minister of Works resigned from the NCNC in protest against interference. The Cameroonians in the Eastern House of Assembly threatened to cease participating in the Assembly's work unless Mr. Muna was reinstated. When this was rejected, Southern Cameroonians demanded a split from the Eastern House. Nerius Mbile who had

<sup>12</sup> Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, p. 179.

<sup>13</sup> Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, p. 183.

<sup>14</sup> Solomon T. Muna was born in 1912 in the Bamenda district. After having studied at a local school, he went to London; he returned, was for a time a teacher. He later joined politics and was a Minister in the Nigerian Government. He later became Deputy leader of Government to Dr. Endeley. In 1957 he joined the KNDP. In 1961 he was Minister of Transportation and in 1968 he was made Prime Minister of West Cameroon and in 1970 he became the Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Cameroon and after 1972 the President of the National Assembly.

voted against Muna in the 'Eastern Region Crisis' was expelled from the KUNC and he founded the Kamerun's People Party (K.P.P.). Messrs. John Ngu Foncha,<sup>15</sup> Solomon T. Muna and Augustin N. Jua<sup>16</sup> and the other members of the KUNC and CNF withdrew from the NCNC and founded the Kamerun National Convention (KNC) which "eschewed alliance with any Nigerian party; its policy was to be one of 'benevolent neutrality'.<sup>17</sup>" In 1955 Messrs. Foncha and Jua left the KNC - because of the links with the Nigerian Action Group in disregard of its pledge of 'benevolent neutrality' - and founded the Kamerum National Democratic Party (KNPD).

The KNPD in less than three years became the largest party in the British Cameroons because of four factors. The KNPD pursued the issues of sucession from Nigeria and reunification with French Cameroun which were the dominating political issues in Southern Cameroonian politics. Secondly, Foncha and the KNPD received the support of the 'Fons' and chiefs especially in the Grassland because of Foncha's modest personal

<sup>15</sup>John Ngu Foncha was born on June 26, 1916 in Bamenda. He was educated in Bamenda and attended a secondary school near Onitsha, Nigeria. He served as Headmaster in various catholic schools in Bamenda. Between 1942-45 he was Secretary to the Bamenda Branch of the C.Y.L. He founded the KNPD and demanded sucession from Nigeria and reunification with French Cameroun. He was Premier of Southern Cameroons in 1959 and from 1961 to 1965 he was Vice President of the Federal Republic of Cameroon and Premier of West Cameroon. He 'retired' from active political life in 1970.

<sup>16</sup>Augustine N. Jua was born in 1924 in Kom. After his education he took up teaching and turned to politics in 1952. In 1955 he helped found the KNPD. In 1965 he was the West Cameroon Secretary of State for finance and later the West Cameroon Premier until 1967. An able, dynamic and adept politician, he was loved and respected right to his death in 1977 especially by the English-speaking population.

<sup>17</sup>Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, p. 187.

attitude. Dr. Endeley made many "mistakes in dealing with the symbols and spokesmen of tradition in the territory: he would offend the 'fons' by shaking their hands, sitting at their side on stools reserved for their fellow 'fons' or by addressing them by the wrong title or at the wrong time... and was ridiculed for haughtiness and for 'spikin da big English'"<sup>18</sup> while Foncha was extremely fluent in pidgin English and respected all the traditional norms. Thirdly, the KNDP's proreunification policy attracted several groups especially Southern Cameroonian students most of whom had sympathy with the objectives of the U.P.C. as against the KNC which stood for integration with Nigeria. The KNC eroded its support base in the Grassfields by insisting on unpopular and unfamiliar contour ploughing rules which antagonized the natives. For instance in the Kom area of the Wum Division, Mr. Augustine Jua gave his blessing to the revival of the Bikom 'Anloo' ('Anlu') Society against Endeley and the KNC. The 'Anloo' Society, a women's society, was mobilized against the K.N.C. The only road leading to Njinikom was blocked by the women at several places. Since it was also rumoured that their land would be taken and given to the Ibos if they supported the KNC, this increased the women's hatred for the KNC and they refused their husbands food if they were suspected of nursing pro-KNC sentiments, houses belonging to KNC members were 'attacked', husbands were forced to stay at home and look after the children, cars were stoned etc. Finally, the KNDP stressed the importance of ethnic unity between Southern and French Cameroonians. The downward decline of the KNC was accelerated by the switching over of 'Fon' Galega II of Bali

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<sup>18</sup> Johnson R. Willard, The Cameroon Federation, p. 162.

and Solomon T. Muna from the KNC to the KNDP in 1957 due to Dr. Endeley's pro-integrationist policy.

The January 1959 elections

In 1958 Dr. Endeley was made Premier of British Southern Cameroon but in January 1959 elections to the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly produced results which favoured Foncha's KNDP. In the elections, the KNDP in alliance with the One Kamerun (O.K.) campaigned for secession from Nigeria while the KNC-KPP alliance campaigned for continued links with Nigeria coupled with the various factors outlined above which favoured Mr. Foncha and the KNDP led to the defeat of the KNC-KPP alliance by 75,326 to 51,384.<sup>19</sup> The defeat of Endeley in 1959 led to the rise of Foncha as Premier of Southern Cameroons who was now bent on complete secession from Nigeria and reunification with French Cameroun.

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<sup>19</sup> See Appendix F<sub>3</sub> for the detailed results.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ROAD TO REUNIFICATION

In the British Cameroons, the idea of unification with French Cameroon was kept alive by the C.N.P. after the Second World War. After 1955, the KNDP led by Foncha took over the lead of the unification movement. After the 1939-45 war, when the British and French Cameroons became trusteeship territories, the example set by the Ewe-Togoland question<sup>1</sup> stimulated the two territories to pressure the U.N. for independence and unification.<sup>2</sup> In order to enhance their pro-reunification idea, the KNDP talked of the historical links which existed between the Bamoum sultanate of French Cameroun and the Tikar Chiefdoms of the British Cameroons as well as the close affinity between the Balong and Mbo Bakossi people who had been divided between the British and French Cameroons - never did they mention the very close affinity of the Ejagham (Ekoi or Ekwe)<sup>3</sup> separated by the Nigerian-Cameroon border.

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<sup>1</sup>The Ewe were coastal people in Togo who colonial interplay had divided into three different areas belonging to French Togoland, British Togoland and the Gold Coast. The Ewe resented their partition and were pressing the U.N. - with some success for reunification.

<sup>2</sup>Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, p. 148.

<sup>3</sup>Malcolm Ruel, Leopards and Leaders, Constitutional Politics Among a Cross River People, Tavistock Publications, London 1969, p. 5.  
See Appendix G<sub>1</sub> for map.

In 1949, the reunification issue was brought close to realization in the Southern Cameroons by two principal events: the Richards Constitution failed to give the British Cameroons a regional status so as to enable it to control its destiny more or less separate from the Nigerian Southern Provinces. The Second event was a visit by the U.N. Mission in 1949 which afforded the C.N.F. an opportunity to advance the idea of the establishment of a separate region of British Southern Cameroons within Nigeria and from there the British Cameroonians would be able to move towards unification with French Cameroun.

The idea of creating a separate region for the British Cameroons was enhanced by the extreme backwardness of the British Cameroons vis-a-vis either French Cameroun or Nigeria both of which received direct aid from France and Britain respectively. Britain's aid to British Cameroons passed through Lagos since the British Cameroons during this period had no separate budget, in most cases, part of the financial aid designated for the British Cameroons ended up in Nigeria. Nigerians, particularly the Ibos, dominated British Cameroons' social and economic life especially after the construction of the Kumba-Mamfe road which enabled large numbers of Nigerians to immigrate to the British Cameroons. This domination was bitterly resented by the British Cameroonians and further increased the demand for reunification with French Cameroun. The reason for the resentment of the Ibos can be gathered from the words of the British resident in Southern Cameroons:

"His energy has made him largely master of the local trading and fishing industry and his clannishness shows itself in nepotism, in his habit of renting accommodation for himself and subletting to as many of

his compatriots as it will hold, and in the way in which he combines with them to achieve a common purpose."<sup>4</sup> Also, "the alacrity with which Nigerians came to dominate petty commerce and to fill a substantial proportion of governmental positions seemed to indicate that too-close ties with Nigeria jeopardized the chances for the advancement of local inhabitants."<sup>5</sup>

The difficulties presented by custom restrictions between the British and French Cameroons were exploited by the parties in favour of reunification as they quickly pointed out the economic 'advantages' which the traders in both Cameroons would enjoy once the restrictions were abolished through unification. As a consequence of the custom restrictions, smuggling was rife between the two Cameroons to which both colonial governments responded by confiscating the goods when they were seized. Incessant demand for the abolition of frontier restrictions, especially after 1945, were met with little success. The Ewe-Togoland question was a constant reminder of the Cameroonian dream for reunification and as Albert Pavec said, "L'idee d'utiliser ce theme (d'unification), promis a un si brillant avenir...fut sans doute inspiree par l'exemple du Togo."<sup>6</sup> To all these factors which favoured reunification were added the British method of administration which made it appear "that Nigeria and not the United Kingdom was the real colonial power in the Territory"<sup>7</sup> and some French Cameroonians spoke of British Southern Cameroons as 'une

<sup>4</sup> Cameroons Province, Annual Report, 1947, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, p. 166.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 167 (Taken from Pavec, "L'Idee de reunification, p. 20)

<sup>7</sup> Johnson, R. Willard, The Cameroon Federation, p. 94.

colonie d'une région d'une colonie' and "the generally favourable memory of German administration."<sup>8</sup>

In 1949 the CNF held a conference in Kumba which was also attended by French Cameroonians and the demand for reunification was accepted as the rallying theme and this was presented to the 1949 U.N. visiting Mission. In French Cameroun, the U.P.C. kept the issue alive which was also presented to the U.N. Visiting Mission in 1949. This visit enabled the pro-reunification movements in both territories to exchange concrete views on the subject since it "provided a common platform for the parties of the two trust territories."<sup>9</sup> The attainment of a regional status by British Southern Cameroons in 1954 and the banning of the U.P.C. in 1955 in French Cameroun by the French High Commissioner, Roland Pre, momentarily decreased the intensity of the drive towards unification. When the U.P.C. was banned, its leaders found asylum in Kumba in British Cameroons and until 1957 it 'collaborated' with the KNDP on the reunification issue but restricted its terrorist activities to French Cameroun. Before its expulsion from the British Cameroons, the One Kamerun Party (O.K.) had been founded by Ndeh Ntumazah to keep alive the doctrines of the U.P.C.

With the defeat of Dr. Endeley in the January 1959 elections by Mr. Foncha, the KNDP government summoned a meeting of the House of Assembly to talk on the secession of Southern Cameroons from Nigeria and the postponement of registration for the federal elections. The KNDP and the KNC, having opposing views on the future of Southern Cameroons, sent

<sup>8</sup> Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, p. 166.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 175.

Mr. Foncha and Dr. Endeley respectively to New York to attend the thirteenth session of the U.N. General Assembly convened to debate the future of Cameroon. Mr. Foncha insisted on the secession of Southern Cameroons from Nigeria before deciding whether to join French Cameroon or not while Dr. Endeley insisted that a plebiscite should be held on reunification with French Cameroon or integration with Nigeria - a statement tantamount to the collapse of the session was reached. The U.P.C. - inspired looting, sacking, and plundering in French Cameroun was regarded by the KNC as a weapon to be used against the KNDP since British Cameroonians, naturally, would be afraid to unite with French Cameroun which was suffering U.P.C. - inspired terrorist activities. Dr. Endeley wanted to exploit it so as to tilt the scale in his favour.

After much quibbling, Dr. Endeley relinquished his demand for an immediate plebiscite and Mr. Foncha dropped his demand for secession from Nigeria before deciding on reunification. The compromise presented to the Fourth Committee of the U.N. on October 29th, 1959 called for a plebiscite not later than March 1961 on the question of Souther Cameroons either joining French Cameroun or integrating with Nigeria. It was also decided that the administrative separation of Southern Cameroons from Nigeria should be not later than October 1, 1960 and only British Cameroonians were eligible for voting.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, the political uncertainty of British Northern Cameroons led to the arrangement of an election for November 1959 on whether Northern Cameroonians wanted immediate union with Nigeria or wanted to delay their decision.

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<sup>10</sup> Victor T. LeVine, The Cameroon From Mandate to Independence, p. 210.

British Northern Cameroons

'Since the division of the British Cameroons into Southern and Northern Cameroons in 1922, political developments in each portion had little or no repercussion on the other. While political hagglings were underway in Southern Cameroon in favour of either secession from Nigeria or union with French Cameroun, no rippling effect was produced in British Northern Cameroun. The poor, illiterate and 'apolitical' Northern Cameroonians who were administered as part of the Northern region of Nigeria were 'neglected' by the political parties in the Southern Cameroons before 1958 since the Northern Cameroonian representatives of the London Constitutional Conference in 1953 refused to demand separation from the Northern Region of Nigeria. It was generally assumed that the Northern Cameroonians were in full support of integration with Nigeria.

However, the Fourth Committee of the U.N. decided that a plebiscite should be held in Northern Cameroons in November 1959 on whether Northern Cameroon wanted immediate integration with Nigeria or wanted to delay their decision until a later date. By a five to three majority, Northern Cameroon, surprisingly rejected immediate integration with Nigeria. This was essentially because of the resentment against the Fulani-dominated Northern Peoples Congress (NPC). The Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) and the Northern Kamerun Democratic Party (NKDP) won the election with a 70,546 to 42,738 vote to delay the decision.<sup>11</sup> The results shocked the Sarduna of Sokoto who accused British officials of rigging the elections. The defeat of 'immediate integration' was translated by pro-reunificationists in Southern Cameroon as a desire to reconstitute 'Kamerun'.

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<sup>11</sup> See Appendix G<sub>2</sub> for the detailed results.

### Reunification Campaign and Plebiscites

The Fourth Committee of the U.N. decided that the plebiscite on whether British Southern and Northern Cameroons should join French Cameroun or integrate with Nigeria would simultaneously be held in the two areas but that the votes of the areas would be counted separately. President Ahidjo of the newly independent République du Cameroun met several times with Premier Foncha in order to arrive at a time-table for reunification. Various meetings were held in 1959 and 1960 in Buea, Yaounde and Nkongsamba but nothing substantial was agreed upon except that there should be a loose federation until after the plebiscite when details of a union would be worked out. In May 1960, the KNC and KDP merged and formed the Cameroon People's National Convention (CPNC). The KNDP and CPNC produced newspapers, the 'Kamerun Times' and the 'Cameroons Champion' respectively to promote their respective policies.

The KNDP campaign was directed against Nigeria where it was felt that a vote for Nigeria would mean the mass influx of the hated Ibos, the seizure of all important jobs and the enslavement of Cameroonians by Ibos. The KNDP based its campaigns in the Grassfields where it had the support of the populace and in the South it exploited the grievances against the Ibos whose enterprising energy and ability led them, especially the traders, to maltreat, cheat and abuse the Southern Cameroonians.<sup>12</sup> The CPNC placed great emphasis on the U.P.C. - inspired terrorism in 'République du Cameroun' and narrated the horrible slaughter of human

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<sup>12</sup>Various forms of intimidation, fraud and disregard for authorities by Nigerian traders, especially the Ibos, continued even to the mid-1960s.

beings by terrorists. Campaigns and arguments ran high and some families experienced serious splits based strictly on party lines.

From the CPNC came arguments like, "It will be senseless to drop the British way of life for a French way of life. Never has England bowed before France and we of the Southern Cameroons shall never bow to France"; "Separation from Nigeria will close these natural and only outlets (the ties of the Balondo peoples to those in the Calabar area of Nigeria) to our people and strangle us economically. To us, association with Nigeria is not just a political desirability, it is basic to our existence"<sup>13</sup> and "Twenty-five thousand Cameroonians have fled that Territory, but none has fled British Cameroon for French Cameroons. People are killed daily on the streets of Douala and Yaounde."<sup>14</sup> From the KNDP came arguments such as "We've been with Nigeria for forty years under British Administration. We have no roads, no Government Secondary Schools, no nothing. It is about time we tried the other side of the border."<sup>15</sup>

The results of the elections was a landslide victory for the KNDP in British Southern Cameroons. With a 233,571 votes to 97,741, Southern Cameroons voted in 1961 to unite with the Republique du Cameroun.<sup>16</sup> The main reason for the defeat of the CPNC was because "the danger of terrorists, too many Southern Cameroonians, seemed a lesser threat than the land-grabbing Nigerians."<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, the hopes of the KNDP in Northern

<sup>13</sup> Johnson, R. Willard, The Cameroon Federation, p. 148.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix G<sub>3</sub> for the detailed results.

<sup>17</sup> Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, p. 233.

Cameroon were dashed when Northern Cameroon voted against union with Republique du Cameroun. The reason was that after the rude shock of the 1959 plebiscite in Northern Cameroon, in July 1960 Northern Cameroon was made a 'Trusteeship Province' under the British administration and great administrative reforms were initiated. With the NPC, NEPU and NKDP now in support of integration with Nigeria, Northern Cameroonians with men and women voting on separate days<sup>18</sup> decided on February 11th and 12th by 146,296 to 97,659 to integrate with Nigeria.<sup>19</sup>

#### Reunification

On April 24th, 1961 the U.N. General Assembly approved October 1st, 1961 as the date for the termination of the trusteeship for Southern Cameroons through federation with the Cameroon Republic. The Cameroon Republic filed a complaint to the International Court of Justice at the Hague claiming that the 1961 elections in Northern Cameroons were punctuated with gross irregularities, but nothing positive was achieved. With two Constitutional Conferences held in June and July 1961 at Bamenda and Founban by representatives from the Cameroon Republic and Southern Cameroons, reunification was proclaimed on October 1st, 1961 with the two Cameroons forming the Federal Republic of Cameroon and thereby realizing Reuben Um Nyobe's famous statement on reunification which was: "Chretiennement parlant, tout le monde reconnaîtra que Dieu a créé un seul Cameroun; c'est là le point de départ."

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<sup>18</sup> Because of Muslim Tradition

<sup>19</sup> See Appendix G<sub>4</sub> for the detailed results.

The former colonial masters wished the new Federal Republic of Cameroon<sup>20</sup> well although in due course France was to outpace Britain and increase her influence in the country.

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<sup>20</sup>In 1972 the Federal Republic of Cameroon became known as the United Republic of Cameroon. The two stars on the flag designating two federated states were replaced by one star designating a union of two federated states.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

The political form that Cameroon took in 1961 was one that had been conditioned during the period 1884-1960. Without the German colonization of Cameroon in 1884, the political evolution of Cameroon from 1884 to 1960 would have been different.

This is because the Germans, despite their relatively short stay in Cameroon 1884-1915, exposed Cameroonians to European political, economic, social and judiciary institutions. The Germans united and consolidated the scattered and war-like tribes, the traditionally religiously and linguistically different Cameroonian tribes into one political entity. This single political entity was subjected to 'uniform' political, economic, social and legal institutions designed by the Germans. Although the Germans were primarily concerned with the economic exploitation of Cameroon - it should be borne in mind that this was the rule in the colonial era - they unintentionally sowed the seeds for Cameroonian nationalism which was to crystallize during the period 1945-1961 when Cameroon was administered by Britain and France. The activities of some German administrators in Cameroon such as those undertaken by Puttkamer and Kleist led to the gradual rejection, although unconsciously at first, of the doctrine of the superiority of the 'white race'.

The importance of the Germans in the political evolution of Cameroon from 1884-1960 could be seen in the nostalgia for all 'what was German'

which developed during the inter war years and after 1945. Although some scholars emphasize the fact that the 'myth of a united Kamerun' under the Germans was created by those who wanted independence and reunification, it should be admitted that German rule created a picture of 'once a united Kamerun'. This should not be judged solely from the German political rule in Cameroon but also from her 'splendid' and rewarding economic achievements in the form of communication and plantations. This enabled the pro-independence and pro-reunification groups in the two Cameroons to refer back to the 'good old German days' when British and French administrators failed in satisfying their political aspirations. This to a certain extent, rallied a reasonable proportion of Cameroonians against British and French rule - especially the British who were accused of neglecting the British Cameroons politically, economically and socially.

France in administering French Cameroun pursued the unpopular political policy of 'assimilation'. This policy, pursued in the midst of unpopular economic rules such as the 'indigenat' and 'corvee' proved unattainable by 1952. The unpopularity of 'assimilation' coupled with the harsh economic rule quickened the pace of Cameroun's political evolution towards independence. The French administrative procedures, instead of enticing French Cameroonians towards 'assimilation' antagonized and led them to demand independence for Cameroun. In French Cameroun, independence was achieved not by radical parties and personalities who had been the vanguard for independence and reunification but by parties and personalities who demonstrated patience and the willingness to appease the French administration.

In the British Southern Cameroons, the 'Kamerun myth' attracted much attention because economically and socially, the British Cameroons did

not progress under the British administration as much as it did when it was under German administration - an opportunity which was exploited by those demanding independence and reunification with French Cameroun.

Cameroon, in its transformation from a colony in 1884 to an independent and reunited state in 1961 was faced with a number of problems: problems in the differences in religion between the christianized South and the Muslim North, economic disparities between the relatively backward Muslim, North and the more advanced South and traditional and social differences. All these differences were translated into the parties since most of the parties worked more or less on tribal lines. In the course of the political evolution of Cameroon, the pro-independent and reunification parties and personalities had to create and expand on the myth of a United Kamerun before 1916. This task was rendered more difficult by the fact that neither the German, nor the French nor the British encouraged the growth of Cameroonian nationalism or national consciousness. The parties were thus, left to exploit these shortcomings of the British and French.

Cameroon of 1884 with an ill-defined geographical limit and no common citizenship was transformed, in the course of its political evolution 1884-1961, into an independent and reunited state in 1961; with a defined geographical boundary, a population with a common citizenship and an internationally and legally recognized territory.

Although January 1, 1960 was celebrated with some fear in the minds of some French Cameroonian, the pre-1959 Cameroons was thrown in the political wastepaper basket once and for all. This became crystal clear in 1972 when the Federal Republic of Cameroon became known as the United Republic of Cameroon - a complete and thorough unification of the two Cameroons!

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## APPENDIX A1

### AGREEMENT BETWEEN BRITAIN AND CAMEROONS ON THE ABOLITION OF HUMAN SACRIFICES

AGREEMENT with the Chiefs of the Cameroons River. Human Sacrifices. Hulk "Alexander Grant," Cameroons River, July 8, 1859.

An Agreement is this day entered into between Thomas Joseph Hutchinson, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul for the Bight of Biafra, in behalf of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria on the one part, and the Chiefs of the Cameroons, in behalf of themselves and their people, on the other part.

That for the future the conditions of an Agreement made and signed on the 11th of May, 1842, between Captain William Allen, R.N., a Commissioner of the Niger Expedition of 1841-42, and Acqua as well as Bell, the "two Chiefs of Dualla," be considered, as it was then declared "to stand forever."

That is to say, all human sacrifices for pagan worship, or for other circumstances or customs, be from this day henceforward entirely disused and abolished.

In confirmation of this Agreement we hereby affix our signatures and marks.

(L.S.) THOMAS HUTCHINSON, H.M.'s Consul

Their marks:

X BONNY BELL

X PRIESO BELL

X JOSSE

X KING ACQUA

Witnesses marks:

H. BAKINGTON

J.B. BOWERBANK

ROBT. A. TAYLOR

ALEX. GRANT

On further serious consideration it is likewise agree to:

That in case any disputes arise between Headmen of any towns, on no occasion shall arms be used in event of arbitration failing to settle such palaver.

Furthermore, that should disputes arise between the Chief or people of one town or towns and those of another or other towns, the disputants shall request the supercargoes of the ship contiguous to the beach of said disputes to call a meeting to arbitrate their disputes.

It is also agreed in case of friendly arbitration of this kind amongst white and black men failing to bring matters to an amicable termination, that the final settlement be referred to Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Fernando Po.

Their marks:

X PRIESO BELL

X BONNY BELL

X JOSSE

X KING ACQUA.

Witnesses marks:

H. BAKINGTON

J.B. BOWERBANK

ROBT. A. TAYLOR

ALEX. GRANT

## APPENDIX A2

### ANGLO-CAMEROON TREATY ABOLISHING SLAVE TRADE IN CAMEROON

WILLIAM SIMPSON BLOUNT, ESQUIRE, Lieutenant commanding Her Britannic Majesty's steam-vessel "Pluto," on the part of Her Majesty the Queen of England, and King Bell of Bell's Town Cameroons,

Have agreed upon the following articles and conditions:

ARTICLE I: It is agreed, and the two Contracting Parties hereby covenant and agree, that, from the date of this Treaty there shall be an entire cessation and extinction, throughout the territory of King Bell, and wherever his influence can extend, of the sale or transfer of slaves, or other persons whatever, to be removed from off the territory of King Bell into any country, island, or dominion of any Prince or Potentate whatever; and that King Bell will make a proclamation and a law prohibiting all his subjects, or persons depending on him, to sell any slave to be transported from his territory, or to aid or abet, or assist, in any such sale, under penalty of severe punishment.

ARTICLE II: King Bell further agrees, that should any slave-vessels arrive in the river, he will send and inform any of Her Britannic Majesty's cruisers thereof that may be in the neighborhood.

ARTICLE III: And in consideration of this concession on the part of King Bell, and in full satisfaction for the same, and for the loss of revenue thereby incurred by King Bell, Lieutenant W.S. Blount, on the part of the Queen of England, does engage, that there shall be paid to

King Bell, according to the Treasury letter dated 20th November, 1840, and a Declaration made by Kings Bell and Acqua, on 10th of June, 1840, before Lieutenant R. Levinfe, of Her Britannic Majesty's brigantine "Buzzard," and Mr. Lilley, resident at Cameroons, yearly, for 5 years, the following articles: 60 muskets, 100 pieces of cloth, 2 barrels of powder, 2 puncheons of rum, 1 scarlet coat with epaulettes, 1 sword; upon a certificate being received that the said laws and proclamations have been enforced, which shall be signed by King Bell.

Done at the King's House, Bell's Town, Cameroon River, this 7th day of May.

W.S. BLOUNT - Lieutenant and Commander

KING BELL - his X mark

## APPENDIX A3

### LETTER FROM DOUALA CHIEFS TO QUEEN VICTORIA ASKING HER TO ANNEX THE CAMEROONS - WRITTEN IN 1879\*

"Dearest Madam,

We your servants have join together and thoughts its better to write you a nice loving letter which will tell you about all our wishes. We wish to have your laws in our towns. We want to have every fashion altered, also we will do according to your consule word. Plenty wars here in our country. Plenty murder and plenty idol worshippers. Perhaps these lines of our writing will look to you as an idle tale. We have spoken to the English Consul plenty times about having an English government here. We never have answer from you, so we wish to write ourselves. When we heard about Calabar River, how they have all English laws in their towns, and how they have put away all their superstitions, oh we shall be very glad to be like Calabar now."

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\* This letter was signed by King Acqua (Akwa), Prince Dido Acqua, Prince Black, Prince Joe Garner and Prince Lawton.

Source: Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon, 1883-1887.

#### APPENDIX A4

NOTIFICATION of the Assumption of British Sovereignty over the  
settlement of Victoria at Amboises or Ambas Bay, July 19, 1884.

I, EDWARD HYDE HEWETT, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul for the  
Bights of Benin and Biafra, do hereby notify to all whom it may concern  
that, in compliance with the wish of the inhabitants, the territory  
which has long been in the possession and occupation of certain British  
subjects, viz., the Baptist Missionary Society, at Amboises Bay, consti-  
tuting the settlement of Victoria has now been taken over by Her Majesty  
the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and forms an integral part of  
her dominions.

Given under my hand on board Her Britannic Majesty's Opal, anchored  
in Amboises Bay, this 19th day of July, 1884.

EDWARD HYDE HEWETT.

## APPENDIX A5

PRELIMINARY TREATY with Chiefs of Batoki, August 28, 1884.

HER Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, & Co., and the Chiefs of Batoki, being desirous of maintaining and strengthening the relations of peace and friendship which have so long existed between them;

Her Britannic Majesty has named and appointed F.H. Hewett, Esq., her Consul for the Bights of Benin and Biafra, to conclude a Treaty for this purpose.

Lieutenant Arthur Furlonger, commanding Her Britannic Majesty's ship "Forward," having due authority from the said E.H. Hewett, Esq., for and on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, &c., and the said Chiefs of Batoki, have agreed and concluded the following Articles:

ARTICLE I: Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, & c., in compliance with the request of the Chiefs, and the people of Batoki hereby undertakes to extend to them, and to the territory under their authority and jurisdiction, her gracious favour and protection.

ARTICLE II: The Batoki Chiefs of Batoki agree and promist to refrain from entering into any correspondence, Agreement, or Treaty with any foreign nation or Power, except with the knowledge and sanction of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

ARTICLE III: This Preliminary Treaty shall come into operation from the date of its signature.

Done in duplicate this 28th day of August, 1884, at Batoki,  
A. FURLONGER, Lieutenant in Command, Her Majesty's Ship "Forward."

Their marks:

X CHIEF MAWONGEH  
X CHIEF MOCACEH  
X CHIEF MASOKEH

Witnesses marks:

R.M. PEARSON, Assistant Paymaster in Charge, Her Majesty's  
Ship "Forward."

His, JOSEPH WILSON, Interpreter

X AMONACO, ditto

## APPENDIX B1

### AN EXTRACT OF JOSHUA TUNDI'S LETTER TO FULLER ON THE DOUALA WAR - WRITTEN IN JANUARY, 1885\*

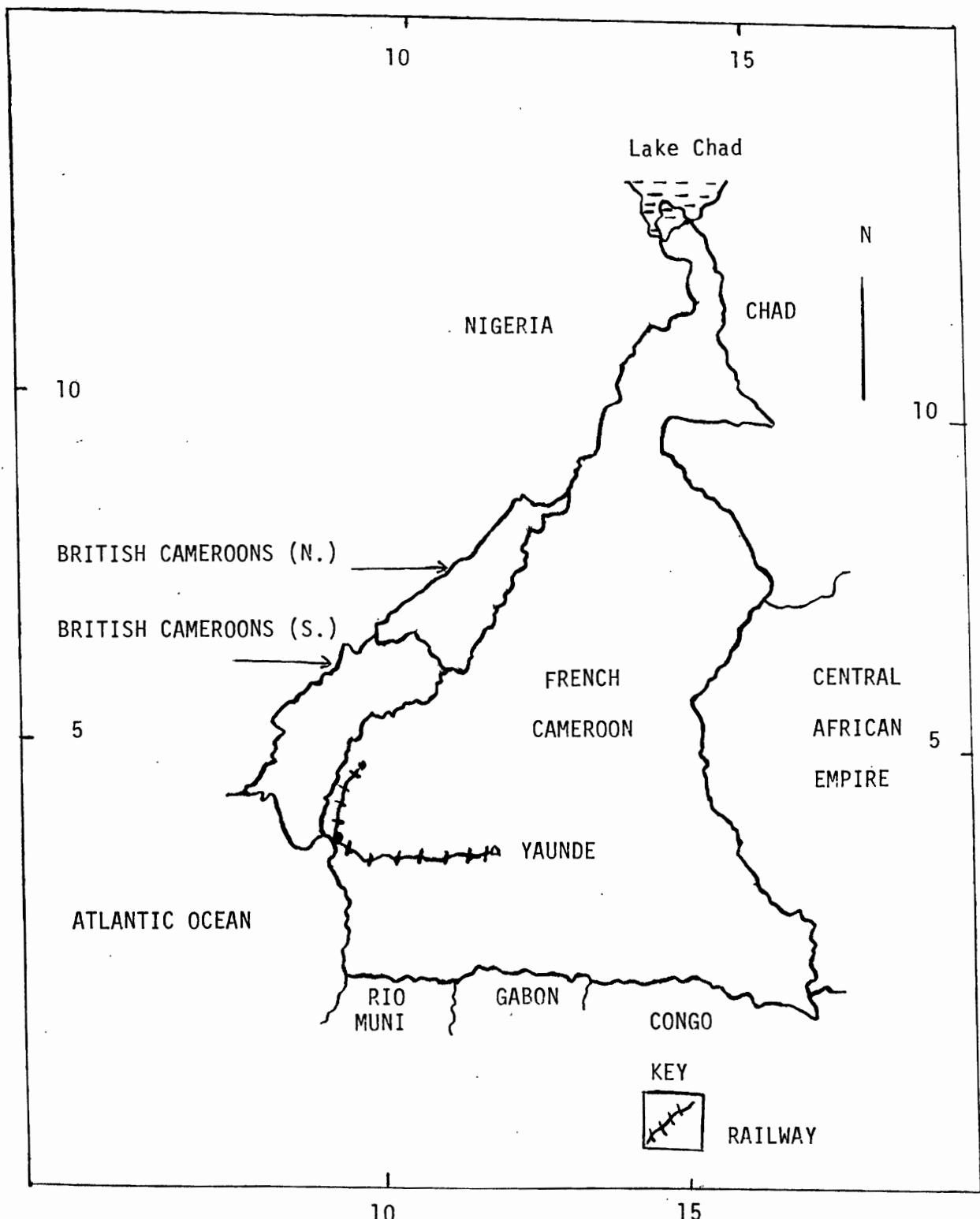
"My dear Sir,

I hope these few lines of mine shall meet you and Mrs in good health, than they leave us: You shall worry to hear of this sad use (news?) at Ikory Town and Joss Town; very sad use indeed. I was stop from writing you when I hear that you go to Jamaica; now I find that I was mistaken to do so; therefore have me excuse; Mr. Smitd Mr Voss has given King Bell and King Acqua a great dash to soft their heart and give the Cameroons to the Germans; there they signed and their nobels; King Acqua was give one part of is dash to his nobles; But King Bell do not give his nobles a share of is dash; Therefore the palaver comes between him and Joss; so Joss go and signed again to the English Cunsel; and they ready to fight with Bell therefore Bell people were afraid and left the Town and go to Mungo; But Ikory people were not willing to be under Germans there the German Cuncel Burnt the Ikory Town and Joss Town; therefore Germans and Joss people were fight together they kill Joss people kill plenty of them. Sorry to hear that Chapel at Ikory has burnt Kitchen School house and boys house and Germans Concel agree to pay; So I hear; but I do not know whither it is so, Though you hear all these sad use; plese do not stop but come all people here want you very badly...."

\*Source: Eye-Witnesses to the Annexation of Cameroon 1883-1887.

## APPENDIX C

### BRITISH AND FRENCH CAMEROONS



## APPENDIX D1

### FRENCH COMMISSIONERS IN CAMEROUN (1916-1959)

Georges Aymerich	1916
Lucien-Louis Fourneau	1916-1919
Jules Carde	1919-1923
Theodore-Paul Marchand	1923-1932
Auguste-Francois Bonnecarrere	1932-1934
Jules Repiquet	1934-1936
Pierre Boisson	1936-1938
Richard Brunot	1938-1940
Philippe LeClerc	1940
Pierre Cournaire	1940-1943
Hubert Carras	1943-1946
Robert Delavignette	1946-1947
Rene Hofherr	1947-1949
Andre Soucadaux	1949-1954
Roland Pre	1954-1956
Pierre Messmer	1956-1958
Jean Ramadfer	1958
Xavier Torre	1958-1959

## APPENDIX E

### GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATORS IN FRENCH CAMEROUN

#### National Assembly

Dr. Louis-Paul Aujoulat (President)

Mr. Douala Manga Bell

Mr. Georges Molinatti

Mr. Jules Ninine

#### Council of the Republic

Mr. Jean Grassard

Mr. Charles Okala

Mr. Arouna Njoya

#### Territorial Assembly

Dr. Louis-Paul Aujoulat (President)

Mr. Paul Soppo Priso (Vice President)

Mr. Antoine Giard (Vice President)

Mr. Martin Abega (Vice President)

Mr. Mahonde Mohamane

Dr. Henri Jouriac

APPENDIX F

GERMAN PLANTATIONS IN BRITISH CAMEROONS 1938

Name of Plantation	Owner	Total Acreage	Acreage In Use	Capitalization in Reichmarks
Westafrikanische Pflanzungsverein (WAPV) Bota	West Africa Plantation Co. Victoria & Berlin	18,790	6,580	no info.
WAPV, Ngeme and Sachsenhof Sections	same	no info.	no info.	no info.
WAPV, Molyko, incl. Malende	same	5,687	3,602	3,700,000
WAPV, Prinz Alfred Missellele	same	6,042	4,692	no info.
WAPV, Bimbia and Mabeta	same	11,083	3,018	no info.
African Fruit Co.	African Fruit Co. Hamburg	12,172	7,109	4,000,000
Likomba	Likomba Kamerun Bananen Gesellschaft A.G., Hamburg	15,672	5,945	1,024,000
Molieve	Molieve Plantation Co., Berlin	34,000	7,636	1,000,000
Holtforth Planation Company	D. Holtforth	1,617	1,617	no info.
Donbe	Rein and Wessel, Oberhausen, Rhineland	603	600	no info.
Bibundi and Allied Plantation	Bibundi, A.G.	31,000	5,994	458,000
Debundscha	Debundscha, Pflanzung Berlin	4,329	1,137	220,000
Dechelhausen Plantage	William Scipio Mannheim	4,490	1,137	no info.
Isobi Plantation	Bibundi A.G., Lease to K. Proving	1,000	544	see Bibundi

Name of Plantation	Owner	Total Acreage	Acreage In Use	Capitalization in Reichmarks
Kamerun Eisenbahn Gesellschaft (KEG) Tombel	KEG, Berlin	17,500	2,500	1,380,000
Mukonje Estate	Kamerun, Kautschuk Co., A-G, Berlin	5,250	4,500	1,200,000
Ikassa Estate	Gesellschaft Sud-Kamerun, Hamburg	17,375	1,130	1,105,200
Mbonge, Davo, Beofa, Kumbe, Mukoko, Eboka, Transport and Boa Plantation	Deutsche Westafri- kanische Handels- gesellschaft Hamburg	20,289	5,990	710,000
Hernsheim Plantation	Hernsheim and Co., Hamburg	2,964	2,964	540,000
Scheitlin's Estate Tombel	Madame Scheitlin	260	112.5	no info.

APPENDIX F2

MAIN C.D.C. PLANTATIONS 1947-1960

Palm Products Statistics, C.D.C. from 1947-1960

Year	Hectares		Total Product./Metric Tons	Revenue Derived		
	Mature	Immature		Oil	Kernels	Millions of C.F.A.
1947			1342	801		37
1948			1507	856		51
1949			1615	1176		80
1950			2110	1285		116
1951	6263	199	6462	2503	1601	169
1952	5452	617	6069	2635	1739	214
1953	6036	830	6866	2759	1767	209
1954	5765	1327	7092	2908	2042	193
1955	5518	1819	7337	3403	1523	202
1956	5191	1881	7072	2738	1605	147
1957	4919	1983	6902	3101	1716	164
1958	5295	2048	7343	3557	2162	185
1959	5807	1905	7712	4235	2185	261
1960	6246	1802	8048	4825		287

Rubber Statistics 1947-1960

Year	Total Production		Revenue Derived	
	Mature	Immature	Metric Tons	(Millions of C.F.A.)
1947			1335	71
1948			1356	88

## Rubber Statistics 1947-1960 (contin.)

Year	Mature	Immature	Total	Production	Revenue derived
				Metric Tons	(millions of C.F.A.)
1949				940	66
1950				1345	292
1951	4579	1460	6039	1632	379
1952	4731	1615	6346	1584	244
1954	4545	2028	6573	1829	200
1954	3985	2517	6502	1621	189
1955	3939	2793	6732	1549	274
1956	4163	2760	6923	1742	278
1957	4450	2782	7232	1886	268
1958	4347	2753	7100	2279	303
1959	4700	2913	7613	2623	453
1960	5306	3059	8365	3268	587

SOURCE: The Cameroons Development Corporation, by Bederman, S.H.,  
p. 44 and 49.

Banana Statistics, C.D.C. 1947-1960

Year	Mature	Immature	Total	Production/Metric Tons	Revenue Derived
			Dried	Green	(Millions of C.F.A.)
1949				620	11000*
1948				189	37500*
1949				51	48500*
1950				13	44000*
1951	7308	998	8306	260	59500*
1952	7803	1064	8867	238	47031
1953	8170	1581	9751	126	54945
1954	8989	1147	10136	22	53585
1955	9293	624	9917		46270
					1278

## Banana Statistics 1947-1960 (contin.)

Year	Hectares		Total	Production/Metric tons		Revenue derived Millions of C.F.A.
	Mature	Immature		Dried	Green	
1956	7756	776	8322	104	48517	1215
1957	6845	811	7656	64	54370	1521
1958	6056	770	6826	25	59775	1381
1959	5445	607	6052	-	35479	609
1960	4232	790	5022	-	35155	755

SOURCE: The Cameroons Development Corporation, by Bederman, S.H.,  
p. 37.

NOTE: 1 metric ton = 2,205 lbs.

1 hectare = 2,47 acres

245 CFA = 1 U.S. Dollar

\* - Approximate figures

APPENDIX F3

1959 SOUTHERN CAMEROON'S ELECTION

Results of the 1959 Election, Southern Cameroons

Constituency	Registered Voters	KNC/KPP*	KNDD/OK+	Independent
Victoria - Southwest	5796	2100 *	1027	71
Southeast	5916	1182; 813+*	1293	
Northwest	6309	2086	841	
Northeast	8652	2079	2464	
Kumba - Northeast	12870	4876	4089	
Northwest	9550	unopposed*	-	
Southeast	15459	5057	6429	
Southwest	3880	1538	513	247
Mamfe - West	8630	1202	4004	297
North	12085	6519	2111	
South	8074	1449	3024	1769
East	10590	3076	5761	
Bamenda - North	10793	3083	2879	
East	7205	473	3239	269
Central West	7746	462	5736	
Central East	10423	725	4937; 1940	133
West	12950	1595	7478	79
South	15932	166	5929	6908
Wum - North	3709	674	1031	736
Central	4234	1442	1398	
East	4469	453	3263	
West	2621	769	1079	
Nkambe - North	2440	1215	87; 81	
East	5444	2113	1355	
Central	5775	2638	2,243	
South	4051	2099	1,095	
TOTALS	205576	51384	75326	10509

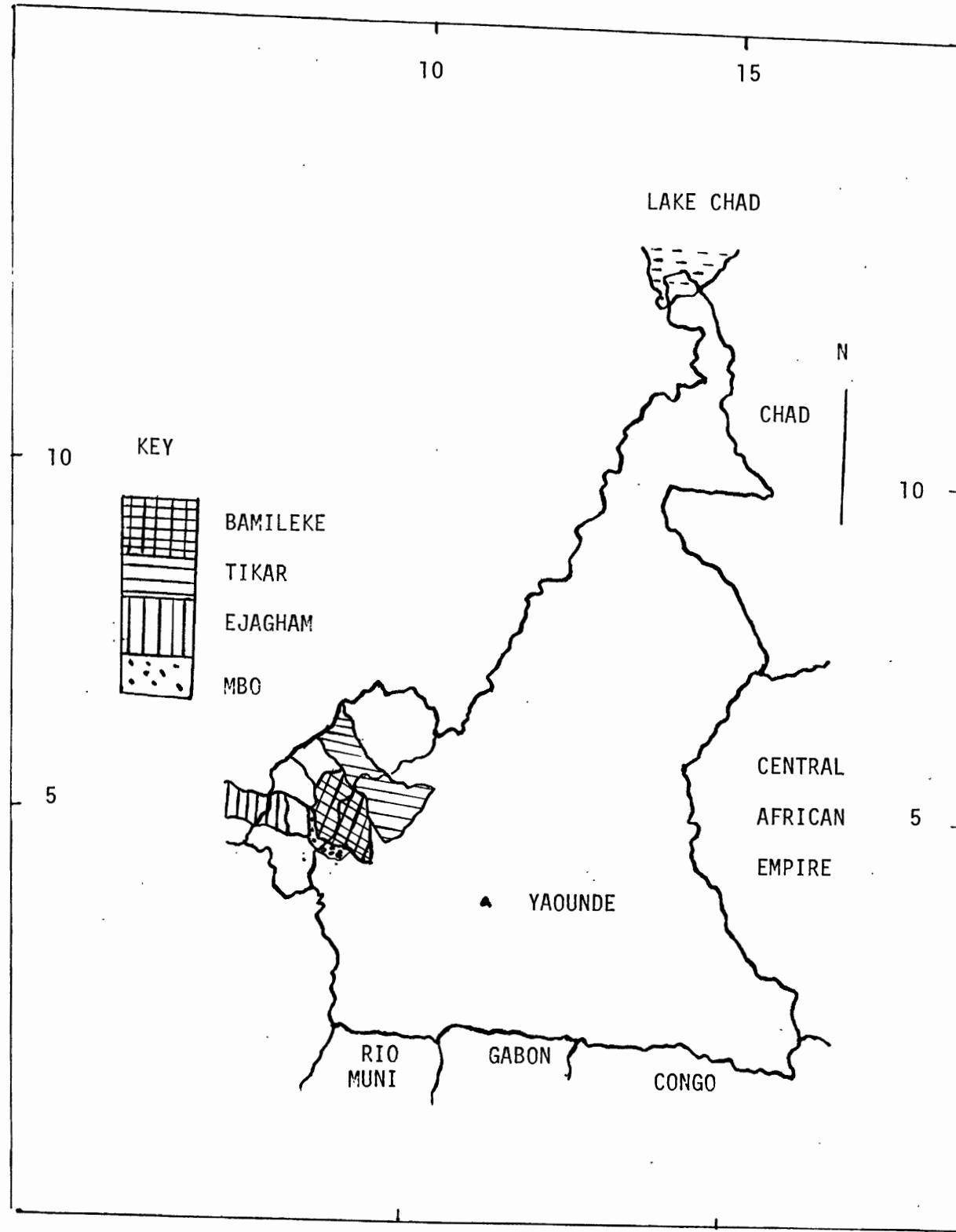
SOURCE: Dream of Unity, by Welch Claude, p. 203.

\* - An asterisk indicates a K.P.P. candidate

+ - All these candidates were K.N.D.P., except in Bamenda Central and Nkambe North where the second of the two figures represents an O.K. candidate.

APPENDIX G1

EJAGHAM, MBO AND TIKAR ETHNIC GROUPS IN CAMEROON



## APPENDIX G2

## NORTHERN CAMEROON'S PLEBISCITE - 1939

## Results of the 1959 Plebiscite, Northern Cameroons

District	Immediate Integration	Delay of Decision
Dikwa North	7,575	7,197
Dikwa Central	8,891	11,988
Gwoza	3,356	6,773
Cubunawa-Madagali	4,247	9,818
Adamawa North East	6,120	13,578
Chamba	4,539	11,651
Gashaka Toungo	2,252	2,099
Mambila	2,745	7,353
Wukari East	3,063	89
TOTAL	42,788	70,546

SOURCE: Dream of Unity, by Claude E. Welch, 220.

## APPENDIX G3

### RESULTS OF THE 1961 PLEBISCITE, SOUTHERN CAMEROONS

Plebiscite District	Nigeria	Cameroon
<b>Victoria</b>		
Southwest	2552	3756
Southeast	1329	4870
Northwest	4744	4205
Northeast	3291	9251
<b>Kumba</b>		
Northeast	9466	11991
Northwest	14738	555
Southeast	6105	12827
Southwest	2424	2227
<b>Mamfe</b>		
West	2039	8505
North	5432	6410
South	685	8175
East	1894	10177
<b>Bamenda</b>		
North	8073	18839
East	1822	17839
Centralwest	1230	18027
Centraleast	529	18193
West	467	16142
South	220	19426
<b>Wum</b>		
North	1485	7322
Central	3644	3211
East	1518	13133
West	2139	3449
<b>Nkambe</b>		
North	5962	1917
East	3845	5896
Central	5059	4288
South	7051	2921
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b><u>97741</u></b>	<b><u>233571</u></b>

SOURCE: Dream of Unity, by  
Claude, E. Welch,  
p. 235.

## APPENDIX G4

## RESULTS OF THE 1961 PLEBISCITE, NORTHERN CAMEROONS

District	Nigeria	Cameroun
Dikwa North	22,765	10,562
Dikwa Central	28,697	24,203
Gwoza	18,115	2,554
Cubunawa/Modagali	16,904	13,299
Mubi	23,798	11,132
Chamba	9,704	25,177
Gashaka-ioungu	4,999	3,108
Mambila	13,523	7,462
United Hills	7,791	152
TOTAL	146,296	97,659

SOURCE: Dream of Unity, by Claude E. Welch, p. 241.