

UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

T/OBS.5/94/Add.2
21 February 1957
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

PETITIONS CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

Observations of the French Government as Administering Authority

Note by the Secretariat: The observations relate to the following petitions:

<u>Section:</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Petition from Mr. Richard Théophile Deghula (T/PET.5/888, section 3)	2
2. Petition from Mrs. Ngo Hemboy Collecte (T/PET.5/888, section 14)	2
3. Petition from Mr. Ossegue Mballa (T/PET.5/888, section 22). . .	2
4. Petition from Mrs. Minique Tchouandem (T/PET.5/888, section 30)	2
5. Petition from Mrs. Barbare Ondobo (T/PET.5/888, section 36) . .	3
6. Petition from Mrs. Joseph Toka (T/PET.5/888, section 39). . .	3
7. Petition from Mr. Paul Ndongo (T/PET.5/888, section 52) . . .	3
8. Petition from Mr. Frédéric Lugard Tamafo (T/PET.5/888, section 56)	3
9. Petition from the <u>Syndicat des petits commerçants détaillants, artisans et transporteurs autochtones du Cameroun</u> (T/PET.5/888, section 59).	4

1. Petition from Mr. Richard Théophile Deghula (T/PET.5/888, section 3)

NGAMENY Michel was arrested for assault and battery of an administrative magistrate and police officials.

He was committed to Yaoundé prison on 6 June 1955 and transferred on 8 July 1955 to Yaoundé hospital, where he died on 23 July. The certificate signed by the Doctor in charge of the hospital states that death was caused by coronary insufficiency.

The Administering Authority has been unable to identify the persons listed at the end of the petition.

2. Petition from Mrs. Ngo Hemboy Collecte (T/PET.5/888, Section 14)

The Administering Authority has been unable to identify the petitioner because of the inadequate address given in the petition.

3. Petition from Mr. Ossegue Mballa (T/PET.5/888, section 22)

The Administering Authority has been unable to identify the petitioner, as the Region and Subdivision of his place of residence are not stated. It has therefore been impossible to check the accuracy of Mr. OSSEGUE MBALLA's allegations.

4. Petition from Mrs. Monique Tchouandem (T/PET.5/888, section 30)

It is true that on 27 July 1956 Mr. Tchouangang Daniel, a shop-keeper living at Yaoundé, received a suspended sentence of two years' imprisonment for assault and battery of an administrative magistrate and police officials.

Mr. Tchouangang was present at the hearing on 27 July 1956, which proves the falsity of the petitioner's allegations that he has disappeared completely.

5. Petition from Mrs. Barbare Ondobo (T/PET.5/888, section 36)

The Administering Authority has been unable to identify the petitioner, as the Region and Subdivision of her place of residence are not stated.

It has not been possible to check the accuracy of the facts reported by Mrs. Barbare Ondobo.

6. Petition from Mrs. Joseph Toka (T/PET.5/888, section 39)

The Administering Authority states that it has been unable to identify either the petitioner or her husband.

7. Petition from Mr. Paul Ndongo (T/PET.5/888, section 52)

The Administering Authority declines to go again into the incidents of May 1955 which have been dealt with in the statements of its Special Representative. For information on the treatment of political prisoners, the Administering Authority requests the Trusteeship Council to refer to previous observations.

8. Petition from Mr. Frédéric Lugard Tamafo (T/PET.5/888, section 56)

The Administering Authority has no knowledge of the disturbances that are said to have occurred at Batcham on 29 May 1955. It denies that police or army units were brought to the village and destroyed houses.

The petitioner's allegations concerning mass arrests, disappearances and "piles" of corpses are pure imagination and utterly fantastic.

It should be emphasized that the present Village Chief at Batcham was accused by a dispossessed usurper of having burnt seventy huts in May 1955. When this accusation was taken to court it was found to be groundless and the case was dismissed.

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9. Petition from the Syndicat des petits commerçants détaillants, artisans et transporteurs autochtones du Cameroun (T/PET.5/888, section 59)

This petition comes from a trade union which has never had any legal existence and which cannot therefore claim to be representative.

For information on the incidents of May 1955, the Administering Authority refers to the statements of its Special Representative.

With regard to market dues at Yaoundé market, Municipal Orders No. 55/6/CMY, 54/15/CMY and 24/CMYA of 13 September 1954, 26 March 1955 and 20 October 1953 fixed the monthly notes which vary from:

2,750 francs to 9,000 francs for shops, and
250 francs to 2,000 francs for stalls and tables,
depending on the site and size of the occupied premises.

Small traders who come for the day and occupy a site only are charged 10 francs a day.

It should be pointed out that there is nothing to compel a shopkeeper to rent a shop. If he cannot afford to do so, he can have a table or even a site rented by the day.

Licence fees are laid down in the General Code of Direct Taxation which is debated by the Territorial Assembly, where there is an indigenous majority. For licence purposes, the Territory is divided into three zones according to the wealth of the Regions; the licenses are further sub-divided into fifteen classes on the basis of business turnover figures. They cost from 2,000 to 4,000 francs.

It is not true that shopkeepers who had paid the Administration what they owed were turned out of the market place and that their goods were confiscated.
