

UNITED NATIONS  
TRUSTEESHIP  
COUNCIL



Distr.  
GENERAL

T/PET.5/550  
16 March 1955  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

PETITION FROM THE "COMITE DE LA DEFENSE DES CHOMEURS AFRICAINS" OF  
EDEA CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85 and supplementary rule F  
of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council)

COMITE DE DEFENSE DES CHOMEURS AFRICAINS DU CAMEROUN

Regional Committee for Sanaga-Maritime

EDEA P.O. Box 96

PETITIONS

We, members of the Comité de Défense des Chômeurs Africains, Regional Committee of EDEA and all the other supporters of the same movement, have the honour to extend our best wishes to the Chairman of the Fourth Committee and to all the Members of the United Nations General Assembly;

We hereby appoint as our representative Ruben UM NYOBE, the General Secretary of the U.P.C. and the representative of all the progressive sections of the inhabitants with claims to enforce, who will appear before the United Nations.

We also appoint our comrade KINGUE Abel, the Vice-Chairman of the U.P.C. and the representative of the J.D.C. to the United Nations.

We support and shall vote for the specific proposals they will present to the United Nations, particularly the referendum on the unification of the Cameroons, the setting of a date for the achievement of the country's independence and the solution of the relationship of the Cameroons with the French Union;

We repudiate the Government's report concerning the unemployed. No census has been taken of nor relief granted to the unemployed, other than in the form of punishment and arrest for non-payment of the 1st and 2nd class taxes on the

"jobless". When an unemployed person is arrested he first receives a rain of blows from the Chief Regional Officer and his henchmen, is locked up for several weeks, and is sometimes forced to sell his property to pay the tax. The Commissioner of Police has at times sold the wives of the unemployed to make them pay the tax. For example, NGUIBAKAL André's wife and two children were sold for 9,000 francs to a Catholic catechist of the SAFA.

The failure of the Administration and employers to apply the Labour Code is responsible for the large number of unemployed. Anyone who belongs to the C.G.T. union or is an active member of the U.P.C. is dismissed from his job. For example, BIBA Georges René was dismissed from the Communications Department at EDEA. BEJEDI Eugène, a senior driver in the general class, a former chauffeur to General LECLERC and a veteran of the last war who went as far as BERLIN, has just been dismissed by Mr. JOUD because he was found in possession of a C.G.T. union card. Mr. AMBIANA Zacharie, a former driver in the Public Works Department for over ten years, was dismissed by Mr. SINIECKOFF of the Public Works Department at Edea on the very day he joined the C.G.T. This is what leads to mass unemployment at EDEA. Just as we were about to finish this sentence we received a complaint from Mr. BILONG Joseph, a former carpenter in the Edea district, who was dismissed this morning because yesterday, 11 November, he presided over a trade union meeting held by the General Secretary of the U.R.S.S.M., joined the C.G.T. and paid a contribution to that union. This morning he was faced with the alternative of returning his card to the Region or joining the army of unemployed.

We, the unemployed of the town of EDEA, request:

1. The establishment of public works for the unemployed;
2. The cessation of arbitrary treatment of the unemployed;
3. Tax exemption for the unemployed;
4. Social security for the unemployed, i.e. the payment of a sum equivalent to 75 per cent of the minimum basic wage, in accordance with the Decree of 30 March 1954;
5. The establishment of a Labour Office for the Sanaga Maritime area;
6. Freedom to form and to join trade unions and freedom of thought for workers without entailing mass dismissals;

7. The fair and straightforward application of the Labour Code;
8. The removal of foreign labour from our area;
9. We request the repatriation of European men and women who are holding subordinate posts which should be given to local workers, such as stenographer, accountant, clerk, cashier, salesman, cellarman, foreman, mason, carpenter, shopkeeper and the like, and more particularly lorry driver and unskilled mechanic.

At EDEA a Greek businessman named CARAYANIS Nicolas manages his shop, buys the goods, is chief storekeeper, while his wife is a saleswoman and cook, one child is cellarman, another, ten years of age, acts as a barman, another sells soap at the market and he keeps his own shop and drives the four trucks he owns. The same holds true for Mr. PANAS. They are jacks of 10,000 trades.

They are hand in glove with the local administration. We request that these businessmen be repatriated to do their work elsewhere as they are becoming more and more selfish towards the African workers.

We are sending you some photographs to disprove the Government's statement that there are no unemployed at EDEA.<sup>1/</sup>

We have the honour to be etc....

Done at EDEA, on 12 November 1954

For the Comité de Défense des Chômeurs Africains d'EDEA

The Officers 8 signatures)

-----

---

<sup>1/</sup> Note by the Secretariat: The photographs referred to as annexes are in the possession of the Secretariat and will be made available upon request to members of the Trusteeship Council.