

**BRITISH AND FRENCH ADMINISTRATION
OF PEOPLES ON THE SOUTHERN
BORDERLANDS OF CAMEROON. THE
CASE OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH INTER-
CAMEROONS BOUNDARY, 1916-1961.**

BY

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my daughters and granddaughter who have been a source of constant love and inspiration throughout the research and writing of the entire work.

They are: Gina, Sidonie, Pulcherie, Dalia and Malaika.

I hope this gives them the satisfaction and encouragement they deserve in life.

ABSTRACT

The subject of this thesis is the history of British and French imposition of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary and the effects on the divided people from 1916 to 1961. The focus is on border administration and the response of the separated border groups notably the Balong, Bakossi, Duala, Balondo, Bakweri and the Mbo. The work opens with post-war Anglo-French negotiations and the partition of the territory. These negotiations resulted to an unequal division of Cameroon between the British (1/5) and the French (4/5). After the partition on paper, the actual work of survey and demarcation began in 1937 from the coast and proceeded inland. The work came to a halt with the outbreak of the Second World War.

Establishing and settling their administration on an old German base was not an easy task for either administration, especially in a territory where there was a Germanophone educated group reluctant to sever links with the former colonial power. More complicated was the administration of separated ethnic groups who seized every opportunity to send an avalanche of petitions and complaints to first the League of Nations and later to the United Nations in protest of the boundary. While border people resisted the boundary, others who were smarter saw the boundary as a zone of limitless opportunities, which they did not hesitate to exploit.

It was in the early 1960s that following the plebiscite results in Southern Cameroons, the Trusteeship regime ended and the territory achieved independence on October 1st, 1961 by reuniting with an independent French Cameroon. Reunification changed the status of the boundary from an international to an interstate boundary yet the ghost of the defunct boundary has ever since continued to haunt Cameroon.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study looks at the origin, the function and consequences of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary from 1916 to 1961.¹ It will explore the effectiveness of border administration and the views of the local people. The study makes no attempt to treat the subject of colonial boundaries exhaustively; its aim is simply to call attention to the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary as a fertile field for investigation and to suggest some of the problems, which arise in connection with its history.

It was difficult to decide whether I wanted to carry out research on the entire evolution of the Anglo-French boundary or on a particular aspect or stage of its evolution. That is, deciding whether I intended to look at the entire life - span or specific periods of its evolution. It was also important to reflect on colonial governmental policies of boundary maintenance, population mobility across the boundary, trade and taxation. Of equal importance was the temptation to look solely at the consequences of the boundary for the border groups or maybe the post-colonial history of the boundary to see if its maintenance was a continuation of colonial policies or an abandonment of them. What seemed clear however in my mind was

¹ The evolution of the name Cameroon started with the Portuguese who originally called it CAMAROES meaning prawns; then the Spaniards later called it CAMERONES. When it became a German Protectorate from 1884-1916, it was called KAMERUN but when the Germans were defeated and the country was shared between the British and the French, the British sections were called BRITISH NORTHERN and BRITISH SOUTHERN CAMEROONS. They were invariably referred to as the CAMEROONS. The French occupied sphere was called FRENCH CAMEROON or LA REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN. When British Cameroons voted for reunification with an already independent French Cameroon in 1961, they both formed the FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON, comprising of WEST CAMEROON and EAST CAMEROUN. In 1972, there was a reunification of both the west and east to form the UNITED REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON. Seven years later the name was changed to the REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON. For easy and acceptable usage it is today called either CAMEROON by English speakers or CAMEROUN by French-speakers.

that I intended to explore the constant tensions between the different perceptions of the boundary from the point of view of the boundary makers and the divided people.

Deciding on the appropriate chronology for this study was also difficult. This is because the 45 years of history that the topic now covers actually seem a very long period yet this does not cover the entire life span of the boundary. The boundary actually functioned until 1972 when the government of the Federal Republic of Cameroon decided to end it in view of creating a United Republic of Cameroon.² The Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary was defined in March 1916 but the survey and demarcation of the portion under study did not start until November 1937. Work was halted in September 1939 due to the outbreak of the Second World War. This probably implies that the actual administration of the boundary, as an instrument for enforcing the colonial policy of boundary maintenance, could only have been institutionalised after the war. However, this argument could be shaky for during the war there were movements of persons and ammunitions from one side of the boundary to the other and this demanded the administrative attention of both governments. Colonial administration ceased in 1961 with the creation of the Federal Republic of Cameroon. Since my interest is to highlight the administration of borderlands, the time period could equally well run from 1939 to 1961. This of course would not exclude serious background work on its allocation, definition and demarcation.³ Eventually, I decided to examine both the administration of the boundary and the reaction of the separated people from 1916 to 1961. This I hope

² From independence in 1961 to reunification in 1972, the boundary changed its status from an international to an inter-state boundary marking the limit between the East and West Cameroon Federated states. It was however, the highest policed boundary within the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

³ To allocate is to take a political decision on territorial distribution; to delimit is to select a specific boundary while to demarcate is to mark the boundary on the ground.

would construct a historical portrait of state functions on an African colonial boundary and their effects on the divided people.

The Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary has been subjected to comparatively little research by comparison with other boundaries (notably the Cameroon-Nigeria boundary). My intention thus is to first of all contribute to the available literature on this boundary, and secondly to branch off from the over concentration of research in the past on border disputes and conflict resolutions. Most importantly, this research is intended to contribute to the development of border studies. Until recently, most studies have looked at boundaries as colonial impositions which artificially divided border peoples, and were therefore an impediment to their development.⁴ Others have argued that the boundary provided a framework for independent African nations, while recent treatments of the question take quite a different approach which outlines that border peoples were not all victims, that not everything they did at a local level constituted resistance as smuggling for instance was probably more an attempt to exploit new opportunities than to maintain existing links.⁵ As a result, some of the border people may have benefited from the border.

I do agree with Nugent and Asiwaju's observation that for the border people, the boundary was a paradox because it served as a barrier to some and an opportunity zone to others.⁶ But the central argument in this thesis is about the group of people for whom the boundary was a barrier or negative and they were reacting in several ways to dismantle the boundary and be reunited with their kin and property across the boundary. These were the people whose families and farmlands had been divided

⁴ A. I. Asiwaju, *Partitioned Africans. Ethnic relations across Africa's international boundaries, 1884-1984*. London: Christopher Hurst, 1985.

⁵ J. C. Anene, *The international boundaries of Nigeria 1885-1960. The framework of an emergent African nation*. Harlow: Longman, 1970. P. Nugent, *Smugglers, secessionists & loyal citizens on the Ghana-Togo frontier. The lie of the borderlands since 1914*. Oxford: James Curry, 2002.

⁶ P. Nugent, and A. I. Asiwaju, (eds) *African boundaries. Barriers, conduits and opportunities*, London & New York: Frances Pinter, 1996.

between the British and the French territories and they needed to pay and obtain official passes to be allowed to visit their relations or cultivate their farmlands. Even though I have adopted this approach, which rather looks like an older perception of colonial boundaries, I do agree with the newer historiography represented by Nugent that there was a second vested interest, which saw the boundary as positive for it provided them with the opportunity for increasing their wealth through lucrative smuggling. This smuggling industry was successful due to the ineffectiveness of the customs service and border policing which were in turn rendered hazardous by difficult terrain and changing weather conditions. It is to be recalled here that colonial states were seriously under-resourced making it easier for enterprising smugglers to operate along the boundary. On reflection, I would say that although the recent treatments of the question have forced me to rethink much of what I had previously taken for granted, in this study, I am more interested in the negative effects of colonial boundaries on separated border groups than the opportunities offered by the boundaries.

A HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE BOUNDARY

Although the periodisation and focus of this research proved problematic, the historical setting was clearly defined. The primary aim was not to analyse the different colonial encounter but to expose the historical background in which the boundary was drawn and administered. For even the most casual observer, relics of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary have remained a visible edifice of the history of the territory. Cameroon first felt the impact of European colonisation under the Germans through the introduction of Western economic, political and administrative institutions. It went on to experience the division of the territory (by

the British and the French), which had been subjected to a single set of European influences for more than a generation.

To the purely physical or territorial aspects of this division, there must be added the effects of allocating the individual parts of Cameroon to Britain and France. The two new European powers which then ruled in their respective spheres had distinctive cultures, political traditions and colonial policies which differed from one another at least as each was different from those of Germany. The result was an increasing degree of divergence between the territory under French administration and that under British rule. Victor Le Vine says that "complexity" is the key word to describe Cameroon's political, social and economic configurations:

No other African country, save perhaps Nigeria, has had such an extraordinarily varied history of political experiences. It saw three direct colonial and two indirect tutelary powers work their will and influence: Germany, France and Great Britain; the League of Nations and the United Nations. Nigeria with which the British Cameroons were in administrative union might be added to the list.⁷

What were the particular circumstances under which the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon was drawn?

After the Allied joint conquest of Kamerun in the First World War, they both had conflicting interests in their freshly conquered territory, which hindered any effective and smooth collaboration between them. The territory was carved into three main sections; those areas conquered solely by the French (placed under French command), those by the British (under British command) and the areas conquered under joint efforts by both powers (placed under the command of General Charles Dobell). Essentially, the war did reveal rather starkly the imperialist motives of both powers and provided a pretext for further colonial conquest and annexation. Lovett

⁷ V. T. LeVine, *The Cameroon Federal Republic*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1971, p.xix.

Elango says that both powers tried to disguise this fact when, early in the campaign, they agreed to establish a Condominium over the territories jointly conquered and occupied, but the projected Condominium never materialised.⁸ Also, differences arose over an acceptable formula for partition. With the failure of joint rule and a common formula for the partition of Kamerun, the Allied powers opened negotiations, which led to the partition of Kamerun and the birth of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary.

Those negotiations lingered on until 1922 during which claims and counterclaims were launched by both administrations leading to the final partition. The provisional Picot line of 1916 largely foreshadowed whatever adjustments were made later and the eventual partition. This partition was disproportionate as Britain got 1/5 while France had 4/5. It then became imperative that an Anglo-French boundary commission be set up to delimit and demarcate the boundary between the British and French spheres of Kamerun. An important aspect of the division accord was that both parties were given the possibility of slightly modifying the partition line in order to avoid dividing villages, ethnic groups, plantations and farmlands. In their work of delimitation and demarcation, both land commissions realised that it was difficult to divide the territory without separating ethnic groups, plantations and farmlands.

In their efforts to maintain the dividing line, both administrations generated both friction and understanding with each other; the boundary sometimes became a zone of amity and sometimes one of tension. Also, while each administration imposed customs formalities on their side of the boundary and put patrol guards to arrest and punish trespassers, the borderland peoples demonstrated their non-

⁸ L. Z. Elango, *The Anglo-French Condominium in Cameroon, 1914-1916. History of a misunderstanding*. Limbe: Navi-Group Publications, 1987, p.8.

acceptance of the boundary and their determination to remain unified and ignore the boundary. Independence and reunification in 1961 failed to solve the problem of division and inter-group reintegration; today, the psychological and linguistic scars of division still persist among Cameroonians. Why is the southern portion of the boundary an important field for investigation?

IMPORTANCE OF THE CHOSEN AREA OF STUDY

The section of the boundary under study is that which separated British Southern Cameroons from *La République du Cameroun* or French Cameroon in 1916. Along this section of the boundary, I have chosen to study the southernmost portion that runs northwards from the sea, around the mouth of the River Mungo (Moungo) to the summit of Mount Manenguba, a distance of about 135 miles. This section of the boundary is very special in many ways. First of all, the boundary here is of a dual nature, maritime and territorial. This difference warranted highly specialised technicians in the surveying, mapping and demarcating of the boundary. It also proved to be a very costly venture for both the British and the French administrations. This suggests how important they believed it to be.

Secondly, the topography and vegetation cover made the task of the Anglo-French Land Commissioners very arduous. During the rainy season severe rains caused heavy floods and high tides along the maritime boundary especially on the coastal swamps and mangroves, this rendered the work of the Boundary Commission very difficult. The southern section of the River Mungo, which was fixed as the natural boundary frequently overflowed its banks during the rains and made the work of surveying and demarcating very difficult. It was for these reasons that all work on demarcation was halted during this period of the year, making the task time-

consuming. Tracing and demarcating huge expanses of thickly forested and hilly landscape was a painstaking venture for the Land Commission.

Thirdly, the southern section of the boundary fell on very fertile soils for food and cash crop cultivation, an advantage, which both the British and the French wanted to secure. This section of the boundary was also a mountainous area with three prominent peaks (Mounts Fako, Kupe and Manenguba) all of which offered good pasture for pastoral agriculture. Due to all these economic advantages, boundary delimitation and demarcation here was a very tricky and delicate process for it was impossible to satisfy the demands of both powers.

The abundance in natural resources was also reflected in human resources along this portion of the boundary. The area is inhabited by ethnic groups (Duala, Bakweri, Bakossi, Balong, Balondo and the Mbo) who were a reliable labour force for plantation agriculture, building of communication infrastructure, government residential areas as well as auxiliaries in the colonial administration and missionary societies. These activities made this southern section of the boundary very busy and popular thus its importance.

It was due to all the peculiarities of this section of the boundary and the difficulties both British and French administrations had in delimiting, demarcating and administering it that I consider it very important to research the effectiveness of states' functions along the boundary. This study will include an analysis of the problems and opportunities that both administrations encountered in their endeavour to maintain the dividing line.

The effectiveness of boundary administration, which this research seeks to highlight, is very important in the evolution of any boundary. This importance will depend on the characteristics of the boundary, the functions of the boundary, the

availability of government resources to maintain the boundary, the economic and strategic importance of the boundary, and the readiness of the border peoples to maintain the boundary. There is therefore an urgent need for this and more studies on the application of government policies along border zones for they determine the relationship between governments and directly affect the lives of the border people. David Downing has underscored the point that government policies have always been at the root of border disputes in these words:

Border disputes rarely have an independent life of their own. They resemble cases of high explosives left carelessly behind by the indifferent progress of human history. They need fuses to be dangerous, and someone has to light those fuses for them to explode.... Governments have become adept at providing both the fuse and the hand that lights it.⁹

This research on the tracing, administration and effects of the southern portion of the Anglo-French boundary on the divided people is important for its aim is to fill up a missing gap in the colonial history of Cameroon.¹⁰ It is hoped that the research will equip students with knowledge and skills on ethno-history that will prepare them for future careers as scholars and researchers on border studies. The work will also advance the frontiers of knowledge on border studies through the use of data collected from oral interviews, archival reports and other written sources. By exploring the functions and effects of the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon, this research has exposed one of the divisive aspects of colonial rule in Cameroon in particular and Africa at large.

⁹ D. Downing, *An Atlas of Territorial and Border Disputes*. London: New England Library, 1980, p8.

¹⁰ There have been earlier works on the northern section of this boundary, by J. R. V. Prescott and Peter Yearwood, while V. G. Fanso has given a general analysis on the tracing and administration of the boundary. There has so far been no comprehensive examination of the demarcation, administration and response to the boundary by peoples of the southern portion of the boundary, hence the importance of this research.

METHODOLOGY

The bulk of the data used for this research has been drawn from various archives and libraries. In London, I worked in seven libraries: SOAS Library; British Library; Institute of Commonwealth Studies Library; Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library; Senate House Library; Institute of Historical Research Library and the Library of University College London. In France I did research in the French National Library (*La Bibliothèque François Mitterand* in Paris) and the library of the Université Aix-Marseille I at Aix-en-Provence. Interviews conducted during fieldwork did provide important data for this research. Fieldwork was done in Cameroon and it enabled me to interview the victims of this boundary and was therefore better placed to appreciate the intensity of the effects of the boundary on border groups. I also took photographs of the relics of the boundary such as boundary pillars, the remains of destroyed boundary land marks, and of customs and police posts, the physical land limits of the old German plantations that straddled the boundary and the geographical features that were used at certain sections as the boundary line, for example the River Mungo. Due to problems of accessibility and poor visibility of the area during the rains, which start in early August and last till October, fieldwork was carried out from the beginning of April to mid August 1999. I conducted interviews in the hope of making a better assessment of the effects of the boundary on the divided peoples and their reactions to it. Informants for the most part were mostly people from the former border groups some of whom could supply eyewitness accounts on the nature, intensity and effects of boundary administration.

Archival research for this study was done at the Public Records Office (PRO) in London; the French National Archives - the Centre for Overseas Archives in Aix-en-Provence; the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris; the National

Archives in Yaounde, and the Provincial Archives in Buea, Cameroon.¹¹ All the archives in Cameroon, France and London provided valuable information on the different colonial administrations and their policies of boundary maintenance. Unfortunately, archival records on the Anglo-French boundary peter out after the Second World War. They convey little on the effects of the boundary on the divided people and attention is focused on nationalist and reunification movements on both the British and the French territories. It was, however, possible to complement the data collected from Colonial Reports with what was published by News Papers and Journals.

REVIEW OF SOURCES

A major realisation in connection with this research was the problem of sources and the inadequate attention given to the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary. The lone database available in the internet is the International Boundary News Database, which is a project of the International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU) at the University of Durham (England), and is supported by a grant from the United States Institute of Peace. This database provides over 10,000 boundary related reports around the world but the reports date from 1991. All that is available on these reports on Cameroon are the Cameroon-Nigeria border clashes since 1991, but this is of remote importance to my work.

Archival Sources

Archival research in London has been based largely on the Colonial and Foreign Office archives at the PRO.¹² The bulk of the material needed for this work

¹¹ The name PRO has now been changed to The National Archives, as a result, everywhere in this work that mention has been made to the PRO, this is referred to what is today called The National Archives located in the same holding at Kew Gardens, London.

¹² Other relevant sources for colonial studies at the PRO have been records for the Colonial Office, Dominions Office, Commonwealth Relations Office and Commonwealth Office.

is available in the Confidential Regional Prints for Africa (CO879) the "Q.v." series and West Africa-Nigeria. For the Cameroons, the most important classes are files CO649, CO750 and CO751, running from 1915 to 1926.¹³

In Aix-en Provence, I carried out research in the archives of *l'Afrique Equatoriale Française* (AEF) and *l'Afrique Occidentale Française* (AOF), particularly on Cameroon. In these archives there are files on political affairs (Aff. Pol.) for Togo and the Cameroons and various Annual Reports and Official Journals from 1916 to 1959. Of importance are the AF/CP series, which contain maps on Cameroon and the boundary. In Paris, research was done in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Major files here are the K and AL series that cover general administration of Cameroon and AEF. There are also files on the Second World War and Vichy Africa (1939-1945) and on French and British Cameroon from 1953 to 1959. Data on Vichy Africa is on microfilm. Files on boundaries in Africa (the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon inclusive) are not accessible to the public until the year 2019.¹⁴ However, there is data on colonial administration, political

¹³ Documents for the Southern Nigeria Protectorate like Government Gazettes, Session Papers; Registers of out-going letters and Original Correspondence are found in CO520, CO590, CO591, and CO473. CO968 contains relevant information on Anglo-French colonial co-operation in 1944 and 1945. The CO files were used in conjunction with the Foreign Office correspondence notably the FO371 series. These series of records, together with a number of other subject-based series are indexed in a contemporary card index held in the Research Enquiries Room (RER) which covers 1906-1919, and thereafter by printed indexes, also on open access in RER, for 1920-1951. FO912 consists of four files covering Foreign Office Correspondence with the Consulate in Douala, Cameroon from 1940 to 1955.

¹⁴ I am not quite sure why this is so but the Officer in Charge of the archives explained that files on boundaries are considered sensitive and cannot be released readily.

parties and the independence movements in Cameroon. There are also cuttings from newspapers, which cover political events in French Cameroon from 1945 to 1960.

In Cameroon, research was done at the National and Provincial Archives of Yaounde and Buea. In the National Archives Yaounde, the *Affaires Politiques et Administratives* (APA) series provided both materials on the delimitation and on the administration of the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon. In the Provincial Archives Buea, the qf/a series provided useful information on the Cameroon Anglo-French boundary notably files nos. 58,124,142, and 239. These archives also hold important data on the British and French administration in Cameroon.

Secondary sources

According to secondary sources, geographers first expressed the interest in boundary studies.¹⁵ Working from the general to more specific works, I have distinguished the very important from the general works in the various areas of

¹⁵ Frontiers and boundaries were initially of interest to geographers and geo-politicians who wrote at the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. The study later attracted students of international law who looked at the legal implications of boundaries. When a second group of political geographers began distinguishing between the zonal and linear characteristics and differences of frontiers and boundaries, the subject created serious reactions from historians and other social scientists. These scholars made a distinction between "frontier" as a zone separating two political territories and "boundary" as a line of demarcation within the frontier. Some of these historians and social scientists whose works I have used are P. Nugent and A. I. Asiwaju, *African boundaries. Barriers, conduits and opportunities*. London and New York: Pinter, 1996. C. Anene, *The international boundaries of Nigeria 1885-1960. The framework of an emergent African nation*. Harlow: Longman, 1970. O. Adejigbe, *Boundary problems in Western Nigeria. A geographical analysis*. Nigeria: University of Lagos Press, 1975. V. G. Fanson, "Transfrontier relations and resistance to Cameroon-Nigeria colonial boundary". Post graduate thesis (Doctorat d'Etat), University of Yaounde, Cameroon, 1985.

research interest notably: colonial rule in Africa and in Cameroon, African colonial boundaries and the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary.

British and French rule in Africa and Cameroon

This research will not narrate the British and French colonial administrations in Africa. For a proper understanding of the two colonial experiences, some works have been of tremendous value. For a discussion on the aims and differences in colonial policies in Africa, I consulted the companion volumes edited by Prosser Gifford and W.R. Louis.¹⁶ L. H. Gann and P. Duignan have explored the history, politics and economics of colonialism in Africa.¹⁷ Still on general works, I judged it necessary to read more on British and French colonial rule in Africa. Such an analytical and comparative study, I was convinced, would enhance my appreciation of the British and French administration of the boundary in Cameroon.¹⁸ I gathered from these sources that British administration during the Trusteeship period (this was when there was much resistance against the boundary) was a lot more relaxed than in the Mandate period, this was because the territory was moving towards self-government as reunification became a major political option in Cameroon. The general works I used on French colonial policy in Africa, revealed that the French colonial regime (like most other regimes) was despotic and their administration intimidating and oppressive.¹⁹ This explained the harsh system of border control exercised by French Police Officers and Border Guards along their side of the boundary. The burdensome

¹⁶ Prosser Gifford and W.R. Louis (eds.) *Britain and Germany in Africa: Imperial rivalry and colonial rule* and *France and Britain in Africa: Imperial rivalry and colonial rule*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967 and 1971 respectively.

¹⁷ L. H. Gann and P. Duignan in their four volumes of *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, vol. 1, 1969; vol. 4, 1975)

¹⁸ R. O'Neil, *Mission to British Cameroons* London: Mill Hill Mission Press, 1991; D. Meredith, "The British government and colonial economic policy 1919-39", *Economic Historical Review*, 28, 1975 and G. Padmore, *How Britain rules Africa*. London: Wishart Books, 1936.

¹⁹ J. Suret-Canale's translated version of *French colonialism in Tropical Africa 1900-1945*. New York: C. Hurst, 1971 and Hardy's *Histoire de la colonisation Française*. Larose, 1931. S. N. Roberts, *The*

and oppressive French system of taxation for example caused the movement of many French subjects to cross the boundary and take up residence and employment on the British side of the territory. For a closer view of both administrations, I relied on the interesting contributions of John Kent, which outline the various levels of Anglo-French co-operation before and after the Second World War.²⁰ Kent says that at all levels, the war revealed difficulties in the way of closer Anglo-French relations in Africa for both aimed at preserving their global interests but the means to achieve this was hotly disputed. Where Kent's contribution ties in with my work is in his view that by the early 50s, the question of commanding authority and territorial interests within Africa tended to limit the extent of close Anglo-French relations in the same way as divergent metropolitan policies.²¹

From general works in Africa, I narrowed my research down to specific works on colonialism in Cameroon. This I presumed would give me a better understanding of the extent of successes and/or failures of the application of British and French colonial policies in that part of Africa. Cameroon has undergone a triple colonial experience, first German, then British and French simultaneously. For the German prelude, the major work used was Harry Rudin's case study.²² Rudin's case study reveals three important observations on the German period, which have been of interest to this research. Firstly, German colonial administration prepared the people of Kamerun for the later British and French experiences; secondly, under the Germans the territory was administered as a single political entity; and thirdly, German District boundaries respected as much as possible, the local ethnic boundaries.

history of French colonial policy 1870 – 1925. London: Frank Cass, 1963.

²⁰ J. Kent, *The internationalisation of colonialism. Britain, France and Black Africa 1939-1956*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992 and his article "Anglo-French colonial cooperation 1939-49", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 17, 1(1988):55-82.

²¹ Kent, *The internationalisation of colonialism*, p.341.

²² H. R. Rudin, *Germans in the Cameroons 1884-1914: A case study in modern imperialism*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968.

From general works on the British and French colonial administration in Cameroon,²³ some specific works have provided important data on the making of the Anglo-French boundary.²⁴ These works discuss the Anglo-French post World War One agreements, the division of Kamerun and the delimitation of the boundary. More importantly, they do discuss the British and French Mandates in Cameroon, and the terms on which Britain and France obtained confirmation of their partitions of the Kamerun. Whereas the British merged the administration of their sector with that of Nigeria, the French did not bring her own part of Kamerun into the Federation of French Equatorial Africa (A.E.F.). Some other sources have provided data on the relationship between both administrations and the various political parties in their respective territories.²⁵ This relationship did affect the administration and control of the boundary. The tension between the French administration and the U.P.C. political party for example led to the influx of the party's insurgents into the neighbouring British administered borderland towns from where they launched several attacks on the French administration across the boundary. I used the specific works of Victor LeVine, Mark Delancey and Richard Joseph because they give a critical analysis of colonialism and nationalist politics in the inter-war period as well as constitutional

²³ V. J. Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985: A hundred years of history* Limbe: Navy Group Publications, 1987 and *History of Cameroon since 1800* Limbe: Pressbook, 1996; M. Njeuma, *Introduction to the history of Cameroon: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989; V.G. Falso, *Cameroon history for secondary schools and colleges. Vol. 2: colonial and post-colonial periods*. London: Macmillan, 1989; T. Eyongetah and R. Brain, *A history of Cameroon* London: Longman, 1987 and E. Mveng, *Histoire du Cameroun*, Tommes 1 et 2 Yaounde: Societe des Presses et Edition du Cameroun SO.P.E.CAM. 1986.

²⁴ L. Z. Elango, *The Anglo-French Condominium in Cameroon 1914-1916. History of a misunderstanding*. Limbe: Navy-Group publications, 1987. L. Z. Elango, "The Anglo-French 'Condominium' in Cameroon, 1914-1916: The myth and the reality", *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 18,4(1985):657-673. M. Essiben, "France et la redistribution des territoires au Cameroun (1914-1916)", *Afrika Zamani*, 12&13, (1981):36-52. J. A. Osuntokun, "Great Britain and the final partition of the Cameroons 1916-1922", *Afrika Zamani* 6 &7 (1977):53-71 and A. N. Njoya, *Le Cameroun dans les relations internationales*. Paris: R. Pichon et Durand Auzias, 1976.

²⁵ Mark Delancey's *Cameroon: Dependence and Independence*. London: Westview press, 1989; David Gardinier's *Cameroon: United Nations challenge to French policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970; R. A. Joseph's *Radical nationalism in Cameroon: social origins of the U.P.C. rebellion*. London: Oxford University Press, 1977 and Victor T. Levine's *Cameroons from mandate to independence*. California: University of California Press, 1964.

changes in Cameroon after the Second World War. The evolution of the political situation of Cameroon for example led to the UN organised plebiscites in both Cameroons and the dismantling of the Anglo-French boundary.

Of particular importance are both of the works of Leon Kaptue which discuss an aspect of the colonial administration of borderlands in French Cameroon and the control of the movement of people along the border.²⁶ Kaptue focuses on the "Laissez-passer" which was an administrative document or passport needed to cross from the French to the British zone. His book which analyses the need for and use of labour by the French colonial administration proved very relevant to this research as labour was one factor which determined population mobility across the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary during the period under study.

The concept of boundaries and African colonial boundaries

Even though many scholars have written on African colonial boundaries and boundary concepts, a quick examination of my references reveals my indebtedness to Anthony Ijaola Asiwaju. From the definition of key terms to the origin, role and effects of colonial boundaries in Africa, Asiwaju has been the main authority. A. Asiwaju and P. Adeniyi, suggest that in any work on border studies, it is important to make a clarification in the difference between the use of key terms like frontier, boundary and border zone. According to them, while frontiers are zones within which, boundaries are located or delimited, borderlands are lands close to the border or boundary.²⁷ Their contribution gave me a clearer definition of the boundary under

²⁶ Leon Kaptue, "L'administration coloniale et la circulation des indigènes au Cameroun. Le Laissez-passer 1923-1946", *Afrika Zamani*, 10 & 11, (1979) and *Travail et main d'oeuvre au Cameroun sous régime Français 1916-1952*. Paris: l'Harmattan, 1985.

²⁷ A. I. Asiwaju and P.O. Adeniyi, (eds.) *Borderlands in Africa. A multidisciplinary and comparative focus on Nigeria and West Africa*. Nigeria: University of Lagos Press 1989, pp.27-28.

France) for most of the period of this study, could also be described here as a frontier. This study however, highlights the boundary as an important feature in the frontier zone.

study. Throughout this research, I have preferred to use the terms boundary and borderlands rather than frontier and frontier zones.²⁸ Paul Nugent and Asiwaju define African colonial boundaries as territorial limits, which were drawn and sometimes redrawn from the end of the nineteenth century to the twentieth century with the intention of demarcating competing spheres of colonial authority (British, Belgian, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Ethiopian).²⁹ This definition suits the Anglo-French boundary, which was drawn in 1916 and rectified several times in the hope of demarcating the British and the French spheres of colonial authority in Cameroon and meeting the requests of the border people.

J. Prescott and I. Brownlie have outlined an important aspect of boundaries, which is of interest to this research.³⁰ I used their work because it discusses the evolution of boundaries in stages. While Prescott talks of three stages namely allocation (political decision on distribution), delimitation (selection of a specific boundary site) and demarcation (marking the boundary on the ground), Brownlie and S. Jones add a fourth stage they call administration (policy provisions for supervising the maintenance of the boundary monuments and vistas).³¹ The Anglo-French inter-Cameroon's boundary, I deduced from these sources, outlived all of these stages and reached a terminal stage that can be called the extinction stage (when the boundary ceases to exist at least as a physical, political and administrative division). Such a boundary could be referred to as a relict boundary. Even though extinct, the boundary

²⁸ Also, since the word frontier could be referred to the division between sovereign states or nations, the Anglo-French boundary, which was international (it separated two sovereign states, Britain and

²⁹ Nugent and Asiwaju, *African boundaries*, p.2.

³⁰ J. R. V. Prescott in *Boundaries and Frontiers*. London: Croom Helm, 1978 and in *Political Frontiers and boundaries*. London: Allan and Unwin, 1987. I. Brownlie in *African boundaries. A legal and diplomatic encyclopaedia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979

³¹ S. B. Jones *Boundary-Making, a handbook of statesmen*. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, 1945.

under study has left social and psychological scars of division in the Cameroonian society.

In close association with territorial boundaries are maritime boundaries, which sometimes lead to disputes and claims. S. Boggs explains the difficulty of identifying "the middle" of the river or sea where the boundary should stand thus resulting in a wavering boundary causing disputes.³² This was a significant problem with the Anglo-French boundary, which led to problems of delimitation around the coastal waters at the mouth of the River Mungo. As a result of these difficulties, there were frequent tensions between the British and the French administrations as their respective patrol guards trespassed into each other's waters sometimes without knowing where the boundary was.

Data on problems relating to partitioned border groups have been compiled from Asiwaju's work on the partitioned Western Yorubaland.³³ Asiwaju says that among other problems that arose in partitioned Western Yorubaland were those that resulted from difference in colonial policy operating at the boundary. This study has been helpful in a comparative examination of British and French colonial administrative policies that were applied to border groups in Cameroon as well.

Cameroon's international boundaries and the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary

The number of works (both published and unpublished) treating the inter-Cameroons or intra - Cameroons boundary, as it is sometimes referred to, is much smaller than those on Cameroons international boundaries. The reason for this

³² S. W. Boggs in *International boundaries. A study of boundary functions and problems*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1940.

³³ A. Asiwaju, *Western Yorubaland under European rule; 1889-1945*. London: Longman, 1976 and O. Adejigbe, *Boundary problems in Western Nigeria. A geographical analysis*. Nigeria: University of Lagos Press, 1975. Asiwaju says that these problems arose in Yorubaland because the British operated a more relaxed policy with respect to firearms and a more restrictive policy with respect to liquor than did their French counterparts, see Asiwaju, *Western Yorubaland*, p.158.

according to Prescott is clear.³⁴ Prescott says that generally, there is increased attention on international boundaries because they are the subject of dramatic conflicts between countries and thus attract much public attention.³⁵ Among all of Cameroon's international boundaries particular attention has been given to the Cameroon-Nigeria boundary by both scholars and other interested people. Perhaps this is due to the fact that it is the longest (1600km) of all Cameroon's international boundaries and the most active.³⁶ Prescott and C. Weadji have discussed the evolution of the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary with special attention given to the terms of agreements, delimitation and demarcation of the boundary.³⁷ The Cameroon-Nigeria boundary, which cuts across ethnic groups, has been a zone of co-operation, development and at the same time one of conflict.³⁸

Cameroonian and Nigerian researchers have examined some of the causes of the frequent border clashes between Cameroon and Nigeria.³⁹ Of significance is the border clash of May, 1981, over the Bakassi Peninsular was intense and took a deal of diplomacy to avoid war between the two countries. The struggle for control is still on

³⁴ J.R.V. Prescott, *Boundaries and Frontiers*. London: Croom Helm, 1978, see chapter six.

³⁵ Prescott, *Boundaries and Frontiers* p.166.

³⁶ There is a lot of official and unofficial trade transaction along this boundary. There are also frequent open clashes between military officials of both countries along this boundary resulting from disputes over the ownership of certain portions of the boundary. There is the long-standing on-going dispute causing regular military clashes over the Bakassi Peninsular in Cameroon's southwestern border with Nigeria.

³⁷ J. V. R. Prescott, *The evolution of Nigeria's international and regional boundaries: 1861-1971*. British Columbia Geographical series, no.13, Vancouver, Canada: Tantalus Research limited, 1971. C. Weadji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria border 1914 and after (5th and last instalment)", *Abbia* 3-39, 1982.

³⁸ V. G. Fanson "Transfrontier relations and resistance to Cameroon-Nigeria colonial boundaries 1916-1945". Doctoral thesis, University of Yaounde, 1985. J. Ekpenyong "Prospects and constraints for Cameroon-Nigeria socio-economic co-operation along the eastern border", in A. I. Asiwaju and B. M. Barkindo (eds.) *Development of border regions. National Boundary Commission Documentation Series*. Lagos: National Boundary Commission, 1993.

³⁹ I. Modupe in *Nigeria and Cameroon. An annotated bibliography*. Lagos: Libriservice, 1984. H. N. Shey in his B.Sc. thesis "Colonial boundaries in Africa: A case study of the Nigeria-Cameroon border clash of 16th May, 1981". Zaria, Amadou Bello University, 1983.

between the two countries. Much data on this and other disputes and clashes are available in both state and private owned newspapers and magazines in Cameroon and Nigeria. Even though this work is not focused on border disputes, the causes of these disputes are similar to those that caused periods of tension between the British and French administrations in Cameroon over the maintenance of the boundary between them. Examples of this include the flow of people in search of employment from one side of the boundary (Nigeria) to the other (Cameroons). Research on Cameroon's international boundary with Gabon and Congo has also been done.⁴⁰

I decided to consult very important works on the ethnic groups that were separated by the southern portion of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary. This I hoped would enable me to understand both the effects of the boundary on the divided groups as well as the functions of the boundary within time. E. Ardener identified and characterised the border groups as the coastal Bantu groups of Cameroon. He puts the Bakweri and the Douala into one major group with common characteristics. Before the allocation of the boundary these groups interacted freely with each other. When the boundary was delimited, it cut across this group placing the Bakweri to the west and the Douala to the east.⁴¹ I. Dugast in her inventory of ethnic groups in Cameroon has grouped the Mbo, Bakossi and the Balong under another major ethnic group because of similar socio-cultural traits that they share.⁴² The boundary cut across these groups leaving portions of the group to the west and the other portions to the east. Clans, villages, families, farmlands, fishing, and hunting grounds were divided by the boundary.

⁴⁰ A. Mangongo-Nzambi, "La définition des frontières du Gabon" *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, 9,1 (1969). E. Muoston "Petit journal de la mission de délimitation Congo-Cameroun. Mission Moll au Sangha-Tchad 1905-1906 1907", *Bulletin de la société des Recherches Congolaises*, 19 (1933).

⁴¹ E. Ardener, *Coastal Bantu of the Cameroons*. London: International African Institute, 1956.

⁴² I. Dugast, *Inventaire ethnique du sud Cameroun*. Yaounde: mémoire de l' I.F.A.N., 1949.

For these separated border groups, boundary delimitation and demarcation entailed a very strained and stressful experience especially as it severed asunder relationships, links and interactions that had been nurtured over the ages. For a clear understanding of these long nurtured relations between all the ethnic groups under study, some studies have been helpful.⁴³ But for V. G. Fanson's article there has been very little interest shown by researchers and scholars in establishing the historical connections and socio-cultural homogeneity among these or other ethnic groups divided by the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon.⁴⁴ This research does not explore those connections elaborately; as a result, there is an urgent need for research along those lines.

A point that Nugent raises in his recent work, which is of interest here, is about ethnicity and boundaries. He says ethnicity has not been a timeless constant in Africa nor in any other part of the world. He continues that before colonial conquests Africans occupied a universe in which there were a great variety of possible links, which were often cross-cutting. Colonial concept led to a reconceptualisation of space but these new conceptions should not be pushed back into the pre-colonial period. I would not probably want to go all the way with Nugent in his idea that "Tribal" ethnicity was a construct of the colonial period.⁴⁵ In other words, he is saying that the

⁴³ R. Bureau "Ethno-Sociologie Religieuse des Douala et apparentés" *Recherches et Etudes Camerounaises*, 7-10(1962); P. Moby-Etia "Les Pays du Bas-Moungo, Bas-wouri", Postgraduate thesis, (Doctorat de 3^e cycle), Université de Paris 1, 1976; S. N. Ejedepang-Koge *The tradition of a people: Bakossi*. Yaounde: SO.P.E.CAM., 1986 and P. M. Kale, *A brief history of the Bakweri* Lagos: Tika-Tore press, 1939.

⁴⁴ V. G. Fanson, "Inter-group relations and Cameroon unification: A prototype of Africa's frontier problem" in *Annals of the Faculty of Letters and Social Sciences*, Human Science Series, 1,2(1985), 37-52.

⁴⁵ In his recent study of the Ewe people, Nugent outlines that ethnic consciousness may well be a product of the border for protests against the 1919 repartition marked the first time that the word "Ewe" was used by the people themselves, see chapter 4 on the issue of Ewe identity. Paul Nugent, *Smugglers, secessionists & loyal citizens on the Ghana-Togo frontier: the lie of the borderlands since 1914*. Oxford: James Currey, 2002.

Ewe were all the more conscious of their shared cultural and historical heritage by virtue of being artificially separated.

The situation in Cameroon was different in that before the Germans annexed the territory in 1884, groups of people occupying the same space and speaking similar languages were named after either their founder, the geographical area that they occupied or after great events in their long migratory historical trail. Before and during the German administration of Cameroon, the various groups shared and maintained a common tradition and culture. These are the groups that were later called "tribes" or "ethnic groups" by Western scholars. It is true that the very definition and components of such groups have changed within time but they have kept their socio-cultural traits and claims to a common ancestry. These are the factors that helped to maintain the pre-colonial group coherence that was broken by the boundary.

Specific works on the Anglo-French inter-Camerouns boundary have been highly limited. Prescott seems to have been the first scholar to have shown interest in the study of this boundary as early as 1962 when he published his article "The evolution of the Cameroons inter-Camerouns boundary" *The Nigerian Geographical Journal* 5,2(1962). He based this work on the allocation and definition of the boundary with the techniques of its demarcation. The geographical and survey details were of more importance to him than historical and ethnological details. His work has been said to contain the defects of a pioneering study for it produces maps prepared in Nigeria during the First World War which were rightly criticised by the British Colonial Office as being seriously misleading.⁴⁶ In a subsequent article, Prescott's

⁴⁶ Peter Yearwood, " ' In a casual way with a blue pencil': British policy and the partition of Kamerun, 1914-1919" *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 27(1993):218-44.

approach and content were not very different except for the fact that he studied this boundary as one of the international boundaries of Nigeria which evolved normally until the outbreak of the Second World War when all works of demarcation ended.⁴⁷ It was important to know how the boundary was later administered and how the division affected the lives of the border people. These are the major concerns of this research.

Jide Osuntokun and Peter Yearwood have done much research on the politics of the partition of the Cameroons.⁴⁸ Both authors have written extensively on the making of the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon. What they both overlook is the administration and effects of the boundary on border people. The Northern portion of the boundary has received adequate attention through the works of Yearwood and B. M. Barkindo, this thesis aims at concentrating on the south.⁴⁹

In his legal and diplomatic encyclopaedia on African boundaries, I. Brownlie dedicated eighteen pages to the description of the Anglo-French boundary, which he called "the Franco-British Frontier" in Cameroon.⁵⁰ Brownlie also discusses the other boundaries of Cameroon and her neighbours notably Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria. In his contributions on the

⁴⁷ J. V. R. Prescott, "The Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary" The evolution of Nigeria's international and regional boundaries: 1861-1971, *British Columbia Geographical Series* no. 13, Vancouver, Canada: Tantalus Research limited, 1971.

⁴⁸ J. A. Osuntokun, "Great Britain and the final partition of the Cameroons, 1916-1922" *Afrika Zamani*, 6 and 7 (1977) and in *Nigeria in the First World War*. London: Longman, 1979. J.A. Osuntokun, "Anglo-French occupation and the provisional partition of the Cameroons, 1914-1916" *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 7,4(1975):647-656. P. Yearwood, " 'In a casual way with a blue pencil': British policy and the partition of Kamerun, 1914-1919" in *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 27,(1993):218-244.

⁴⁹ Peter Yearwood "The Reunification of Borno, 1914-1919", *Borno Museum Society Newsletter*, 25(Oct.-Dec.1995):24-44 and B. M. Barkindo, "The Mandara astride the Nigeria-Cameroon frontier", in A. I. Asiwaju *Partitioned Africans. Ethnic relations across Africa's international boundaries, 1884-1984*. London: Christopher Hurst, 1985.

⁵⁰ I. Brownlie in his *African Boundaries. A legal and diplomatic encyclopaedia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979.

Cameroon-Nigeria boundary, Weladji has discussed the making of the Anglo-French boundary.⁵¹ The importance of these articles is that the author displays in the appendices, some important texts on boundary description, and colonial administrative correspondences between the British, and the French governments about the boundary under study. Again, in both works, nothing is said about the boundary after 1939 or on its administration. Weladji seems to have been greatly influenced by the works of Prescott on the boundary description and the maps, which he uses, have the same errors as those used by Prescott. In his work, there is also nothing on the effects of the boundary on the border groups. A serious handicap that this research seeks to overcome.

Lucas Kouam in his post graduate thesis "La dynamique historique des frontières du Cameroun: 1884-1916"(Maitrise) thesis, University of Yaounde, 1979, discusses in a general way the historical evolution of Cameroon's boundaries from the period of German occupation to the end of the First World War and post war agreements on newly defined boundaries by the British and the French. Much of Kouam's work has been used here as background material for he ends where this study begins and gives very little useful data on the Anglo-French boundary. His work however acted as one of the early sources on which I built the foundation of one of my postgraduate theses.⁵² Even though this study does not focus on the Anglo-French boundary, it examines the effects of colonialism on the local Bakossi ethnic group - their tradition, culture, language, philosophy and economy. It was from there that my interest on the Anglo-French colonial frontier took its roots.

⁵¹ See C. Weladji's two articles published in *Abbia* notably "The Cameroon-Nigeria border (contd.) *Abbia*, 31-32-33 (1978) and "The Cameroon-Nigeria border 1914 and after (5th and last instalment)" *Abbia*, 38-39 (1982).

⁵² Anastasia Nzume, "Culture change in Mouamenam, 1916-1960. A background study"(Maitrise) thesis, University of Yaounde, 1983.

I pushed forward the interest and research on this boundary in my doctoral thesis.⁵³ This thesis is focused on the linguistic and socio-cultural effects of the Anglo-French boundary on the Bakossi, which like some other ethnic groups, were divided by this boundary. It was from this micro-perspective that I became curious to know if the function and effects of this boundary would have been the same with other ethnic groups that were also separated by the boundary. It was in the effort to get the answers to my inquiry that I carried out research on primary and secondary sources, and the resultant data has been arranged in seven chapters.

WORK OUTLINE

This first chapter is an introductory chapter, which has explored the research design, the methodology and some preliminary observations and terms on boundary. The historiography of the boundary has highlighted two points; firstly, that Cameroon had been a German Protectorate and was administered as a single unit, secondly; Cameroon was hemmed in on both sides by the British and the French who ended up sharing the territory between them after they got rid of the Germans. The Great War and the German defeat therefore provided a perfect solution. This introductory chapter has also given some of the major reasons for the choice of conducting research on the southern portion of the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon. An important section of this chapter is the methodology and the review of sources for the section gives a selection and an examination of the major primary and secondary works that have been used and their relevance to the work.

Chapter two discusses the making of the boundary and is based on post-war Anglo-French agreements and the division of Kamerun. This examines the allocation, delimitation, and the demarcation of the Southern portion of the Anglo-French

⁵³ A. Nzume, "The colonial frontier and bilingualism in Cameroon: The case of the Bakossi, 1916-1961" (Doctorat de 3^e Cycle) University of Yaounde, 1989.

boundary. A historical survey of the boundary groups has been provided to give a clear understanding of the effects of the boundary on the separated people. Chapter three is lengthy and it analyses the British and French administrative policies and state functions at the boundary. It seeks to ask the question as to what were their administrative policies of boundary maintenance and how effective were they? The chapter highlights the differences in the exploitation of natural and human resources by both colonial administrations. Issues that stand out clearly are those on colonial policies and administration, boundary control and policing, taxation and labour. Attention has also been given to the 1929 World Crisis, World War Two and their effects on boundary movements.

Because they shared a common boundary, British and French administrations co-operated with each other some times but at other times, their closeness and boundary administrative policies generated friction between them. Chapter four examines the existing levels of co-operation between both administrations over boundary functions as well as the problems encountered by both. While British and French administrators exchanged official visits and held across-border meetings to seek common solutions for the problem of prohibited immigrants for example, increased co-operation was hampered by differences in their political systems, languages and currencies. The chapter closes with a description of the border zone as an area of high risk, constant mobility and terrorism.

How then did the people react to this boundary and why? This forms the core of chapter five. It was because of the traumatic experience the border peoples had that they ultimately rejected the boundary. This rejection took various forms, from the writing of petitions to the UN against the boundary, through crossing the boundary without an official pass to destruction of boundary landmarks. Political

parties also called for the removal of the boundary and the reunification of both Cameroons. Meanwhile border groups maintained close relations across the boundary and turned border zone into an opportunity zone. The struggle for reunification of British and French Cameroons took its roots from the division of the territory between the British and the French.

Chapter six explores the Anglo-French boundary issue and the reunification drive. The chapter builds up from the contribution of border people to the search for reunification, and the part played by the British administration and the UN in shaping the political history of the territory. Discussions on the Cameroons boundary problems were continued at Pan-African conferences that were held from 1920 to the early 60s. This lengthy chapter brings Cameroons boundary and reunification problem into a wider forum where French colonial policy and colonial boundaries were condemned. Chapter seven which concludes this study states that border administration as conceived and outlined by the colonial administrations was however effective while it lasted but it was faced with a lot of resistance from the divided groups who were traumatised by the presence of the boundary. The Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary was a barrier to increased co-operation among the gateway or border people. This study reveals that both colonial administrations made efforts at repairing the divisions caused by the boundary. Of equal importance is the observation made in the study that the Anglo-French boundary was not solely a negative feature for it also provided opportunities for border groups.

CHAPTER TWO

THE MAKING OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH INTER-CAMEROONS BOUNDARY, 1916-1939

This chapter is focused on the making of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary from 1916 when the boundary was drawn by the British and the French to 1939 when the Second World War broke out and put to a halt all works of boundary demarcation in Cameroon. Initially, the chapter examines the pre-colonial socio-political and economic factors of group cohesion among the border groups in the area under study. This will enable the reader to have a clear picture of the particular groups concerned, where they were situated, how related they were to each other before the imposition of the boundary, how and why the boundary affected them the way it did. Factors of geographic cohesion like the sea, rivers, lakes, and mountains for instance remained areas of traditional divinities and homes of the ancestors of all the related groups.

The African traditional notion of a boundary was different from that which was later imposed by the Germans and the post-war colonial administrations. Unlike these two, the Germans in their division of the territory into Districts, endeavoured and to a great extent, succeeded in respecting traditional polities. After the Annexation of the territory, the German administration started off with the exploration of the interior and consolidation of their power. It was because of this early contact with the people (the Germans met with resistance in some areas) that the German District boundaries respected for the most part existing indigenous polities. These new boundaries were drawn probably with the intention of creating convenient

administrative units. Most of the boundaries especially those over which the Anglo-French boundary was drawn lasted only to the defeat of the Germans.

With the expulsion of the Germans from Kamerun,¹ the British and the French occupied the territory. The French proposed a Condominium and a common formula for partition both of which were unworkable due to differences in administration and ambitions. One of the highlights of this chapter is the correspondences and talks between the British and the French governments as they scrambled for this lost German colony rich in human and natural resources. After claims and counter-claims by both governments, a compromise was reached and a Land Commission was set up to work out the details. The joint Boundary Commission that was formed took care of the demarcation of the boundary as agreed by the experts of both Governments.

This chapter further discusses the various stages of boundary demarcation in view of exposing the difficulties faced by the Land Commission which were usually topographical, climatical, economical, cultural, tribal and most of all human. From 1916 when the Picot line was drawn (provisional line of partition), it was not until 1922 that an accepted boundary was arrived at and its demarcation started in 1937 from the coast and was halted in 1939 on Mount Manenguba when the Second World War broke out. There is a need to be asserted here that the Anglo-French boundary in the Cameroons thus delimited and demarcated planted the seeds of division among border groups.

A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF BORDER GROUPS

Before discussing the events that led to the partition, it is important to explore the pre-colonial socio-cultural and economic relations of the border groups in the area under study. This would hopefully enable the reader to have a better understanding of

¹ The word Kamerun refers to Cameroon under German administration from 1884 to 1914.

the effects of the division and the reaction of the divided people. The ethnic groups in the area under study are the Duala, Bakweri, Balondo, Bakossi, Mbo, Mungo and the Balong. These groups are found around the coast, in the Mounjo Valley and on the slopes of Mounts Kupe, Fako, Nlonako and Manenguba. They are bounded to the North by the Bamileke, to the East by the Bassa, to the West by the Bayangs and tribes of South Eastern Nigeria and to the South by the Atlantic Ocean. They are Bantu people. Edwin Ardener points out the strong linguistic inter-comprehension that exists particularly among the Bakweri, Duala and the Bakossi while Irene Dugast, Jean-Claude Barbier and Jacques Champaud who group the Bakossi with their Eastern neighbours speak of very close cultural and linguistic ties between the Bakossi, Mbo and the Balong.²

The majority of these ethnic groups share a common ancestry; common traditional rites and they live in close geographic proximity with a high level of linguistic inter-comprehension.³ According to their traditions of origin, the Bakossi, Balondo, Balong and Mbo shared the same ancestor, *Ngoe*, who lived on the summit of Mount Manenguba.⁴ Due to increased population and land disputes among the children, there were frequent clashes among his sons leading to civil wars as in the case of the Bakossi and their Bafaw neighbours. As a result of mutual assistance in these wars, some of the groups developed close ties; examples are the Mbo and the

² Edwin Ardener, *Coastal Bantu of Cameroon*. London: International African Institute, 1956, pp.33-36. Irene Dugast. *Inventaire Ethnique du Sud-Cameroun*. Yaounde: Institut Français d'Afrique Noire, 1949 p.23. Jean-Claude Barbier and Jacques Champaud, *Manjo et le Mounjo Central. Introduction à une étude de l'immigration(Cameroun)*. Yaoundé: Institut de Sciences Humaines, 1980, p.29.

³ George Peter Murdock, *Africa: Its peoples and their culture history*. London: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc., 1959, p.12.

⁴ S. N. Ejedepang-Koge, *The Tradition of a people. Bakossi*. Yaounde: SO.P.E.CAM., 1986, pp.32-47.

Bakossi, the Balong, Balondo and the Bafaw. Colonial reports record the various versions of traditions and settlement patterns of these ethnic groups.⁵

The riverine Bakweri, Mungo and Duala groups share very close historical and cultural ties with the Balong. According to the Victoria Centenary Committee, they all migrated in groups from the northern confines of the Equatorial forest on the border between Nigeria and Cameroon and also from the Lake Chad basin to the sites of their present settlement, around the slopes and foot of Mount Fako.⁶ Due to population pressure, and the quest for new hunting grounds the Bakweri migrated further to the southwest. They clashed with the Balong whom they met on their way. The Mungo who formed the last group to migrate into the area are reported to have the same ancestor as the Duala, his name is *Sunamboke*.⁷ It is important to note here that all of these groups lived in the same geographical area and due to their proximity; they developed and maintained a great degree of group solidarity.

There are dominant relief features around the border area that had and still have a major place in the mythology, tradition and history of these border groups. For this reason the Bakweri, for example, believe that Mount Fako is the abode of their ancestral spirits and thus together with the Duala, they believe in and offer sacrifices to these ancestors as well as those of the Rivers Mouno and Wouri. An activity that frequently brought the Duala and the Bakweri closely together was the *Jengu* closed Association or Secret Society festival. This was a magico-religious ritual, which involved offering sacrifices and gifts to the water spirits. This was to ensure the well

⁵ Intelligence, assessment and re-assessment reports on the Bakossi, Balong, Balondo and the Mbo found at the National Archives Buea, Cameroon hereafter cited as N.A.B. Picture below (p. 78) shows some traditional house types that are common among the Mbo, Bakossi, Balondo and the Balong. I took most of the pictures in this work; my escorts and guides took a few others.

⁶ Victoria Centenary Committee, *Victoria: Southern Cameroons 1858-1958* Victoria: Basel Mission Book Depot, 1958, p.11.

⁷ Assessment report on the Mungo Riverine District, Victoria Division, 1922, File no. 247/134/Ag 5, NAB.

being of all in the group and to bring good luck and fecundity. Lovett Elango points out that one of the most important functions of the Association was that it was a vital cultural link between the Duala and their kinsmen the Bimbians.⁸ Verkijika Fanso in his thesis throws more light on this by saying that the Bakweri and the Duala groups mingled in the riverine districts of the Mounjo River with the Mungo group, and frequently organised traditional wrestling matches and canoe races, and the competitions were sponsored by the various groups long before the boundary was imposed.⁹

The Balong who are their immediate neighbours inland hold the River Mounjo as the home of their ancestors and together with the Duala, Balondo and the Bakossi fish in its waters and offer sacrifices in it to appease the ancestral spirits. According to their myth of origin, the Balondo, are said to have come from the north of Mount Nlonako, at the confines of Mount Manenguba. To this date, that area has been considered as the abode of their ancestors.¹⁰ In the Bakossi country, Mounts Kupe and Manenguba have remained places of veneration and offering. Mount Kupe, for example, is seen by the Bakossi and the Mbo as the seat of endless conferences between the living and the dead to enhance or limit the fertility of the land and the living annually. The twin lakes on Mount Manenguba called the "male" (smaller but more powerful) and the "female" lakes are imbued with special powers. It is for this reason that sacrifices on the "male" lake were and are still performed by the designated sons of the offspring of the ancestor who are located on either side of the

⁸ Lovett Elango, "Britain and Bimbia in the Nineteenth Century 1833-1878: A study in Anglo-Bimbia trade and diplomatic relations", Ph.D. thesis, Boston University, 1974, pp.26-27. The Bimbians like the Isubu, Wovea and Bambuko are regarded here as Bakweri groups by extension.

⁹ Fanso, "Trans-frontier relations", p.176.

¹⁰ Assessment Report on the Balong, Kumba Division, 1922, NAB.

boundary. The grassy plain on Mount Manenguba called "Ebouh" is considered by the local groups to be the home of the ancestors of the Bakossi, Mbo, Balondo and the Balong.¹¹

These geographical factors of cohesion also reflected a strong intra-group solidarity in their economic activities. Fishing, carving and weaving were the major occupations of all the groups especially the Duala, Mungo and the Bakweri. These groups did seasonal fishing on the River Moungo and its tributaries with no restriction as to where each of them could fish. With the inland Mbo and Bakossi, fishing was done by some specific clans who were located around the navigable portions of River Moungo and its tributaries. Catches were sold in markets open to and frequented by all who were to be affected by the border.

Besides fishing, farming was also an important activity undertaken by all the groups especially the Mbo, the Bakossi and the Balong. This is an area of volcanic mountains and thus very rich in volcanic soils which are good for planting. These three inland groups usually planted food crops like cocoyams, plantains, bananas, grains, vegetables and fruits. Due to the presence of the equatorial rain forest, which contains a variety of game, reptiles, birds and insects, the bulk of the people also hunted. It is important to note here that because the forest, waters, sky and the land belonged to the community, they all shared what they got from these "gifts of nature". There were intra-group exchanges of the various products on specific market days. For example the coastal Duala, Bakweri and Mungo would attend common markets like the Mudeka, Loum, Tombel and Nkongsamba markets to exchange their products (usually fish, and later, products they bought from European traders at the coast like tobacco, spirits wines and beers, gunpowder and cloth) with those of their inland

¹¹ Pictures below (p.79) show the lakes on Mount Manenguba.

brothers (food crops, smoked meat, elephant tusks and skins). For this reason, it was common to see a person from Moujouka, Balong, carry his products all the way to Tombel, (about 50km), to exchange or sell to his Bakossi brothers.

Closely tied to these geographical and economic factors of group cohesion were socio-cultural and political factors of group cohesion. Traditional markets, which took place once in every ten days, were both economic and social institutions for all of the groups. People sent messages on market days, thus a person could leave Loum (Bakossi) to go to market at Bangem (a distance of about 60km) mainly because he intended to send a message to a relation in Mboassoum (Mbo). These crisscross movements were also undertaken for purposes of marriages, big cultural ceremonies and political exigencies. The Duala and the Mongo for example who trace their ancestry to the Isuwu, the Wovea and the Bakweri, intermarry and attend the same traditional ceremonies like the *Ngondo*. This annual traditional obligation pulled all the kinsmen together irrespective of their location. Like the *Ngondo*, magico-religious rituals like the *Jengu/Liengu* involved sacrifices and gifts to the water spirits and were associated with good fishing and all kinds of luck.¹² There were also birth and death celebrations, which brought these peoples together irrespective of their location. Elango says that the initiation rites of these secret societies often lasted several days and involved repeated feasting and dancing; one of the most important functions that the *Jengu served* was a vital cultural link between the Bimbians and their Duala kinsmen.¹³ The *Liengu* of the Bakweri was exclusively female but served the same functions as that of the Duala. The Balong who settled on both banks of the River Mounjo trade and intermarry with the Bakossi, Bakweri, Mongo and the

¹² Elango, *Britain and Bimbia in the nineteenth Century*, pp.26-27.

¹³ Ibid.

Douala. They also had a variety of secret societies whose activities attracted attendance from the neighbouring groups; these societies included the *Nyangwe*, *Botam*, *Ekumba* and the *Maloba* for the women.¹⁴ These secret or closed associations encouraged and maintained close relations between the groups who were cut by the border. The Bakossi for example had the *Ahon* secret society, which played political and moral functions in the society, and when it staged its dance, the Bakossi and the Mbo alike gathered to participate and watch. The frequency of the *Ahon* dance resulted in frequent movements of ethnic Bakossi and other kin groups to and from the border zone.

Other significant closed associations, which cut across these groups and demanded participation or attendance from them were the *Male/Mall*, *Mwankum* and the *Ngwe*. These associations, the belief systems, economic and socio-political organizations of all these groups necessitated people travelling widely for the purposes of social visits, arranging marriages, attending and participating in traditional ceremonies and also for trade and sometimes for war.¹⁵ These were the needs that the border peoples expressed and continued to express before the imposition of the first colonial administration.

German colonial administration in Kamerun (1884-1916) was a preparatory phase for it prepared the scene and the minds of the borderland peoples for foreign administrative intervention and implantation. It is not intended here to narrate the story of German annexation and rule in their entity. The focal issue here is to highlight the fact that the Germans in their administration of Kamerun, endeavoured

¹⁴ *Assessment Report on the Balong District, Victoria Division, File no. Ag 20/1920, NAB.*

¹⁵ *Assessment Report on the Bakossi, Ninong, Elung tribes of Kumba Division. File No.Ac3 1922,N.A.B.*

and succeeded for the most part to respect traditional limits. Also, they administered Kamerun as a single political unit, a situation that only lasted with their rule.¹⁶

The German colonial administrative apparatus in Cameroon took off by creating garrisons of troops at critical points as protection against numerous attacks on their trade. Military control later gave way to civil rule and large administrative Districts or Bezirke were created called Bezirksamtmaner.¹⁷ The important point here is that the division of these Districts respected the traditional groups as much as possible. This explains why amongst the twenty six Districts created, the Douala District with Headquarters at Douala comprised the Duala, the Bakossi, Balondo and the Balong; the Dschang and Bare Districts with HQs at Dschang and Bare respectively took in the Mbo; and finally the Victoria District with HQs at Victoria (Present day Limbe) administered the Bakweri and the related groups. All District boundaries were traversed by everybody and at all times with no restriction on movement by the German Government. In this way, the border peoples kept and maintained their group coherence. Before the Germans could carry out effective development in Kamerun, the First World War broke out and lasted from August 1st 1914 to February 20th 1916 when they were expelled from Cameroon.

THE ISSUE OF THE CONDOMINIUM AND A FORMULA FOR PARTITION

After the surrender of Douala, national differences and the ambitions of the Allied Powers became important. It is in the light of their ambitions that the provisional partition of Kamerun can be understood. British ambitions according to Osuntokun were to regain all the territories she lost to Germany by default during the

¹⁶ For a detail discussion on German administration in the Cameroons, see, Harry Rudin, *Germans in the Cameroons 1884-1914. A case study in modern imperialism*. New York:Greenwood Press Publishers, 1968.

¹⁷ Ibid. p.148. German Districts boundaries for the most part regrouped people of the same ethnic groups and were flexible and permeable.

partition and delimitation of boundaries between 1882 and 1894 while France never forgot the cession of territories in French Equatorial Africa (AEF) to Germany in 1911 and also wanted her empire to stretch from Algiers to Brazzaville.¹⁸ The Anglo-French conquest of Kamerun was mounted in spite of the colonial rivalries between the two Allied powers and resulted in conflicting interests. These as outlined by Victor Julius Ngoh were bound to hinder effective, smooth collaboration between the two powers.¹⁹ Poor collaboration was apparent in the differences that arose in the adoption and proclamation of the principles of a joint Anglo-French administration or Condominium. While Lovett Elango speaks of a mooted but eventually rejected Condominium, Adamou Ndam Njoya and Madiba Essiben say that an Anglo-French joint rule took place in Cameroon from the start of hostilities to the end of the war.²⁰

On the British side, the Foreign Office disagreed with the Colonial Office over the issue of the Condominium. In the event that General Charles McPherson Dobell, the commander of British forces in the Cameroons died or left, the CO wanted the next in command to be British; saying that such an officer should be senior to any French officer in the Cameroons even if his rank was achieved by temporary promotion. The CO also agreed that the pay, allowances and the other expenses of maintaining troops should fall on the government, which the troops served. Moreover, they argued that "general expenses" of governments, so far as they were not covered by revenue and receipts, should be divided in a proportion relative to the

¹⁸ Akinjide Osuntokun, *Nigeria in the First World War*. London: Longman Group Limited, 1979, p.206.

¹⁹ Victor Julius Ngoh, *History of Cameroon since 1800*. Limbe: Pressbook, 1996, p.128.

²⁰ Lovett Elango, *The Anglo-French Condominium in Cameroon 1914-1916: History of a misunderstanding*. Limbe: Navi-Group publication, 1987, p.10. L. Z Elango, "The Anglo-French 'Condominium' in Cameroon, 1914-1916: The myth and the reality", *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 18,4(1985):657-673. Adamou Ndam Njoya, *Le Cameroun dans les Relations Internationales*. Paris: R.Pichon et R.Durand Auzias, 1976, pp.83-89. Madiba Essiben, "La France et la redistribution des territoires au Cameroun (1914-1916)", *Afrika Zamani* (12,13,December 1981): 41.

eventual division between the two governments. The CO lastly suggested that areas adjacent to the Nigerian border and those of the Eastern and South Eastern borders be administered by the adjacent colonial governments. The French government rejected these conditions; it was for this reason that the proposed Condominium was laid to rest. After elaborating the reasons for the inapplicability and rejection of the Condominium, Ngoh concludes, in line with William Roger Louis, that the suggested Condominium was abandoned without any serious trial by February 21, 1916.²¹

Like the Condominium, the French first raised the issue of a common formula for partition. At the start of the Allied campaigns in the Cameroons, Lewis Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies (until 1915) privately made it known to Sir Frederick Dealtry Lugard, the Governor General of Nigeria, that he had assumed that practically the whole of the territory would go to France. He believed that in return for this "generosity", Britain would demand the whole of Togoland and the French colony of Dahomey so that British possessions could stretch uninterrupted from the Gold Coast to Nigeria.²² In case this plan failed, Harcourt's alternative, as indicated in his private correspondence to Lugard, was that Britain should give up her share of Togoland in exchange for the French half of the Condominium in the New Hebrides plus some pieces of the Cameroons, especially, Victoria, Buea and Mount Cameroon.²³ Lugard suggested that at the close of the war, the Cameroons should be partitioned into two equal parts administered by the British and the French. Colonial Office indecision dragged on over the partition and the annexation of Douala.

²¹ Ngoh, *History of Cameroon*, pp.129-131. William Roger Louis, *Great Britain and Germany's lost colonies 1914-1919*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967, p.59. In effect there were three distinct zones; the Douala zone where the Condominium was nominal under British General Dobell; zone two consisted of the area uniquely conquered by the British under the command of Cunliffe and the last zone which was most of Cameroon, conquered by the French and under the command of General Aymerich.

²² Osuntokun, *Nigeria in the First World War*, p.210.

²³ Harcourt to Lugard, September 29th 1914, CO 583/28, PRO.

Douala fell to the Anglo-French forces under the command of Dobell by September 27, 1914, after which Lugard sent a telegram to Harcourt emphasising the importance of retaining this splendid naval fortress and coaling station.²⁴ He said that if Douala passed into foreign hands it would be a serious menace to British possessions and the South African Trade Route. Apart from strategic considerations, Douala had commercial value. From there, the British would be able to export rubber and other tropical products from the interior. Dobell and the Admiralty supported Lugard's view but indecision as to whether Douala and the rest of the Cameroons should go to France or not resulted in the Foreign Office taking up the matter with the French Government. This view about the importance of this part of Africa contradicts that of historians of European policy like Peter Yearwood who claim that leaders in the metropole seldom considered Africa important.²⁵ It is however also true that those officers on the spot who had a career to make could have wanted to impress the Home Governments by stressing the indispensability of certain portions of their new colonial conquests in Africa. This assertion about Douala could have been an exaggeration as well.

The French raised the issue of partition through claims of their military participation in the war. On March 19, 1915, the French declared that they supplied far more forces in the military campaigns in the Cameroons and were losing more men than the British.²⁶ The memorandum made two points clear: first, France had been left to conduct the more difficult and arduous operations to achieve victory in

²⁴ Lugard to Harcourt, 30th November 1914, CO 583/28, PRO. Also see Lugard's Report on his visit to Douala, in the same file.

²⁵ Interview with Peter Yearwood on April 10th, 1999 in London. Peter maintains that Britain did not have the same interest in Cameroon like the French. He however acknowledges that Harcourt did want Mount Cameroon as a hill station but Lugard did not for British territorial expansion was in the north but that was overridden when the Milner-Simon line was drawn.

²⁶ Osuntokun, *Nigeria in the First World War*, p.27. David Killingray says that in order to compensate for its demographic and thus military weakness against the Germans, the French embarked on an

Kamerun; and second, the French forces had covered a lot more ground in the conquest than the British. In making these claims, the French were obviously trying to lay the ground for their subsequent claim to a greater share of territory in Kamerun than the British.

The CO, furious with the French for claiming they were doing more fighting, compared it with the contribution of the British Navy which kept the colony cut off from fresh supplies of ammunition from Germany which was the deciding factor in tilting the balance of power in favour of the Allies. Dobell held that it was difficult to judge which side had the more arduous share of the fighting and pointed out that the naval factor also had to be taken into consideration. Besides this, Dobell said that the incidental and civil administrative expenses of the expeditions were also to be taken into account. This was of course because he knew that the naval and financial factors were more heavily borne by the British. From the end of 1915, Anglo-French correspondence was based on a common formula for partition. The fact that the British and French eventually went into negotiations and settled on a provisional partition of Cameroon in 1916 signalled the failure of the applicability of the joint administration.

BRITISH AND FRENCH NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE PARTITION OF KAMERUN

The Allies had no intention of returning to Germany any of her conquered colonies unless forced to do so. Germany was seen as being responsible for the war, which had cost the Allies so much blood and money. For Britain, a return of the Cameroons to Germany would have affected her image in Nigeria while the French

intensive conscription campaign, see Hew Strachan ed., *The Oxford illustrated history of the First World War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Hew Strachan's most complete and definitive study of the opening of the First World War, is now available in three paperback sections: *The outbreak of the First World War*; *Financing the First World War*; *The First World War in Africa*. All of the sections are published at Oxford and by the Oxford University Press in October 2004. Strachan's volume one, with the subtitle "To Arms", published in 2003 at Oxford by OUP, is more elaborate on the Kamerun campaigns.

wanted to keep the Cameroons on the grounds that her overseas possessions had proved to be such great assets in human and material terms during the war. The British government maintained that the German colonies could not be returned to Germany on humanitarian grounds for according to Lord Curzon, it could lead to renewed savagery and bloodshed as a result of vengeance on the "wretched natives" who had aided or abetted the cause of the Allies during the war.²⁷

Louis outlines more reasons for the Allied refusal to restore to Germany even the smallest of her colonies in Africa, Togoland.²⁸ If Germany was allowed to retain her colonies, she would splinter the developing system of communications of the British Empire. She would have not only a military base from which to menace all parts of the world, but also the resources of tropical Africa with which to outpace the Allies in industrial development. It was thought Germany would also have at her disposal the human material to build a huge "Black Army" especially as she would have created and purchased a Central African Empire -a Mittelafrika- stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. This would have been a base to paralyse Allied shipping and commerce, and also provided an extension of German influence to South America and Australia. There was also a general fear that it would have been easy for Germany to mobilize Black Africans in order to aid her conquest of the world.

The British government had little enthusiasm for territorial expansion into Kamerun. Peter Yearwood holds the view that the German colonies in West Africa - Kamerun and Togoland- were dismissed as being of little strategic or other value.²⁹

²⁷ Osuntokun, *Nigeria in the First World War*, p.27

²⁸ Louis, *Great Britain and Germany's lost colonies*, pp.2-5. These were general Allied reasons for not giving back to Germany her lost territories. They applied more to France than to Britain for the French kept on talking of consolidation and adjustment of territories, which meant that territorial expansion was more important to her than to the British.

²⁹ Peter Yearwood, "Maps lines and the making of modern Africa; the Northern Nigeria-Cameroons boundary 1885-1919", unpublished article, p. 52.

Yearwood substantiates his standpoint by saying that in April 1917, during the Sub Committee of the Imperial War Council/Cabinet; the issue of the German colonies was tabled. In reaction to that, Lloyd George maintained that the British were only taking the lost colonies to give back to Germany in case the war ended in a compromised peace.³⁰

When the war began, Harcourt wanted to retain only the area around Mount Cameroon, which was considered suitable for a sanatorium and a rest station for officials in West Africa.³¹ To Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, the Cameroons colony was expendable especially if giving it to the French would offset their suspicion that the British were collecting the colonial spoils while France bore the brunt of the war on the Western front. This suspicion was backed by the accusation made against Britain by the French Ambassador in London, Paul Cambon that, Britain had not always been sincere with France in its dealings in other areas like German East Africa. In a comprehensive memorandum Harcourt proposed, on the assumption that Britain was entitled to half of the Cameroons, but that she did not need or could not usefully occupy more than a quarter of it, that Britain would demand from France:

- a) their share of the Condominium in the New Hebrides
- b) their small settlement of Jibuti opposite Aden, which controls the mischievous arms traffic to Abyssinia and Central Africa.

He went on: To obtain this we can offer France:

- c) three-fourths of the Cameroons (instead of one half) *plus* our half share of Togoland,
- d) or, if we wish to retain all Togoland and acquire Dahomey, we can offer France *all* the Cameroons except Mount Cameroon and Douala.... Alternatively we might surrender to France *our* share of the New Hebrides Condominium as compensation, with nearly the whole

³⁰ Interview with Peter Yearwood, April 10 1999, in London.

³¹ See the various letters of correspondence between Lugard and Harcourt on this subject during the months of September and November 1914, Co 583/20, PRO.

of the Cameroons, for our possession of Togoland and Dahomey.³²

Eventually, a committee was established to determine the British position in the negotiations with the French.

THE PROVISIONAL PARTITION OF 1916

Meanwhile in Britain, some politicians held that Douala and the rest of Kamerun should go to the French until the end of the War.³³ This it was hoped would prevent the French from participating in the East African campaign and claiming part of the spoils. Grey had strongly argued that London should inform Paris that Britain would make a great sacrifice and agree to their having all of Kamerun on condition that the French dropped any demand to take part in the conquest of East Africa. Bonar Law, who was not convinced that the French would accept this bargain, stressed the need of French assurance and said it would be better to have a Condominium and leave the question of partition until after the war.³⁴ On the suggestion that the French might not want all of Kamerun, the British were willing to keep what the French did not want irrespective of what it included. It was on the basis of this suggestion that a proposal was made that when Strachey of the Colonial Office and Lancelot Oliphant of the Foreign Office met with the French representatives, the French should be asked to table their demands without being told of the decision of the British government. This meant that London would therefore

³² Louis, *Great Britain and Germany's lost colonies*, pp.59-60.

³³ On February 22, 1916, an inter-departmental committee composed of representatives of the Foreign Office, Admiralty, Military intelligence, the War and Colonial Offices met to discuss how best to deal with the French on the question of the partition of the Kamerun. The committee was made up of liberals like the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mckenna, the Minister of Munitions, Lloyd George, and Bonar Law, the Secretary of State for colonies who succeeded Harcourt.

³⁴ Mckenna and Lloyd George wanted to be generous and surrender the entire colony to France, while Bonar Law felt that some bargaining might be done. The Admiralty argued strongly for the retention of the coastal area north and west of Douala (Balfour was First Lord of the Admiralty at the time and Admiral Jackson was no. 2 in the Admiralty). Bonar Law's insistence on bargaining ended this major high level of debate at the time over the future of Kamerun.

keep whatever Paris failed to ask for. By the time the decision was taken "to give the whole of the Cameroons to the French," Louis says a stratagem was also devised to salvage something at least of the territory.³⁵ The stratagem worked for the French representative Picot did not ask for all of the Cameroons.³⁶

The French bluff paid off

Georges Picot, the diplomat and negotiator, and Cambon, both very excited about the partition, declared that Paris wanted to take part in the war in East Africa but that this desire would no longer be felt if Douala was conceded. Picot stressed the domestic pressure on the home government and insisted that unless claims were met in West Africa, France would also claim a share in German East Africa. Yearwood, who calls this French statement a bluff, said it was very transparent and could easily have been called, but the War Committee gave way to it too readily.³⁷

In their lust to retain German East Africa, the British virtually threw the whole of Cameroon at the feet of the French. Consequently, when Strachey and Oliphant met Picot on February 23rd, he was asked to set out the French desiderata. Picot, who had very little knowledge of Africa, chose a War Office map of 1:2,000,000, pointed to a spot to the east of Victoria on the coast and another to the south of Yola arc, and began to join these two points in a casual way with a blue pencil.³⁸ The French colonial party was so overwhelmed that it did not occur to them that they could have had all of the Cameroons if they had only asked for it. Strachey

³⁵ Louis, *Great Britain and Germany's lost colonies*, p. 60.

³⁶ C.O. West African Confidential Print, 11 January, 1917, no. 1054, CAB 694/9, PRO.

³⁷ Yearwood, " 'In a casual way with a blue pencil' : British policy and the partition of Kamerun, 1914-1919". *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 27 (1993) p.223.

³⁸ Yearwood, " 'In a casual way with a blue pencil' ", p.225; C.O.649/9/9154; FO371, PRO. Maps below (pp. 80 and 81) show the various suggested divisions and possible concessions that could be considered by both administrations.

who did know about Kamerun managed to get the line drawn in such a way that Britain could have a narrow piece of territory. This British sphere was described by Lugard as “ an insignificant little strip that it was hardly worth reserving at all”.³⁹ According to this provisional boundary usually referred to as the “Picot Line”, France had 4/5 of Kamerun less the “Duck bill” which went to French Congo while Britain had 1/5 of the territory. The French portion was to be called Cameroun or French Cameroon while the British part was then styled British Cameroons.

On March 1,1916, the British Under Secretary of the State for the Colonies sent a telegram to Dobell on the delimitation of the British and French spheres.⁴⁰ It was on the basis of this telegram that the British and the French agreed to sign an accord for partition following the Picot Line. This agreement, usually referred to as the London Accord of March 4th, demarcated the British and the French spheres on paper.⁴¹ An important aspect of the London Accord was that both parties were given the possibility of slightly modifying the partition line in order to avoid dividing villages, ethnic groups, plantations and farmlands as indicated in article six of the March 1 telegram. On March, 17,1916, Dobell issued Proclamation No.10 which took effect from April 1, ratifying the March 4th Accord. By this Proclamation, all the territory to the west of the Picot Line was to be administered by the British and that to the east by the French. Unlike the French, the British appeared to have had a genuine desire to prevent the partition of ethnic groups and villages as well as reuniting those

³⁹ Osuntokun, *Nigeria in the First World War*,p.230. Map below (p.82) shows the Anglo-French provisional boundary after World War One.

⁴⁰ Délimitation des zones Françaises et Anglaises. Telegram No.272 of March,I,1916, signed Bonar Law, APA 10813,National Archives Yaounde, hereafter cited as NAY. Engelbert Mveng. *Histoire du Cameroun*, Paris: Présence Africaine, 1963,p.370. In 1986, a revised edition of the work was published in two volumes.

⁴¹ Mveng, *Histoire du Cameroun*, p.370. A copy of this London Accord also called the Bonar Law Accord is annexed.

that had been separated by the Anglo-German boundary of 1913.⁴² Slight modifications of this Picot Line were obvious for the Moisel Ankodat map that was used to draw the provisional line was full of errors. It gave the wrong names for places and rivers and it was drawn on a very small scale of 1:300,000.⁴³ In spite of these shortcomings, the Picot Line remained the basis of subsequent negotiations. Although the partition was formally provisional, a major revision was unlikely much to the dissatisfaction of the British trading companies on the West African coast, the officials on the spot and the Colonial Office. Also, the clearly expressed wishes of the Duala and the other divided ethnic groups, like those of the Ewes in Togoland were summarily overridden.

FROM THE PROVISIONAL TO THE FINAL PARTITION OF THE CAMEROONS, 1916-1922

As regards the provisional boundary, it was pointed out that since the line had been hurriedly drawn, it would be necessary to make a good many adjustments, for which a boundary commission would be required. Meanwhile, a second phase of negotiations opened in Paris on March 6, 1919 in which both parties made further claims and counterclaims. Lord Alfred Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies represented Britain while Monsieur Henry Simon, the French Colonial Secretary, represented France. Simon told Milner that France would be very accommodating in

⁴² Victor Julius Ngoh, "Anglo-French rivalry over the Misselele Plantations, 1916-1920: A case study in the economic motives for the partition of Africa", *Journal of Third World Studies*, XI,2(Fall 1995);277. Also see J.R.V.Prescott, "The evolution of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary" *The Nigerian Geographical Journal*, 5, 2,(December 1962):104. A copy of Dobell's Proclamation is annexed.

⁴³ Ngoh, "Anglo-French rivalry", p. 278.

the negotiations on the Cameroons since she in any case had 9/10 of the territory, but that he could not adopt the same policy on Togoland.⁴⁴

France wanted Britain to cede to her a piece of territory near Dschang which would be on the extension of the railway line running northwards to Bare. France also wanted the old German road from Douala to Fouban through Kotscha to Garoua as well as the Sultanate of Banyo and the towns of Buea, Tiko and Misselele on the lower Mungo (Moungo).⁴⁵ Originally, as Ngoh says, the Picot Line cut through the Misselele Plantations with a smaller portion on the French side; but with further modifications, the British eventually took over all the plantations resulting in Anglo-French rivalry over the area.⁴⁶

British claims were for a readjustment of the boundary in the south in order to permit the frontier to coincide with the mouth of the River Mungo and to run from there across the Bimbia flats. In the north, they wanted all of German Borno or Dikwa for a small strip of it was left in the French sphere by the 1916 partition. Britain also wanted the Mandara Emirate, parts of the Emirates of Kotscha, Lere and Dodo, which had been cut off by the provisional boundary and placed in the French sphere.⁴⁷ In exchange for all of these claims, Britain was willing to surrender the whole Emirate of Banyo to France, part of which was in her sphere. The French agreed to give the whole of Dikwa to Britain but rejected the demand for the Mandara Emirate. The French insisted that the road from the south to Mora passed through parts of the

⁴⁴ Strachey's minute of meeting of Lord Milner and Monsieur Simon, March, 7, 1919, F.O.608/215/4059, PRO.

⁴⁵ Rectifications éventuelles de la ligne de démarcation des zones d'administration, en vue d'un partage définitif du Cameroun, APA 10813, NAY, pp. 1-2. Also see Ngoh, "Anglo-French rivalry", p.278.

⁴⁶ For details on this rivalry, see Ngoh, "Anglo-French rivalry", pp.273-299.

⁴⁷ Osuntokun, *Nigeria in the First World War*, p.283; Elango, *The Anglo-French Condominium*, pp.73-74.

Mandara Emirate. They also turned down the British demand for the former Adamawa possessions of the Lamido of Yola. In the south, it was only after much persuasion that Britain was given the Mungo River, which was a valuable means of transport between the coast and the plantations in the hinterland of the British sphere. France eventually secured most of Kotscha Emirate and Dschang District.⁴⁸

These negotiations lingered on through the duration of the Paris Peace Conference and were only completed in 1920 when Britain received a Mandate to continue administering the territory west of the agreed boundary, which for administrative purposes was regarded as an integral part of Eastern Nigeria.⁴⁹ This date contradicts that given by Osuntokun who says the Cameroons was not subjected to the Mandate system until July 20, 1922.⁵⁰ However, it is clear that the boundary negotiations lingered on until 1922 when the final adjustments were made and the final partition was given the sanction of international law. Some of the major factors that complicated these negotiations were: the difficulties created by the Picot line; the opposing claims of both countries; the fact that the Cameroons question was one of a host of unanswered post-war questions and the absence of an accurate map of the Cameroons. It was in the face of these major difficulties that boundary talks lingered on until 1922.

WEST AFRICAN NEGOTIATIONS AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE, January 1919 to January 1920

Between 1917 and 1918, the fate of the German colonies became a major issue among the Great Powers. Two major options were contemplated; the

⁴⁸ Dispatch of July 22, 1919, FO 608/215/11233, PRO.

⁴⁹ Victor Robert John Prescott, "Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary", *The evolution of Nigeria's International and Regional Boundaries: 1861-1971*, British Columbia Geographical Series, 13, Vancouver, Canada: Tantalus Research Limited, 1971, pp. 45-46.

⁵⁰ Osuntokun, *Nigeria in the First World War*, p. 284.



internationalisation or the annexation of the German colonies. In the midst of the conflicting views of both options, the South African Cabinet Minister General Jan Smuts, who had fallen for "the principle of self-determination" resulting from Woodrow Wilson's notion of "peace without annexation" and the fifth of the Fourteen Points, proposed the idea of a mandate. The mandate idea almost succeeded in reconciling the two irreconcilable proposals of annexation and internationalisation.

The British public was becoming sympathetic to President Wilson's pleas for a "peace without annexations" and the Russian revolutionaries' cry for "no annexations".⁵¹ For the British Government, it was necessary for the security of the Empire after the war to provide evidence of the wish of the local people to live under British rule. It was for this reason that the F.O. published the "atrocities Blue Books"⁵² which contained photographs of Africans hanged by the Germans and other atrocious acts against the "natives". All of this was designed to show that the "natives" could not help but be pro-British thereby giving the British the exclusive responsibility to protect them from German militarism. Andrew and Kanya-Forstner say that, at this point, while Britain was doing all this, the most important administrative issue for the French was not mandate but the right to raise black troops for even before the slaughter of the War, her population had been less than 2/3s that of Germany.⁵³

Irrespective of their different ambitions, the British and the French opened discussions about West Africa at the Paris Peace Conference in early March 1919. The problem was dealt with, in Milner's phrase, "out of court" and not as part of the

⁵¹ In 1917, the U.S. entry into the war and the Russian Revolution had an impact on the issue of whether or not Germany's colonies should be restored; they were both against any form of annexation of Germany's lost colonies.

⁵² Alleged ill-treatment of German subjects captured in the Cameroons can be read in C.O.649/2 and 6, PRO.

⁵³ Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p.191.

formal conference. It was on March 7, that Milner met with Simon to discuss the Cameroons and Togolands. Milner is said to have conducted these African negotiations at the Peace Conference without much reference to the C.O.; that is probably why the more important memoranda are to be found in the Milner Papers and not in the C.O. files.⁵⁴ The final settlement between Britain and France in the Cameroons was substantially the same as the provisional one of 1916.⁵⁵ Final negotiations held on July 10, 1919 ended up with the signing of the London Declaration or what is usually referred to as the Milner-Simon Agreement.

The Agreement recommended that experts of the two colonial ministries should work out the adoption of the boundary. Article 1 of the Anglo-French Declaration of July 10, thus appointed two officers one from each side, to head both commissions, made up of officials from Nigeria and the French Camerouns. Before the Cameroons was put under the League of Nations Mandates System in July 20, 1922, minor adjustments were made on the southern section of the boundary.⁵⁶ It is important to state here that both the French and the British appeared to be satisfied with the partition and left the rest of the task with the joint boundary Commission. In the opinion of Milner and Simon, the settlement was, as Elango says, "not a bad one" even though Britain appeared to be at a disadvantage.⁵⁷ Madiba Essiben says that the final settlement could not really be judged as a French victory because the British

⁵⁴ Louis, *Great Britain and Germany's lost colonies*, p.144.

⁵⁵ The Togoland negotiations were more acrimonious as M. Simon said, he wanted all of Togoland but they finally ended up dividing it-60% to Britain and 40% to France-based on the provisional boundary.

⁵⁶ Boundary adjustments that were made to minimize local hardships caused by the provisional division are discussed later. However, such subsequent delimitations were greatly hampered by the inadequate information on local conditions, thus, they did not prove satisfactory. Commission Anglo-Française de délimitation, letter no 65 of 17/2/1939, Plantation de Ngol, APA 11383,NAY. The entire boundary description is annexed.

⁵⁷ Elango, *The Anglo-French Condominium*, p75.

attached very little interest to this part of the continent.⁵⁸ Britain conceded most of France's requests in the Cameroons because of her desire to have a preponderant position in east, southern Africa and the Middle East. Also, in accommodating France, Britain did not have much to fear from France, which was not an aspiring naval power, as Germany had been. They were much more interested in improving their Nigerian colony.

The partition did not go down well with the Nigerians and the British officials on the spot. The Emir of Yola could hardly contain his resentment of the partition, which robbed him of the territories of his forefathers, which has been promised him by the British officials during the war. Lugard felt the Mandatory Power should have been made to accept that " In all former territories where any arbitrary boundary has been fixed since the year 1885, intersecting tribal units as well as defined and fairly homologous territory under the rule of a recognised chief, the original boundaries shall be restored."⁵⁹ In saying so, he was no doubt thinking about Yola for he had very much wanted to fulfil his promise to the Emir; that is why Lugard recommended that as recompense, the Emir be given £250 by the Imperial Government. Osuntokun rightly judged this sum as being too small considering that the Emir had spent some thousands of pounds in the war in the hope of getting back his territory at the end.⁶⁰

THE DEMARCATION OF THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH INTER-CAMEROONS BOUNDARY 1937-1939.

Aware of their inadequate knowledge of local circumstances, and following the recommendation of the Milner-Simon Agreement, a mixed demarcation

⁵⁸ Essiben, " La France et la redistribution des territoires", p. 52.

⁵⁹ Osuntokun, *Nigeria in the First World War*, p.285.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.231.

commission or a Boundary/Land Commission was appointed and sent to the area with some authority to deviate from the line delimited on paper. This commission, which had the task of surveying and demarcating the boundary on the ground while taking account of the local circumstances sometimes, deviated from the agreed boundary. This they did in order to enable the border groups to have access to their land or water, or to avoid splitting villages into two, and also to conform to the configurations of the landscape. Modifications recommended by such commissions were of a minor nature but they nevertheless constituted an attempt to take local conditions into account and to diminish the hardships caused by the boundary.

Representatives of both administrations held a series of joint cross-border meetings from January 1926 to May 1940 regarding the demarcation of the boundary. These meetings, also called protocols, showed a close Anglo-French relationship at the time, in the domain of boundary demarcation and administration.

JOINT CROSS-BORDER MEETINGS

On January 30, 1926, Ripert, the administrative head of the Circonscription of Dschang (French Cameroon) and G.B. Williams, D.O. Kumba Division (British Cameroons) met and drew up a protocol concerning the provisional boundary.⁶¹ After that, Williams and Reynaud, Head of the Nkongsamba Subdivision met and

⁶¹ James Godfrey C. Allen was initially assisting Firth but he later assumed control of the commission and was appointed full commissioner for the British. He took over from Firth as the British Commissioner on the Anglo-French Cameroon boundary commission from 1937 when both administrations started the demarcation of the boundary to 1939 when the outbreak of the Second World War grounded all works to a halt. The protocols defining the various sections of the boundary should be regarded as progress reports, the finality of which in some cases had to await the advance of the survey party and the engineer in charge of the placement of the boundary pillars.

carried out investigations about possibilities of providing the requisite accuracy of boundary definition.⁶²

A further reconnaissance was carried out and a protocol drawn up on May 30, 1927, by Peretti, the French assistant administrator at Nkongsamba, and Roques, Surveyor in the employment of the Cameroons Lands Office. In July 1929, Carpenter, the Assistant D.O. Kumba and Roques met and carried out a reconnaissance of the section of the boundary between Loum-Ngab road and Mount Kupe. Their work was followed up by a protocol signed on January 26, 1930, between Harris, D.O. Kumba and Brison, chief of the Mbanga Subdivision. During this period, Harris held meetings also with his French collaborator Seyert, Assistant to the Head of the Nkongsamba Region.

The first of a series of eleven joint meetings of specialists and commissioners of the Anglo-French Land Commission held at Tiko (British Cameroons) on December 7, 1937. Present at the meeting and representatives of their respective governments were the British Boundary Commissioner and Senior Resident Nigerian administrative service, O. W. Firth and the French Land Commissioner and *administrateur-en-chef des colonies*, R. Dugast. Also present was J. G. C. Allen, District Officer Nigerian administrative service, Assistant Boundary Commissioner for the British.⁶³ Both governments through their representatives decided to begin the demarcation in that same month. Still in the spirit of collaboration, both commissioners met the following day, December 8, 1937 at Tiko and drew up a

⁶² *Annual Report on the Cameroons Province for the year 1926*, CO649/31 PRO. For more on the protocols from 1926 to 1930 see Anglo – French Boundary Commission. - *Protocols* -, Qf/91937/4, NAB.

⁶³ Anglo-French Boundary Commission. - *Protocols* - various. Cameroons Province, December 7, 1937, Qf/a/1937/4, p.5, NAB.

second protocol.⁶⁴ The major objective this time was to inspect, survey and fix the line of demarcation on the southernmost section of the boundary. From Tiko, the next joint meeting was held at Mbanga (French Cameroon) on January 29, 1938 between Allen and Dugast. Before this protocol was drawn up, both representatives had met on January 24 at a point along the boundary called Mongo Beach (British side) or Mundame (French side). The objective was to carry out a reconnaissance along the course of the Mounjo River, precisely between the mouth of the Mounjo and its confluence with the Ediminjo stream. Protocol number four was drawn up on March 24, 1938 on board the Nigerian vessel "Myrtle".

When Firth and Dugast met, it was to inspect and carry out some major rectifications in respect of the river sections of the boundary.⁶⁵ The British and the French administrations agreed that both commissioners could meet and decide on when work should cease. It was to this effect that Firth, Dugast and their technicians held a meeting at Kumba (British Cameroons) on April 21, 1938 at which they decided to stop work by the end of the month. The reasons given for the ending of work were that some members of both commissions had completed their tours of service and were due leave; the very heavy rains would slow the pace of work; the necessity to co-ordinate the preliminary work and to effect an overhaul of the instruments and materials.⁶⁶ On the April 22, 1938, a fifth protocol was drawn up at Kumba between Allen (Firth was unavoidably absent) and Dugast in continuation of protocols number three and four. In the course of their work some border people of

⁶⁴ Anglo-French Boundary Commission, - *Protocols* -, December 8, 1937, p.6, NAB.

⁶⁵ Anglo-French boundary commission - *Protocols* - Victoria Division, March 24th, 1938, Qf/a/1938/6, p.2, NAB.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.33, NAB.

the Kumba locality asked not to be deprived of their traditional rights on both sides of the Mongo as a result of the boundary demarcation.⁶⁷ Faced with this protest, both administrations through their representatives collaborated to formulate some recommendations in anticipation of the concurrence of their two home governments. They both recommended “the right of free transit should be assured in the territorial waters of the two countries under Mandate to all users, including natives, on a footing of complete equality with the indigenous inhabitants”.⁶⁸ Also, they assured reciprocal fishing rights to protected persons of both territories without any obligation to reside or to pay direct tax in the respective territories.

On the same day, April 22, 1938, two other protocols were drawn up at Kumba. Allen and Dugast drew up protocol number 6 in respect of the section of the boundary from the confluence of the Ediminjo and Mongo Rivers to the main Lum-Ngab road. Firth and Owen drew up protocol number seven at the same place. These meetings closed the season of 1937-38. It was arranged that the first meeting of the Commission in the second season would be held at Nkongsamba (French Cameroon) on November 1, 1938. The eighth protocol was drawn up at the Government House Douala (French Cameroon) by Dugast and Allen with the assistance of technicians. There were H. Isherwood, Senior Surveyor, Nigeria Lands and Surveys Department; J. P. Cunningham, Surveyor, Nigeria Lands and Surveys Department; G. Cardet and P. Bossavy, Captains of Colonial Infantry commissioned by the military geographical service and Combe of the British Cameroons civil service, secretary.⁶⁹ The report drawn up on November 25, 1938, was to advance the work of demarcation from the Tombel-Loum road to Mount Kupe. Still within the framework of cross-border meetings, the next meeting took place

⁶⁷ Anglo-French boundary commission – *Protocols* -Victoria Division, March 24th, 1938, Qf/a/1938/6, p.37, NAB.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Anglo-French boundary commission – *Protocols* -, Victoria Division, Protocol No. 8, November 25th, 1938, Qf/a/1938/6, p.3, NAB.

in the British Cameroons, at Kumba on March 10, 1939, between Allen and Dugast. The major objective of the number 9 protocol was to demarcate the section of the boundary as far North as Mount Manenguba. The next protocol, number 10 was drawn up at Victoria on July 7, 1939 between Allen and Joseph Lenoir, chief administrator of colonies, representing the government of Cameroon under French Mandate. This was the last meeting of the Commission in respect of the season 1938-1939, and was attended the French administrator, Dugast.⁷⁰ Both Commissioners agreed to respect the general principles laid down in protocol number 9 and arranged the first meeting of the third season to take place on October 20, 1939 at a place to be fixed later. On May 18, 1940, the Commissioners met at Victoria (British Cameroons) for the final meeting of the boundary Commission the activities of which had been interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War.⁷¹ Allen drew up this protocol with Georges Verges, chief administrator of colonies who acted as the French Land Commissioner, appointed by the French Government in place of the late Dugast. It was agreed by the two Commissioners that the object of this final meeting should be the preparation of a clear and detailed statement of the work done so far and the stage reached in the process of demarcation. This information they deemed would facilitate the resumption of work by any future commission.

It is recalled here that two boundary commissioners were appointed by the July 10 Declaration. For the British the commission was headed by Owen Watts Firth, a Senior Resident in the Nigerian Administrative Service and the French team was headed by Rene Dugast, the Chief Administrator of Colonies.⁷² Local personnel

⁷⁰ Anglo-French boundary commission- *Protocols* -, *Victoria Division*, protocol No. 10, July 7, 1939, p.1, NAB.

⁷¹ See *Protocol* No.11, p.1, May 18th 1940, NAB. This meeting took place during the war and shortly after the meeting France suffered defeat. After the fall of France in 1940, there were fears in French Cameroon of pro-Nazi regime and the establishment of a Vichy regime. Relationship with the administration of British Cameroons became tense and the boundary between both spheres was strictly controlled. By the end of August the Free French Movement staged a Coup d'Etat in French Cameroon which brought the territory into the war on the side of General De Gaulle.

⁷² Anglo-French Boundary. File No. 239, Qf/a (1920)2, p.14, NAB. The following members were chosen:

from the medical and security departments assisted both teams.⁷³ As the job progressed more members were added to this initial boundary commission on both sides. On the British side, by a letter of September 24, 1931,⁷⁴ G.B. Williams (DO) was recommended as boundary commissioner to be assisted by Denton Tweed. In August 1937 it was suggested that F.E. Tavener, a District Surveyor, should be made the senior survey officer for the British. For the French side, Captain Gardet a survey officer and the administrator Becq were added to the group, while Joseph Lenoir was acting in place of Dugast when he died in 1939.⁷⁵ These experts had to survey and demarcate the boundary.

The Surveyor-General of Nigeria, on the British side, made recommendations on the delimitation and demarcation of the boundary. This was because in French Cameroon, there were no civil or military personnel specialised in survey work, whereas there was a well-structured and experienced Survey Department in Nigeria with trained Nigerian technicians.⁷⁶ Their work was done along the lines of the delimitation experience in the Anglo-French mandated territory of Togoland. In a letter of July 8, 1931, from the Resident of Cameroons Province to the Governor of Yaounde, French Cameroons, it was stipulated that survey operations had to be conducted from the

O.W. Firth - Senior Resident, Boundary Commissioner; James Godfrey Colquhoun Allen - D.O, Assistant Commissioner. H. Isherwood - Senior Surveyor in-charge; J.P. Cunningham - Surveyor L.A. Smith - African Surveyor; J.A.Ume - African Surveyor; J.A. Brown - African Surveyor; J.R. Anganga Williams - African Surveyor; S.O. Emodi - African Surveyor. On the French side, the members were: René Dugast - Chief Administrator (Administrateur en Chef des colonies, Chevalier de la legion d'Honneur); Captain Bossavy - Head of Colonial infantry, geodesian helper and topographer (Le Capitaine d'Infanterie Coloniale, Officier topographe et aide géodesien, breveté technique du Service Geographique de L'Armée).

⁷³ Anglo-French boundary delimitation, File no. 124, Qf/a (1937) 6, p.103, N.A.B.

⁷⁴ Anglo-French Cameroons Boundary File No. 124 Vol. II, Qf/a (1932)1, NAB.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria Border", p.248

coast proceeding northwards.⁷⁷ This was to avoid the waste of time incurred by transferring operations from one section of the boundary to another and to facilitate the consecutive numbering and marking of the boundary pillars. The commission was to begin its work on December 1, 1932.

It was initially expected that the work would occupy four seasons of six months each in the south where the rainfall was heavy and two complete periods of twelve months each in the north. From the start it was clear that the work of surveying and demarcating would proceed more rapidly in the northern grassland zones than in the south. The gap between each cement pillar to be placed on the boundary on land necessarily differed from that on sea. While the distance between land pillars was two kilometres, on sea it was 10 kilometres probably because of the difficulty in planting these pillars in water.

On all boundary pillars the words "British-French Cameroons" or, at the discretion of the commission letters indicating those countries were inscribed on the sides corresponding to the territory of each country. Each pillar was marked by its serial number as indicated in the pictures below. In planting each pillar, a report was drawn up stating the nature of its construction and its serial number. Where possible, the commission gave a description of its position by compass bearings and any other data. Whenever the boundary followed any river or watercourse, the median line was taken as the boundary and pillars were placed on both banks of the river with the initials BC on the British side and CF on the French side and a serial number was engraved on the side facing the river.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ File No. 124, Qf/a (1937)6, p.36. Besides the fact that the French side was not ready financially to commence work, the British also seemed not to be enthusiastic enough to begin the demarcation process. Maybe this again was because the Cameroon question was not an important issue at the time.

⁷⁸ Such a system certainly took care of problems that might later arise in the future when a river might change its course. This was the case in the south-extreme portion of the Anglo-German boundary in Nigeria where the River Akpwayafe was used as the boundary. It was specified that should the river

Furthermore, as long as the work of demarcation lasted, the roads and rivers of both spheres were made accessible to member of both Commissions. All articles, provisions and instruments used for demarcation were allowed to enter both territories free of customs duties and any other internal tax. Both Commissions mutually agreed to leave a strip of country between 5 to 10 kilometre on either side of the boundary. An estimated budget of over one million francs was made in the budgets of 1932 and 1933 but it was felt that French Cameroun could not support such expenditure. Consequently, the assets of the French commission were liquidated and work of demarcation adjourned until when the French side was financially ready. An agreement was made between the two parties as to the sharing of the cost of the boundary pillars and for their subsequent upkeep through periodical clearing of the boundary.

It was only in 1936 that the French government signalled their readiness to start work. The Commission estimated work to last for six years allowing for four years dry season work only for the rainy Southern section and three full years on the northern provinces. Due to difficulties in climatic, topographic and vegetational conditions, the southern section of the boundary would take a longer time to demarcate - four out of six years. In another letter of February 11, 1937, the French proposed the date November 1, 1937 as the date when they would be ready to start work. This they said was because of: "...time needed to transport specialised officers from France to Cameroon who would then be required to study the 1932 file, verify and operate the necessary equipment for the job before it could begin."⁷⁹ That same year, before the work started, Allen was chosen as an Assistant Boundary Commissioner

eventually flow into the Rio del Rey, the Bakassi Peninsula shall still remain German territory. Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria Border", p.249. Pictures below (pp.8438-4) show some boundary pillars on land with initials and serial numbers engraved on them.

⁷⁹ File no. 58/16, of November 1, 1937, Qf/a (1916)1, Anglo-French Boundary (Dschang and Others), p.5, NAB. The translation is mine.

for the demarcation of the southern part of the boundary between the Cameroons Province and the Cameroons under French mandate. This section, being very difficult to demarcate, needed a man with a lot of experience like Allen. He was an officer of ten-and-a-half years standing and spoke French fluently. Both commissions finally met at Buea on November 17, 1937 and finalised all details and work started in December 1937. The joint commission worked periodically notably in the first "campaign" (1937-1938) and the second "campaign" (1938-1939). They held periodic meetings and signed protocols, which fixed the line of demarcation. A third "campaign" was arranged to start by October 1939 but never took place. For convenience, the southern portion of the boundary was partitioned and demarcated in three sections.

SECTION I: *From the Sea to the mouth of the Moungo River*

It is to be recalled here that the principal duty of the commissioners was to translate the verbal description of the boundary into a visibly demarcated boundary on water and on land. The southern extremity of the Anglo-French boundary was difficult to define with accuracy due to mangrove swamps and creeks. The work also presented many difficulties for the boundary was mostly described by reference to natural features like the names of creeks and lakes (on the land section names of rivers, villages and roads) shown on inaccurate pre-war maps. It was for these reasons that the Commissioners were given wide latitude in making minor amendments to the existing textual description. The boundary had to be drawn from a point at the mouth of the Bimbia River to a point on that River due east of Tiko; then it moved towards the North-East along a creek connecting with the Mudeka Bay to the mouth of the Mungo River.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Anglo-French Cameroon Boundary. Delimitation of. File no. 124 Qf/a /1937/6, p.19, NAB. On details about the work and equipment used, see Commission Franco-Anglaise de délimitation de frontière (Cameroun), *Rapport* Concernant les travaux de délimitation depuis le 1er Janvier Jusqu'au 31 Décembre 1938. APA 10813, p.9, NAY.

As shown in the map (p.85) below describing the maritime section of the boundary, this portion was full of mangrove swamps and there was hardly any land suitable for the planting of cement pillars; thus the work of demarcation was difficult and needed expertise. Here the commission benefited largely from the advice of the Marine Director at Victoria. Also, creeks abound in the area, among them, the Kange, Victoria, Matumal, Njumban-anjau, Mbakwele, Mokota, Mbosa-Bome and Gombe creeks. This was similar to the situation to the southern extreme portion of the Anglo-German Nigeria-Cameroon boundary. It was difficult if not impossible to demarcate the navigable channel of the Akpwayafe River for the channel merged with the Cross and Calabar Rivers.

Here too, the area was full of mangrove islands or creeks.⁸¹ It was also difficult to trace the boundary here because the median line, which was adopted as the boundary, wavered with the difference in tides. After hard work, fifteen pillars were placed along the median of the waterside on either side at intervals of approximately 10 kilometres. This southern most section of the boundary is described from Point Number One hundred and thirty-four to Point Number One hundred and thirty-eight in the Graeme Thomson Declaration which determined the boundary description and has remained unchanged since then. Like the British, the French team also recorded difficulties in demarcating this portion of the boundary. These difficulties were recorded in their report to the Commissioner of French Cameroun which read thus:

...The confluence area of the Rivers Wuri, Mungo and Bimbria is made up of numerous creeks on a marshy insect infested zone with highly reduced visibility.... it is very difficult for workers to have any kind of supply even good drinking water

⁸¹ Prescott, "The Anglo-French Inter Cameroon Boundary", p.21.

resulting to doubtful sanitary conditions.⁸²

In anticipation of such health problems the British government dispatched medicines and dressings to the boundary commissions as from December 2 1937. As demarcation proceeded northwards, the next portion to be demarcated was from the mouth of the Mungo River to Mount Kupe.

SECTION II: *From the mouth of the Mungo River to Mount Kupe*

For the most part of this second section of the boundary, the River Mungo was taken as the natural geographical division. This portion of the boundary has been described from point one hundred and twenty nine to point one hundred and thirty three in the Graeme Thomson Declaration. The work of demarcation here was of a peculiar nature because this was an area of vast and rich old German plantations. Some of these plantations were cut across by the provisional boundary. The commission sent letters to the proprietors of some of the plantations involved to alert them of the passage of the commission and to ask for their co-operation when they arrived.⁸³ It was for this reason that the commission wrote to the proprietors of the African Fruit Company, Tiko on whose property the first pillar on land (no.16) was to be placed. They replied pledging their full co-operation when the commission arrived. There were the cases of the Misselele and the Kola Nkote plantations where boundary demarcation was difficult due to Anglo-French rivalry over these plantations. Both parties were also unable to solve the question of tobacco plantations

⁸² From Dugast to Commissioner of the French Republic, December 1st, 1937, APA 10813, NAY. The translation is mine. Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria Border", p.242. Pictures (p. 86) below show a difference in height of the boundary pillars that were placed in the sea. Unlike the previous ones we saw, they are higher, smaller in size and seemed to have been made with more solid concrete.

⁸³ See letter no. 103/1931/ of November 13, 1937 by the Senior Resident to the managers of the West African Plantation Co Victoria Ltd.-Bota; Africa Fruit Company-Tiko; Kamerun-Kautschuk-Compagnie Mukonje Estate and K.E.G. Tombel on this same subject. Also see Anglo-French Cameroon Boundary. Delimitation of. File no. 124 Qf/a (1937)6, NAB.

in Penja Nyombe (Njombe) and Djongo.⁸⁴ The Misselele plantations, owned by the Westafricanische Planzungsgellschaft, Victoria (WAPV), had two other plantations all established between Victoria and Buea.⁸⁵ The Picot line divided these plantations into two leaving a small part on the French sphere. Dobell's Proclamation Number 10 modified the boundary and gave all of the plantations to Britain. According to Ngoh, the reason advanced by Dobell for this modification was acquisition of access to the sea.⁸⁶

The Kola Nkute plantation was established by the Germans on two villages, Kola and Nkut (Nkute). Before the existence of the boundary, the two village communities cultivated the plantation with no problems. The Picot line cut through the plantation leaving Kola on the French-speaking zone and NKute (Nkut) on the Anglophone zone. Pillar number 49 shown below was placed between the two villages. This division brought a difficult situation to the boundary commissioners. The Kola Nkute plantation was ceded to France while Britain was compensated with the Essosung plantation on her own territory.⁸⁷ Weladji holds a contrary view, which says that the Kola Nkute plantation was ceded to the British.⁸⁸ Considering the fact that the Kola section of the village has since then remained in the French administered section of the territory, it is certain that the first version is right for Essosung also remained a British administered locality.

⁸⁴ Ngoh, "Anglo-French Rivalry", p.280, Also see Marc Michel, "Les Plantations Allemandes du Mont Cameroun, 1885-1914" *Revue Française d'Histoire d'outre-mer*, Tom LVVI, No.207 trimestre, 1970:189.

⁸⁵ Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria Border", p.243.

⁸⁶ Ngoh, "Anglo-French Rivalry", p.281.

⁸⁷ Anglo-French Cameroon Boundary. Delimitation of. File no. 124 Vol.II, Qf/a/1937/6, NAB.

⁸⁸ Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria Border", p.243-4. When I visited the ruins of the Kola-Nkute plantation, today mostly farmlands, I located boundary pillar number 49 which was planted on the initial boundary between the two villages. Pictures (p.87) below shows pillar 49 and some others located on the French side of the border.

From the plantations, the commissioners advanced further inland following the Mungo River, which they maintained as the boundary.⁸⁹ When they reached the point where the Mungo breaks up into tributaries, the work of demarcation became very difficult. The Senior Surveyor on the British side, Isherwood reported that his Assistant, Cunningham had great difficulties in surveying the section of the boundary between the mouth of the Ediminjo stream and Tombel. This difficulty was due to the roughness of the country and the presence of thick forests with no footpaths. Also, most of the stream valleys were from two to six hundred feet deep and they twisted in all directions. It was therefore very difficult to trace a watershed without much "bush whacking". Faced with these difficulties, Cunningham suggested that a map of the area be drawn, possibly by Captain Bossavy, showing the Rivers Mumbo, Bubu and Ediminjo. This map also had to show all farms, timber concession roads, bush paths and any other important features so as to facilitate their work. When the commission arrived at the boundary between the River Bubu and the Lum-Tombel road, their work was rendered easier because the land coincided with the southern boundary of the Kamerun-Eisenbahn Gesellschaft (K.E.G) lands. The confines of this property had been cleared and demarcated eight years earlier, which made the demarcation of this particular portion relatively less difficult.

During their work on this section, the commission frequently met with opposition from the local people. When Isherwood reached the Malende customs beach on February 2 1938, he wanted to survey a path that ran from Malende leading to Ikata but the village head of Malende was very unco-operative and frustrated all the efforts he made to reach him.⁹⁰ Similarly when in April, Captain Gardet, the survey Officer for the

⁸⁹ Pictures below (p.88) show sections of the Mounjo River, which served as the Anglo-French boundary, from pillar number 16, where the Mounjo empties into the sea, to pillar number 27, where the Mounjo is fed by the Ediminjo Stream.

⁹⁰ Isherwood to Boundary Commissioner, February 10, 1938, File no. 124 vol.II, Qf/a/1937/6, NAB.

French, was sent to work at Tombel, he found it impossible to work. Just as the Balong frustrated Isherwood at Malende, the Bakossi of Tombel refused to cooperate with him.⁹¹ The Bakossi chief refused to give him any information on Mount Kupe. On this issue, the French government reported the matter to their British counterparts and the latter advised Gardet to return to the French sphere of the land. The boundary commissioners also faced protests from the Mongo/Mungo people who were divided by the boundary. An interesting thing that both commissions learned from the local peoples on this section of their work was that the Bakossi and Balong wanted to be on the British side of the boundary. The original boundary between the Bakossi and the Balong was the Mumbo River which placed them under one administrative unit before 1914 but the Anglo-French boundary cut across these ethnic groups as it did with their northern and eastern neighbours, the Mbo and the Balondo. Three Balondo villages were placed in the French territory, very close to Nkongsamba, these villages were; Nyamsa, Badjong and Nlonako.⁹²

Since the survey parties frequently crossed the boundary in their duties, the Surveyor General, Land and Surveys Department, Lagos suggested to the Resident that a letter of identification be issued to each member of both parties. The letter stated the name of the officer and those of his party. It also stated that no duty was to be taxed on his load and that he needed every possible assistance in the pursuit of his duty when and wherever he went to. By the end of March 1938, Isherwood and his group had gone beyond Malende, Bombe, Mbalangi, and the Mundame customs beach. Due to other pressing duties and linguistic difficulties, Senior Resident Firth proposed a replacement

⁹¹ The number of workers was not stated. This was a similar situation that the boundary commissioners of Togoland undertook in their partition of Togoland. File No. 124 Vol. II, cf. *Report of November 29, 1938*, No. B.C. 5/1937 Vol. II/12. NAB.

⁹² Dugast, *Inventaire ethnique du Sud Cameroun*, p.32.

of Allen, and this was approved. After this second section, the commissioners had to undertake the demarcation of the last portion, which was between Mounts Kupe and Manenguba.

SECTION III: *Between Mounts Kupe and Manenguba*

This section of the boundary is indicated in the Graeme Thomson agreement from point one hundred and twenty one to one hundred and twenty eight. The work of demarcation on this section was to be done in a north-south direction. At a meeting held by the two commissioners at Douala on November 25, 1938, working procedures were agreed upon.⁹³ Work had to begin in December 1 and end on May 15, 1939. The two commissioners met at the crater lakes on Mount Manenguba on December 10, 1938 to fix the boundary between Mount Manenguba and Mbonzie; it was estimated to take only one month but work was slowed down due to topographical, seasonal and "tribal" problems. After the experiences of the ethnic groups and the plantations in the south that were divided by the boundary, the commissioners endeavoured to avoid such problems in future. Unfortunately this aim could not be fulfilled because with the local Bakossi and Mbo occupying the slopes of Mounts Kupe and Manenguba, it was very difficult to determine the group limits. Eventually, the boundary cut through clans like Elung (Elong) as it did with the Mungo (Mongo) in the South, and it also cut through the Ngol plantation, which belonged to the KEG Company.

The original boundary of 1916 had put all of Elung into the French sphere but the modifications of 1922 cut through Elung leaving 1/3 of the land (Mwangel) in the French territory and 2/3 on the British side. In like manner, the Mwamenam who are on the Southeastern slope of Mount Manenguba were moved from the British

⁹³ Letter No. 65 of 17/2/1939, Commission Anglo-Française de délimitation (s.d), Plantation de Ngol, APA 11383, p.1, NAY.

administration in 1919 to French control in 1922.⁹⁴ This situation provided a strong reason for these border peoples to reject the boundary in future and to frequently violate boundary laws.

The surveyors followed up with the fixing of pillars between Tombel and Loum; Nkut and Kola, Abang and Ngombo-Aku; Mwambong and Mouandong (Akid village); Mondong and Ninong (Ebene-Mwin village); and at the summit of Mount Manenguba; the large map in the pocket at the back shows the various pillars that were planted along the boundary on land with their serial numbers. When the commissions arrived further south of this section, they entered an old German tobacco-producing unit at Ngol. According to article 235 of the treaty of Versailles, the provisional boundary passed through this plantation causing another area of tension between the British and French administrations. Because the Germans did not leave any authentic plan of the Ngol plantation, the British and French administrations represented by Ripert and Williams, tried to lay out a plan of division which contained many errors. For instance, the village of Ngol where the plantation was located is wrongly placed in the British zone. Consequently, the people of Ngol-Manehas, Nsung-Mwamenam, lower Bakossi-Asomengoe and Ninong-Anonge appropriated some of the lands of the plantation. The appropriated lands were planted with coffee, cocoa and banana trees.⁹⁵ When the commission finally defined the boundary limit, this plantation fell on the French side. The Chief of Ngol imposed a capitation tax on the English-speaking "natives" who were working on the plantation. The boundary commission later proposed a lease contract of thirty years renewable for individuals of the British side who owned farms in

⁹⁴ A. Nzume, "The Colonial Frontier and bilingualism in Cameroon: the case of the Bakossi, 1916-1961". Postgraduate thesis, Doctorat 3^e cycle, University of Yaounde, p.79. Also see by the same author, "Culture change in Mouamenam, 1916-1960. A Background study". Postgraduate (Maîtrise) thesis University of Yaounde, 1983, p.64. Commission Anglo-Française de délimitation (s.d) letter No. 65 of 17/2/1939, Plantation de Ngol, APA 11383, p.4, NAY.

⁹⁵ Plantation Ngol, see Letter No. 338 of 26/12/1938, APA 11383, pp. 1 et 2, NAY.

the Ngol area. The people were furious with this decision and proceeded to remove the boundary pillars that were placed along the boundary of the Ngol plantation.⁹⁶ Dugast and his team searched for pillars as far as eight kilometres north of Ngol at Abang but found no pillar. Their task was rendered difficult because they had no plan of the area. It was for this reason that Dugast wrote to the Kamerun-Eisenbahn Gesellschaft (K.E.G) and pleaded that they should send him the annex plan of the area in their keeping. Even in the case of Ngol, although the commission sent word to the villagers before they arrived explaining the purpose of their visit, the people did not welcome the demarcation of their lands.

Meanwhile, it was originally intended that the commission would cease work on this section on May 15, 1939. This was the date that a final evaluation meeting was scheduled. After this meeting, Isherwood was to proceed to Nigeria to take up routine duties during the wet season; Cunningham had already gone on leave. The two French surveyors arranged to continue the preparation of their trigonometrical survey until the months of July and August when it was hoped that all controls would be ready for the resumption of the topographical survey in October. Earlier in February 1938, Cunningham in a report to Allen complained about the tedious work and the strain it was causing on Dugast's health. He reported that: "I do not think that it is at all suitable country for Mr. Dugast to work in, as although he is a game old bird, this type of bush whacking is definitely a young man's job. I understand that he is about 60 years old."⁹⁷ It was not surprising therefore that the strain of the work and the weight of his age rendered Dugast very ill the following year. Dugast returned

⁹⁶ Report from Cunningham to Allen of February 20, 1938 concerning the Ediminjo-Kupe Section of the boundary, File No. 124 vol. II. NAB.

⁹⁷ Cunningham to Allen, February 5th 1938, APA 11383, NAY. Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria Border", p.251.

home as the commission promised to meet on October 20 to resume work during the dry season. But Dugast died suddenly and the delay in appointing his successor led to an indefinite postponement of the resumption of the work.

Meanwhile, Lenoir, Secretary General of French Cameroon was appointed acting head of the French Mission. In joint notes signed by Lenior and Allen on July 7, 1939 at Victoria, the definition and delimitation of the boundary between Pillars 87 to 92 were confirmed; that is, from Mount Manenguba to a place in the Nkongsamba area, 5 kilometres north. According to Weladji, all this was prepared before the death of Dugast.⁹⁸ Both commissioners agreed to stop delimitation work in the Mount Manenguba region at Pillar 92. On October 20, 1939 both teams planned to meet again and begin the third campaign but this plan was never undertaken for work ground to a halt with the outbreak of the Second World War on September 3 1939. Consequently, the boundary commission never met again. According to Prescott no further work was done on this boundary demarcation.⁹⁹ This implies that the actual work of demarcation ended on the top of Mount Manenguba (South East top slope). The distance of the frontier thus demarcated on the ground on this section was some one hundred and thirty five miles.¹⁰⁰

After the work of delimitation and demarcation, before their break, both administrations affirmed that individual rights of proprietorship on both sides of the boundary be respected. Individuals on the boundary zone could not be called upon to pay personal taxes on both sides of the boundary. It was forbidden to remove or destroy

⁹⁸ *Procès-Verbal* No. 6, du 22/5/1938. Fait à Kumba, concernant la section des Rivières Ediminjo et Mounjo, et la route de Loum à Ngab, APA, 11383, pp. 4 et 5, NAY.

⁹⁹ Prescott, "The Evolution of the French Inter-Camerouns Boundary", p.40. The entire length of the boundary was 1200 to 1500 km of Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria Border", p.248.

¹⁰⁰ Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigeria Border", p.252. A large map of the Anglo-French boundary on land (with other small maps that show the Picot Line) has been provided in a pocket at the back of this thesis.

structures at less than fifty metres on both sides of the boundary, this was because the commission feared that the border people could by so doing, attempt to alter the boundary. It was then left to both administrations through their land commission to see that the border was made flexible and that border peoples respected the boundary rules. This made both administrations to carry out some adjustments of the boundary to avoid splitting villages, clans, people and their farmlands along the boundary.

EFFORTS BY THE BRITISH AND FRENCH ADMINISTRATIONS TO MODIFY THE BOUNDARY

According to Fanso, requests by divided peoples for the alteration of the boundary through their territory and /or the recognition of their established traditional rights across the boundary were conditioned by response of colonial administrations towards the groups.¹⁰¹ The reaction of the British and French administrations towards divided groups ranged from cautious sympathy and efforts to unite at least some of them, to the rejection of appeals for boundary modification. The provisional boundary did not take into consideration the cultural and ethnic realities of the border groups. It was abstract and both administrations observed, "the so-called Picot Line is therefore largely imaginary having the most glaring discrepancies between the theoretical and the actual line"; that was why Article 2 of the July 10 agreement gave the latitude to the Boundary Commissioners to adjust the boundary.¹⁰² Both governments decided to leave the actual demarcation with specialists -the Anglo-French Boundary

¹⁰¹ Fanso, "Trans-frontier relations", p.199.

¹⁰² A. J. Harding to Strachey, letter No. 39912, CO 649/18, PRO.

Commission- to study and propose areas that needed rectification in favour of the divided groups.¹⁰³

This line may however be slightly altered by agreement between His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the French Republic where an examination of the localities shows that it is undesirable, either in the interest of the inhabitants, or by reason of any inaccuracies in the map (Moisel 1/300.000) annexed to the Declaration to adhere strictly to the line laid down therein.¹⁰⁴

Border groups were to be assured the right of grazing, fishing, farming etc across the boundary. While waiting for the members of the joint commission to be appointed, Britain and France agreed to restrict the authority of the chiefs of divided groups to their respective sides of the boundary. It was made clear that their authority would not be recognised across the boundary.¹⁰⁵

When the joint commission was appointed, the commissioners held several meetings during which they examined the possibilities of boundary rectification in favour of both administrations and the separated border groups as well. To this effect the members of the French delegation argued against the unilateral British annexation of Misselele plantation originally placed in the French zone by the "Picot Line". The French delegation took the position that the Douala population placed largely in French territory depended heavily on food supplies from the Misselele plantation and the surrounding area, and that the abandonment of this piece of territory would be a serious inconvenience to them. The British also argued that the Misselele plantation had to be left to the West of the boundary, on their side. This, they said, was because numerous local traders from border towns of the British zone such as Victoria and

¹⁰³ Resident to DO Bamenda, August 30th, 1920, TB/1920/2 NAB. The British and French administrations agreed on October 23rd, 1921 to modify the boundary taking the local realities into account. See minutes of the meeting of December 17th, 1921, CO 649/23, PRO.

¹⁰⁴ Minutes of the meeting of December 17th, 1921, CO 649/23, PRO.

¹⁰⁵ Resident to chief administrator of Douala Division, August 11, 1920, APA 10494, NAY. Fanson, "Trans-frontier relations", p.199.

Tiko brought their goods, mostly palm oil and kernels, by canoe from Douala through the creeks around the Misselele plantation. It would be inconvenient for these people if the plantation and the surrounding creeks were given to the French.

On August 9, 1920, J. Davidson, the Resident Buea and V. Chazelas, *Chef de la Circonscription de Douala*, met at Buea to give provisional effect to the agreements and to take over and hand over those territories described by the Franco-British Declaration signed in London on July 10, 1919. The territories, which were to pass from the authority of the French to the British, were the lower reaches of the Moungo, and the Misselele plantation. The French had controlled these areas since 1916.¹⁰⁶ It is important to note here that some precautions were taken during this 1920 rectification, to avoid dividing private concessions affecting the rights of the people.¹⁰⁷ Elong was one of the areas that was re-partitioned. By the provisional boundary, Elong was in the British sphere. Elong according to the Moisel map belonged to the Kumba District even though the local officers in the Cameroons seemed to think that it belonged to the Bare District thus should be French.¹⁰⁸ By the 1920 adjustment, the fourteen villages of Elong were divided between the British (Nkiko, Poala, Muasum, Ekambeng, Muabi, Mbad) and the French (Muangel, Mboasum, Mwanwekan, Lolag, Ndoku, Nsonsua, Neno and Ndengua).¹⁰⁹ The boundary cut through the villages of Mwanwekan and Poala. The Elong and their Mbo neighbours had always farmed on the same area but with the imposition of the boundary, this fertile farmland went to the Mbo while the Elong were left with the

¹⁰⁶ Resident to Chazelas, Despatch No. 64/19 of August 9, 1920, CO 649/20 PRO.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Telegram No. 41603/17 of August 23rd, 1917, CO 649/14, PRO.

¹⁰⁹ FO to Under Secretary of State for Colonies, No. C11114/63/18 of November 15, 1920, CO 649/21, PRO

unfertile uplands. The same occurred in Poala where the boundary left all the cultivated land to the Mbo of the French zone while the barren lands went to Poala. When the chief of Poala, James Elunge, laid his complaint to the Resident through the DO, he was told to take his complaint before the boundary commissioner. When the commissioners arrived Poala in April 1939, they registered statements of complaint and were satisfied that the complaints were justified. Both commissioners agreed that:

The line demarcated by us in December should be amended to enclose on the English side all plantations of Poala while, in compensation, a small section of the village at an area to the North presently cultivated by the people of Mwangel (French) should be handed over to the French.

All parties have expressed their complete satisfaction with the new boundary, which will be finally demarcated tomorrow and defined in the final protocol to be compiled at the closing meeting of the commission in May.¹¹⁰

In this memorandum, Allen pointed out that the fact that the border groups were divided by the boundary originally demarcated by them was neither due to their disregard of local interests nor to a lack of proper study of the terrain. It was because they were misled by the frontier defined by Messrs Williams and Reynaud in 1936 and ratified in the Graeme-Thomson-Marchand Declaration of 1937. The Poala case shows the efforts that both administrations and the boundary commission were making to understand the protests of the border groups and to correct where possible the injustice of the boundary. Mouamenam, which by the provisional boundary

¹¹⁰ See memorandum from Allen to Resident Cameroons Province, No. Bc, 6/1937/42, of April 12, 1939, NAB.

was placed under British rule was in 1920 put under French administration.¹¹¹ Further to the South, where the River Mounjo was considered as the boundary, it was difficult to rectify the boundary. This was because there were villages of the Mongo ethnic group on both banks of the river. The Mongo it should be recalled was a subgroup of the Duala and the people's major activity was fishing. A decision was reached by both governments on the fishing rights of the local Duala on the right bank of the river and those occupying fishing villages in the creeks on the British side of the boundary. Both governments declared that the fishing rights of the French subjects acquired West of the Mounjo before August 4, 1914 were to be respected.¹¹² On the division of the Penja-Njombe and Djongo tobacco concessions by the River Ediminjo, the provisional boundary placed a portion of the plantations in the French sphere and another portion in the British zone. The French suggested an adjustment that would place all of the concessions in their sphere since the British had taken the Misselele plantations further south. On this, the Resident said he had no power to accord those concessions to the French without referring the issue to the Governor of Nigeria.¹¹³ Eventually, the plantations remained in the French zone. In 1920, the British administration complained about the unsatisfactory nature of the boundary and decided to make minor adjustments thereafter.¹¹⁴ The following year, the same government acknowledged that the customs barrier imposed by the division of the Cameroons aggravated the position particularly for the border groups on the

¹¹¹ Anastasia Nzume, "Culture change in Mouamenam, 1916-1960. A background study". Postgraduate thesis (Maîtrise), University of Yaounde, 1983.

¹¹² Resident to Chazelas, No. 16/19 of August 9, 1920, CO 649/20, PRO.

¹¹³ Minutes of the meeting of January 30th, 1926 between G. Ripert, chief administrator of the Circumscription of Dschang and G. B. Williams, Acting D O Kumba, APA 1007, delimitation Franco-Anglaise. Accord 1919, NAY.

¹¹⁴ Resident to Chazelas, August 9, 1920, C O 649/20, PRO. Also see Harding to Strachey, No. 39912 of July 8th 1919, C O 649/18, PRO.

West of the River Moungo. Harding suggested that the boundary would pose difficulties to border groups to the West of the River Moungo like the Mbo, Bakossi, Balondo and the Balong. For these groups, the natural outlet for their trade was either down the Moungo River or by the Northern Railway down to the port at Douala in the French zone.¹¹⁵

Minor rectifications were made between 1925 and 1930 to the boundary. In the Nkongsamba *Circonscription*, the British claimed the Kola-Nkut plantation and in the Moungo estuary, they also claimed some territory near Lake Mowe.¹¹⁶ Local boundary agreements were signed dealing with portions of the boundary, which needed further rectification and definition to avoid splitting villages, clans and people along the boundary. For the definition of the boundary between Kumba Division and Dschang *Circonscription*, the *proces verbal* was signed at Nkongsamba on January 30, 1926. The D O Kumba, G.B. Williams and the chief of administration, Nkongsamba, Monsieur Reynaud, signed this boundary adjustment of 1926 by which Poala was dispossessed of over 50% of their land, the villages of Moundong, Mouakoumel and Abang of the Mouamenam clan were transferred from the British to the French zone. This amendment was incorporated in the Graeme Thomson-Marchand Declaration. The boundary between Mount Kupe and the Loum-Ngab Road was signed in Tombel on January 26, 1929. It was noted by both administrations that some Bakossi farms were separated from their owners and placed in the French territory by the rectified boundary.¹¹⁷ Ripert observed that the Mbo and the Bakossi were split by the boundary but further adjustments made were not satisfactory. The

¹¹⁵ Notes of August 11th, 1923 by Harding, on boundary question, CO 649/27, PRO.

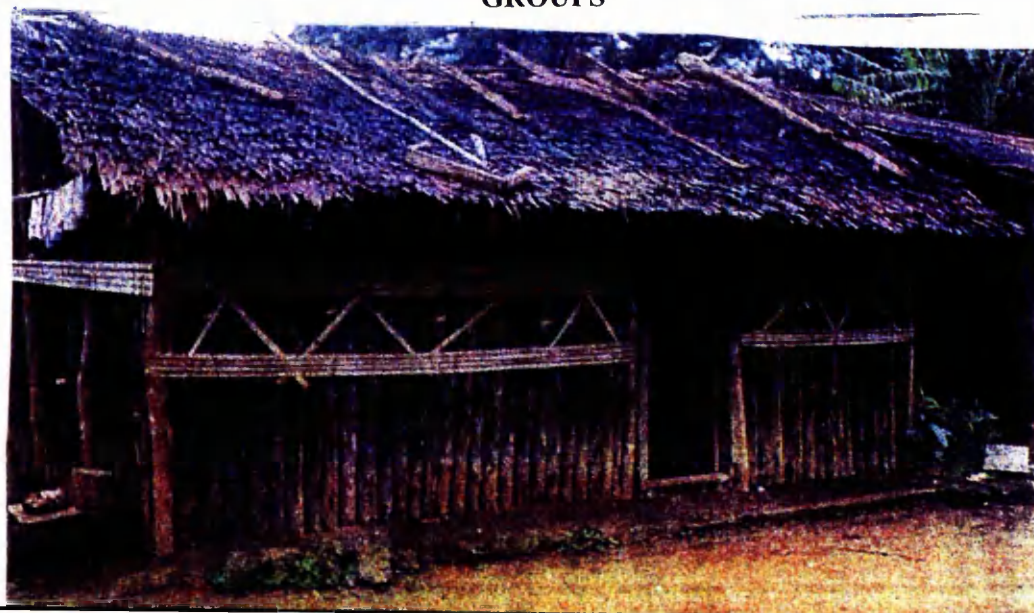
¹¹⁶ C. Weladji, "The Cameroon-Nigerian border 1914 and after (5th and last instalment)" *Abbia*, 38-39 (May 1982):243.

¹¹⁷ It was realised that global solutions could not be achieved through these boundary adjustments. In some cases, border peoples with property across the boundary were asked by the administration to cross over and settle permanently on any side of their choice.

Commissioners noted that due to their cultural and traditional closeness, it would be difficult to trace a clear boundary between the Bakossi and the Balong. The British and French administrations continued to record local dissatisfaction about the boundary and endeavoured to find workable solutions throughout the period of their administration in the territory. While attempting to seek solutions to local protests, both administrations continued to administer and police the boundary with the aim of maintaining the division between the two spheres. How did both administrations administer their sections of the boundary?



TRADITIONAL HOUSE TYPES COMMON AMONG ALL THE BORDER GROUPS





"FEMALE"

THE LAKES
ON MOUNT MANENGUBA



"MALE"



**POST - WAR DIVISION
OF THE CAMEROONS**

NIGERIA

Lake Chad

W. Africa

EQUATORIAL

FRENCH

- Anglo-French division Feb. - Apr. 1916
- Division suggested by Mr. Strachey in Jan. 1916 but not put to the French.
- → → Division proposed to French Government in March 1915.

DIVISION OF THE CAMEROONS

Lake
Chad

Africa

EQUATORIAL

FRENCH

MAMBILA

BAMILEKE
REGION

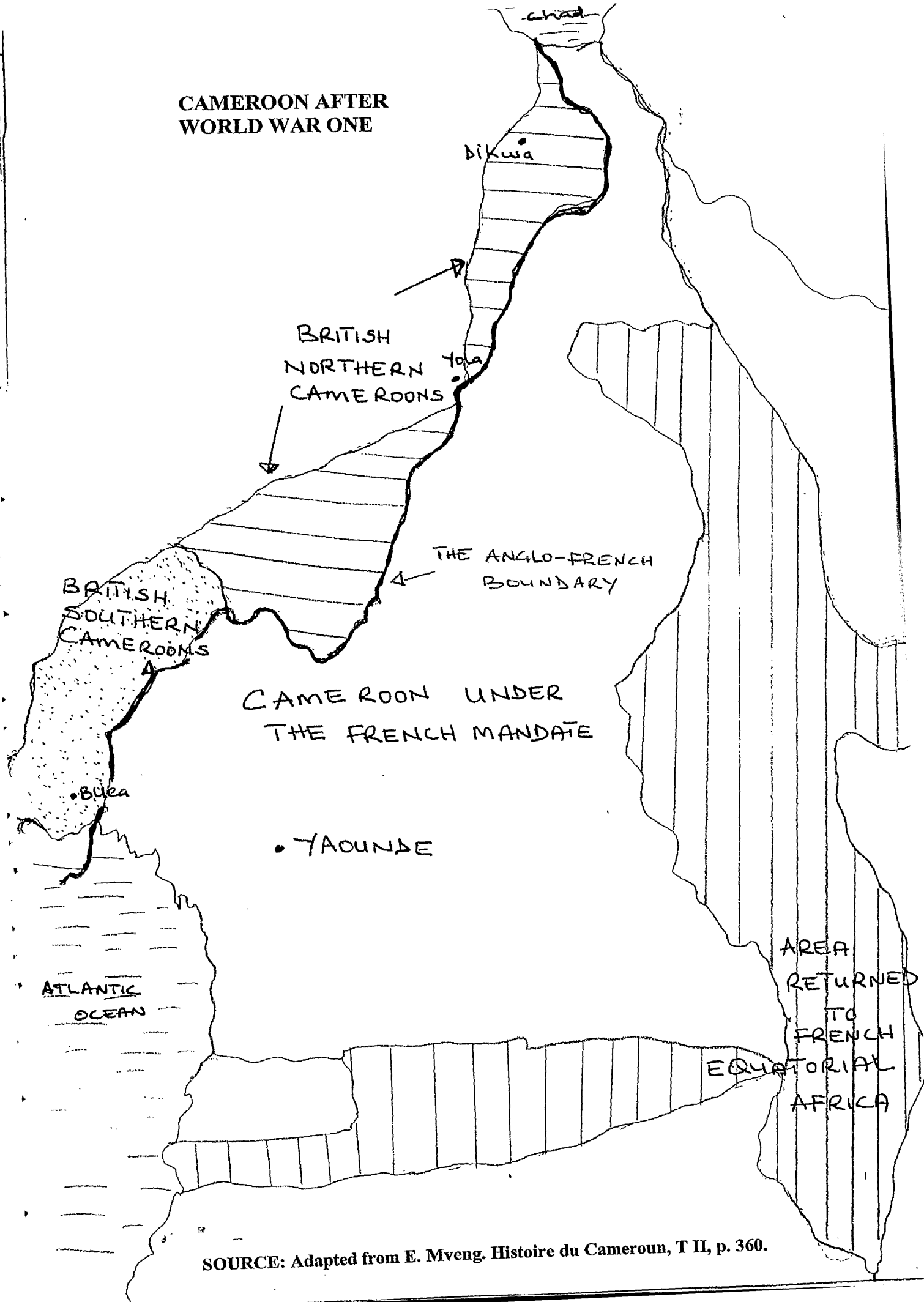
MANENCOUNBA

→ → → Anglo-French division of
Feb. - April 1916

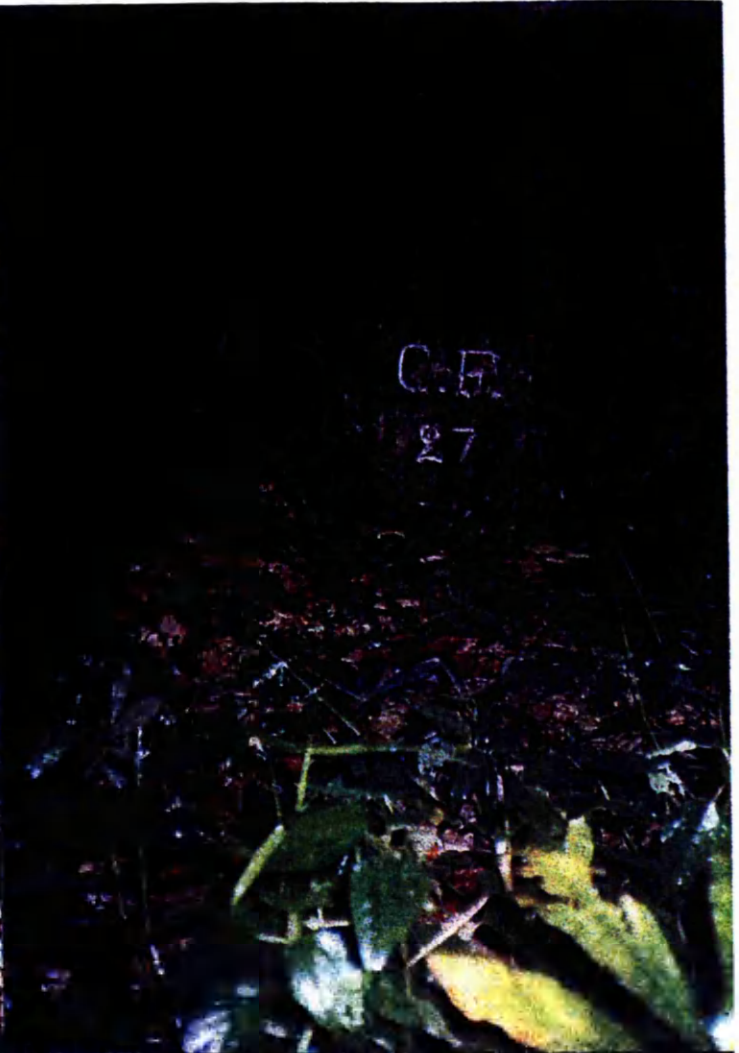
(||||) British desiderata, v. approximate
boundary

• (||||) Area which might be given to
the French if necessary to offer *quid pro quo*.

CAMEROON AFTER WORLD WAR ONE







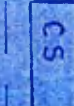
SOURCE: Adapted from E. Mveng. Histoire du Cameroun, T II, p. 360.

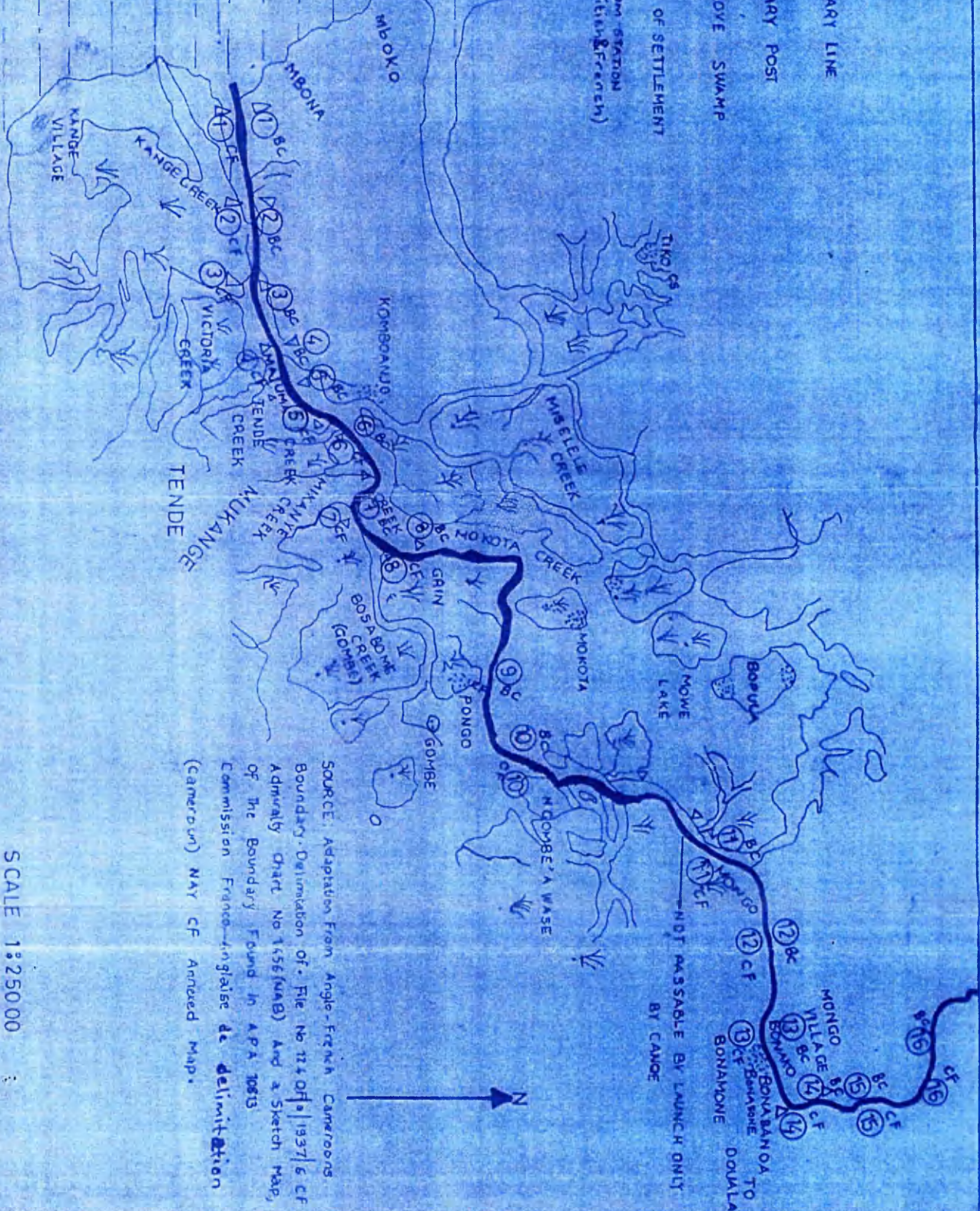


BOUNDARY PILLARS ON LAND



MAP SHOWING THE ANGLO-FRENCH BOUNDARY ON SEA

	BOUNDARY LINE
	BOUNDARY POST
	MANGROVE SWAMP
	AREAS OF SETTLEMENT
	CUSTOM STATION (British & French)

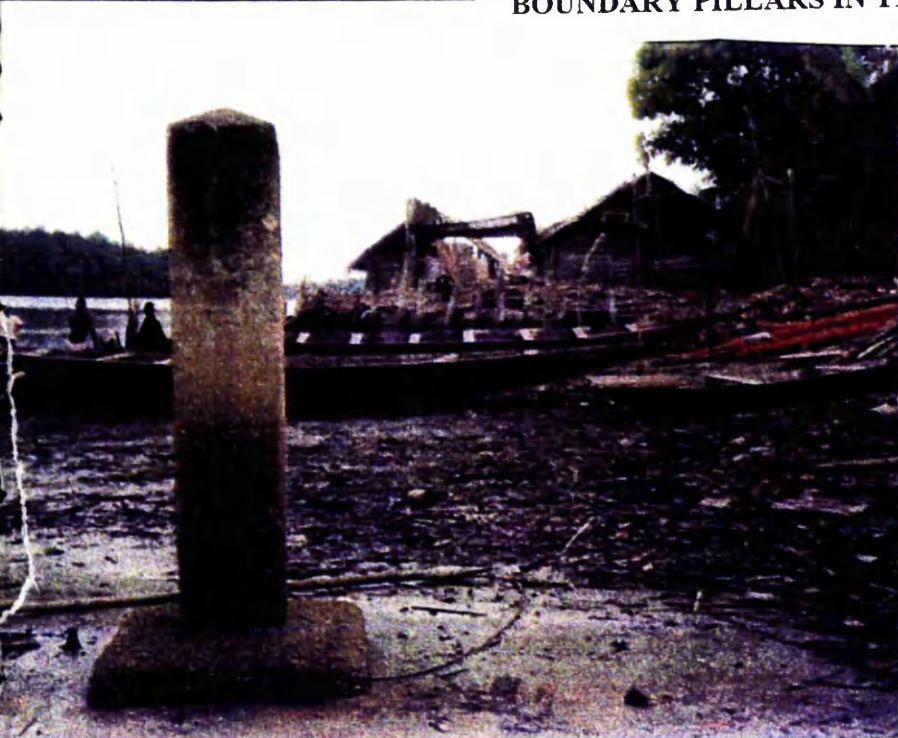


SOURCE: Adaptation from Anglo-French Cameroons Boundary Delimitation of File No 114 of 1937/6 cf Admiralty Chart No 1556 (44B) and a Sketch Map of the Boundary found in APA 1083 Commission Franco-anglaise de delimitation (Cameroon) MAY CF Annexed Map.

SCALE 1:25000



BOUNDARY PILLARS IN THE SEA







**THE RIVER MOUNGO FORMED A NATURAL AND
POLITICAL BOUNDARY BETWEEN BRITISH AND FRENCH
CAMEROONS.**

CHAPTER THREE

COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND STATE FUNCTIONS AT THE BOUNDARY

BRITISH AND FRENCH COLONIAL POLICIES

Colonial powers were largely ignorant of the nature of the societies they were about to govern. As a result, during the early years of colonial rule there was considerable debate as to what type of policy and rule was desirable for Tropical Africa. From these debates and from the practical experiences of the administrators on the spot, there emerged three general dominant trends in colonial policy in West Africa, which dominated from 1918 to 1939 (Assimilation, Indirect Rule and Paternalism).¹ These policies from which colonial practices stemmed were greatly influenced by the personality of the man imposing them as for example Lugard for the British and Sarraut for the French. Of equal importance were the circumstances under which a particular area was occupied either by conquest or by treaty and the character of the society to be governed.

The French policy of Assimilation

Assimilation is that body of colonial theory, which advocated identity between the colony and the mother country. The nature of this identity varied from one place to the other. Assimilation theories fell into two main groups: those, which advocated the personal assimilation of the administered peoples; and those, which discarded this option as unrealistic and advocated administrative political or economic assimilation between the colony and the mother country.²

Theories of personal assimilation asserted that all men were equal irrespective of their racial or cultural background. There were no differences between peoples that

¹ Michael Crowder, *West Africa under colonial rule*. London: Hutchinson, 1968, p. 167.

² Ibid.

education could not eliminate. Therefore African colonial subjects could be treated as Frenchmen with same rights and duties. Crowder suggests that the major conflict between the various theories of personal Assimilation occurred between those who believed in the actual equality of all men at all times and everywhere and those who believed in the potential equality of all men.³ But it became increasingly difficult for the French to actually practice absolute or whole-hearted Assimilation due to economic and cultural obstacles.

As a result, she turned to what has been styled as gradualist or selective assimilation policy.⁴ As this drift emerged, it was excused by the claim that all men could be equal given the right opportunities, but was not equal here and now. Therefore, Africans had to prove themselves worthy of assimilation by demonstrating to the authorities that they had the attributes of citizenship, attributes that were determined by the colonial power. The origins of this policy laid in the much longer-term experiment in Algeria where eventually it was decreed that fully active Moslems could not be citizens. France's experiment in the Senegalese hinterland gradually took the form of a more selective assimilation policy.⁵

Citizens from the *Quatre Communes* of Senegal for example, had rights as *evolués* but not equal to those of Frenchmen. This small group of citizens numbered not more than 2,136 in 1936.⁶ They could elect a general council and send a deputy to parliament, but in fact the completeness of this citizenship was contested for a long time. Could these Senegalese of the privileged communes be considered full citizens

³ Crowder, *West Africa*, p.167.

⁴ Ibid. Ibid.

⁵ Michael Crowder, *Senegal: A study of French Assimilation policy*. London: Methuen, 1969, see first chapter.

⁶ Michael Crowder, *Colonial West Africa. Collected essays*. London: Frank Cass, 1978, p.269.

if they also retained a personal status claiming Islamic rights and polygamy? It was not until after the First World War, that the people from the four communes were given French citizenship and thus could be used as auxiliary staff of the colonial administration. The overwhelming majority of the population was classified as *Sujets* or subjects.

In Cameroon like in all French colonies in Africa, it was difficult if not impossible to achieve the status of a Frenchman or an *évolué* or *assimilé*. It became clear that the French could not form a strange race of Frenchmen in black skins. The French excuse for the shift away from wholesale assimilation were vague claims that indigenous social standards were too far removed from those of Frenchmen for Assimilation to be possible.⁷ This policy had been rehearsed in Algeria where the key decision was taken about the impossibility of being a French and at the same time a Muslim was made. Personal assimilation still remained possible even if very difficult. According to Crowder, personal assimilation left room for non-personal assimilation theories, which fell into three categories: administrative, political and economic.⁸ David Gardinier says that the French used Paternalism in close association with Assimilation both of which led to the establishment of direct rule by French administrators for neither policy in theory contemplated the maintenance or utilisation of African political institutions.⁹

Unlike assimilation and paternalism, the principle of association was supposed to involve a respect for the institutions and traditions of the colonial

⁷ Jules Harmand, *Domination et colonization*, Paris, 1901, cited in Victor T. LeVine, *The Cameroons from mandate to independence*. California: University of California Press, 1964, p.89.

⁸ Crowder, *West Africa*, p.168.

⁹ David Gardinier, *Cameroon. United Nations challenge to French policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 10-14. Also see Gardinier, "French policy in the Cameroons, 1945-1959", PhD thesis, Yale University, 1960. The policy of Paternalism resulted not only from France's activities as a colonial power but also from its own internal experiences. By this policy, France assumed the superiority of the Frenchmen and their civilization over Africans and African civilization and institutions.

peoples, a respect which should lead to co-operation between colonial administrators and local political bodies. Like assimilation, association called for the formation of a Gallicised elite who, as leaders of their people, would remain within the framework of African societies and would then serve as an intermediary group between the French administration and the traditionally oriented masses.

Ironically, in practice, this elite group had to accept so many European cultural values that some of them lost touch with their own cultures and with the unassimilated populations they were supposed to lead. Albert Sarraut who put the French policy of Association into operation in all of the French Empire, stipulated French co-ordination and collaboration with local elites and stressed the economic "development" or "mise en valeur" of colonies along the lines most profitable to France.¹⁰ As from 1940, French Africa was dominated by two distinct French regimes, that of Vichy for AOF (French West Africa) and the Free French for AEF (French Equatorial Africa). There was no single French imperial policy. What was the British colonial policy?

The British policy of Indirect Rule

Indirect Rule was that body of colonial theory, which held that there could be no identity between such divergent cultures as those of Europe and Africa. Consequently, the metropolitan power should rule its African subjects through their own institutions since these were clearly the ones best suited to them. Indirect Rule was the antithesis of assimilation and was inspired by the belief that the European and the African were culturally distinct though not necessarily unequal. The institutions of government most suited to Africans were those, which the African had devised for

¹⁰ Albert Sarraut, *La mise en valeur des colonies Françaises*, Paris: Payot, 1923, pp.62-127. G. Hardy, *Histoire de la colonisation Française*, Paris: Larose, 1931, pp. 434-435. R. Betts, *Assimilation and Association in French colonial theory, 1890-1914*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1961, passim.

himself. The European colonial power therefore, should govern their African subjects through their own political institutions. Crowder says that the use of such indigenous political institutions for purposes of local administration was contingent on certain modifications to those institutions.¹¹ Such modifications fell into two categories:

- modifications of aspects of traditional government that were repugnant to European ideas of what constituted good government. This explains for example the abolition of human sacrifices and certain methods of treating criminals.
- modifications that were designed to ensure the achievement of the main purpose of colonial rule, the exploitation of the colonised country.¹² An example of such exploitation was the introduction of taxes designed to stimulate production of cash crops for export.

As conceived by its chief exponent Lugard, Indirect Rule was supposed to be the progressive adaptation of local institutions to British conditions with a British officer acting as adviser.¹³ The 1925 Annual Report on the Cameroons Province expands on this by saying:

The evolution of indigenous institutions does not mean that those institutions are to be allowed to grow unchecked and uncontrolled. It implies close and continuous direction, supervision and guidance by administrative officers....

European standards and methods must be introduced in the form and measure in which they can profitably be grafted on the pre-existing stock.¹⁴

¹¹ Crowder, *West Africa*, p. 169.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Prosser Gifford, "Indirect Rule: Touchstone or Tombstone for colonial policy". In P. Gifford and R. Louis, *Britain and Germany in Africa. Imperial rivalry and colonial rule*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970, p.351.

¹⁴ *West Africa*. Report on the British sphere of the Cameroons, for the year 1925, presented to Parliament by command of His Majesty, p.4. Institute of Commonwealth Studies Library, London hereafter cited as ICOMM. The stress on the word "profitably" is mine.

The British quickly realised that adherence to what they deemed as local institutions was a better option for the acceptability of their administration. It was important that local government and rulers be given defined duties and an acknowledged status. Yet the policy as initially conceived was interventionist but progressively, Lugard's successors followed a policy of relatively minimal interference in the process of local government. This rendered Indirect Rule less-interventionist. Later however, as society evolved, power and authority fell into the hands of the educated people, professional men and the middle class who wanted to break with the old system of government.

Indirect Rule, which has its origins in India, was initially devised for Islamic populations with centralised authorities. In Cameroon, in areas where traditional authority was centralised, Indirect Rule was easy to assert but in areas of decentralised local authorities, like the area under study, the policy was difficult to develop and adapt. For effective administration, the government therefore had to commission a series of reports to establish the authority of traditional rulers and the role of religious and social organisations. The British assumption that in Cameroon, they had indefinite time ahead during which their policy could grow and develop under their guidance was another reason for the poor and slow adaptation of the policy.

After the Second World War, both the British and the French had to change their pre-occupation with the problems of "Native Administration" to the demands of African nationalists. These nationalists wanted to participate in the running of the central administration of their countries. Consequently, more and more educated Southern Cameroonians were encouraged to participate in Native Administration. Senior British administrators like Andrew Cohen report that Indirect Rule took an entirely new shape with a positive and constructive policy for economic and social

developments.¹⁵ Indirect Rule had to be adapted to modern needs, there was a great forward drive in education, health and communication infrastructure. This version of events could be biased and exaggerated when one considers some of the other British colonies but in Cameroon, for example, it was after the Second World War that the administration opened more elementary schools; political parties and trade unions were also formed. The German plantations for example were taken over and managed as from 1947 by the Cameroons Development Corporation (CDC). The Corporation took care of the economic and social advancement of its workers and paid in huge taxes to the government treasury.

The importance of recalling the basic orientations of both colonial imperial theories in this work is firstly that, these theories oriented the assumptions under which both colonial powers administered the now divided territory. Administration, which according to the terms negotiated between the Principal Allied and Associate Powers on the basis of article 22 of the Covenant, was to be as Mandates. The administration began with the prohibition of abuses, such as the slave trade, the sale of fire arms and alcohol. The administrations had to guarantee freedom of conscience, religion and movement. Secondly, colonialism in its essence implicitly assumed the superiority of the British and the French civilisations over those of Africa and therefore that the colonised in contact with the Europeans would abandon their institutions and adopt superior European models, one of which was the nature and function of boundaries.

COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION

The League of Nations Mandates were created in 1919 and Cameroon was given to Britain and France as a class "B" mandate. It was on these terms that both

¹⁵ Andrew Cohen, *British policy in changing Africa*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960, pp.31-32.

powers obtained confirmation of their partition of the Cameroons in 1922. Whereas the British merged the administration of their sectors with that of Nigeria, the French considered their own sector for administrative purposes as an Oversea Department *France Outre-mer*. Administratively, France did not bring Cameroon into the Federation of French Equatorial Africa (AEF). According to Edward Mortimer, the reason for this is clear for the Covenant spoke of the Mandated territories as being "not yet able to stand by themselves".¹⁶ Unlike the case of the other French colonies for example, the Mandatory power (France) had to make annual reports to the League on the progress of the Mandate. In an attempt to explain why France did not administer Cameroon as part of AEF, Leslie Buell says that it was probably because of the poverty of Equatorial Africa that "France thought it contrary to the spirit of the Mandate" to incorporate Cameroon as a member of that Federation.¹⁷ Whatever the actual reasons the French had for that administrative option, they however applied the laws of the AEF in Cameroon except where proscribed by the obligations of the Mandate.¹⁸ What was the French administrative system that was imposed on their side of the boundary?

On April 1st, 1916, as General Dobell took over the administration in British Cameroons, General Joseph-George Aymerich did the same for the French administered part of Cameroon. By May 1916, Aymerich issued a decree dividing

¹⁶ Edward Mortimer, *France and the Africans 1944-1960. A political history*, London: Faber and Faber limited, 1969, p. 36.

¹⁷ Leslie Buell, *The native problem in Africa*, New York: Macmillan, 1928, p.291. C. N. Ngwasiri, "Developments and reforms in Cameroon land law since 1884" Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1979, p.38.

¹⁸ Ngwasiri, "Developments and reforms in Cameroon", p.38.

French Cameroon into nine administrative units called *Circonscriptions*.¹⁹ Below the *Circonscription* was the *Subdivision* and below the *Subdivision*, there was the *District*. Douala and later Nkongsamba units contained sections of the border populations under study notably the Mbo, Bakossi, Mungo, Balong, Balondo and the Duala. The French created three grades of chiefs: Paramount chiefs (these included the Lamidos in the Moslem North); Chiefs of Cantons and Village chiefs also called Quarter Heads. The French utilised the traditional chiefs as intermediaries because as Gardinier puts it, they lacked the funds to institute an administration of French officials at every level.²⁰ In utilising the chiefs the French did not permit the chiefs to exercise their functions in the traditional manner. They often forced them to ignore the advice of the elders or notables and to implement the policies of the administration, which were unpopular with their people. Chiefs were like toys, they commanded very little or no respect.

It is reported that the administration replaced chiefs who were less cooperative by their sons.²¹ According to some of our informants, chiefs in the French zone were flogged and punished for allowing their subjects to escape to the British zone.²² Also, Crowder says the French placed chiefs in an entirely subordinate position to the

¹⁹ They were: Barre-Foumban-Nkongsamba; Ebolowa-Ako afim territory; Kribi-Lolodorf-Campo; Edea-Eseka; Yaounde; Douala-Yabassi; Bana; Ngaoundere and Mora-Garoua-Doume-Lome-Yokaduma. *Journal Officiel du Cameroun*, hereafter cited as JOC, No. 1 of November 1, 1916, p. 2, Centre des Archives Outre Mer hereafter cited as CAOM. In April 1935, the *Circonscriptions* by that time 17 in number were retitled *Regions*, the name they retained throughout the Trusteeship period. The Douala-Yabassi *Circonscription* became *La Région du Wouri*.

²⁰ Gardinier, *Cameroon*, p.15.

²¹ Chief administrator of colonies to the Commissioner of French Republic, letter of September 19th, 1932, AgeFom 989/3430, CAOM.

²² Interview with Chief Moukwelle Moukwelle Benjamin on July 12th, 1999 at Mombo, Cameroon and with Anoke Gaston on July 13th, 1999 at Mouyouka, Cameroon. Interview with Nhon Blasius Akwe Nzume, on April 20th, 1999 at Likomba- Tiko, Cameroon.

political officer.²³ Chiefs were mere agent of the central government with clearly defined duties and powers. They did not head local government units nor did the areas, which they administered on behalf of the government necessarily, correspond to pre-colonial political units. In the administrative hierarchy, below the Heads of *Circonscriptions* were *Chefs de Subdivision* and below them were *Chefs de Districts* or Cantons. These District Heads were also called *Chefs Supérieurs*.²⁴ Their authority depended in a large measure upon French support. They were thus bound to transmit the orders of the administration to the village chiefs who were their immediate subordinates. Most often than not they were those who had shown loyalty to the French or had obtained some education.²⁵ For example, the political officer in charge of the Mouamenam *canton* in 1940, Granier, expressed the reasons for the administration's preference for one chieftaincy contestant, chief Nti Ewane of Nsoug village over his other brothers as follows: "... he had a good mastery of the French language and high political intelligence ... and drew five subjects from the English zone to his sphere of jurisdiction."²⁶

The French administration also installed a "foreigner"-Nsaso M'E pang- from a different Canton- Manehas (Badjounge)- to rule as *Chef Supérieur* against the wishes and protests of his subjects. He was said to be very wicked and when he died

²³ Crowder, *Colonial West Africa*. p.200. There were however some chiefs who "refused to toe the line" and the administration had problems working with them, for example the Sultan Ibrahim Njoya of the Bamun and Chief Charles Atangana of the Ewondo.

²⁴ Due to the difference in the status of the Cameroon and Togoland, the administration preferred the use of the terminology "Canton" instead of "Circle" as they did in colonies of AOF.

²⁵ *Rapport de tournée de recensement dans le groupement Mouamenam, du 8 au 14 Decembre, 1940*, APA 11801/B, NAY, Cameroon. For an earlier example, see Chief administrator of colonies to the Commissioner of French Republic, letter of September 19th, 1932, AgeFom 989/3430, CAOM.

²⁶ *Rapport de tournée dans le groupement Mouamenam, du 8 au 14 Decembre, 1940*, APA 11801/B, NAY.

later, in 1949 his subjects were relieved.²⁷ The French administration was also responsible for the reign of allegedly unscrupulous and wicked chiefs like *Chef Supérieur* Essoumboua of Elong (Bakossi) and his neighbouring counterpart Chief Pandong of the Mbo. In order to please the administration, these chiefs were very brutal to their subjects and as a result, three villages departed from the administration of the Elong chief (Njob, Limbo and Ninong villages) to the British zone.²⁸ These unpopular and illegitimate chiefs took pleasure in maltreating their subjects to please the administration.²⁹ A concrete demonstration of the pressure imposed on the administered people through the chiefs and by the French administration was the use of the *Indigénat*, which led to large-scale migration of French subjects into the British zone.

The *Indigénat* was a French system of government which deprived the subjects of the liberties of criticism, association, and movement. The system gave to the French administration the power to inflict disciplinary penalties, without trial for a wide range of minor offences.³⁰ Established by decree in 1924, the *Indigénat* conferred on French and French trained administrators broad disciplinary powers and unchecked authority on the locals without trial for a variety of ill-defined violations.

²⁷ Rapport de tournée effectué par le chef de la Subdivision en Région Bakaka, Balondo et Manehas du 4 au 13 Juillet et du 17 au 30 Juillet 1938, APA 11799/H, NAY.

²⁸ Rapport de tournée au pays Elong et Mbo, du 28 Janvier au 5 Février, 1938, APA 11799/H, NAY.

²⁹ Interviews with informants in former border villages on the French side, notably Ewane Mandengue and Nseke Eko of Moungo; Moukouelle Moukouelle Benjamin and Moukete Abel of Mombo; Moukete Moukete Gustav and Anoke Gaston of Mouyouka; Enoge Frederick of Abang; Akoue Norbert and Melango Nzume Jacques of Mouamenam and Mbape Pandong of Mbouroukou. Check list of informants for the various dates of interview.

³⁰ Gardinier, *Cameroon*, p. 16. Thomas Hodgkin, *Nationalism in colonial Africa*, New York: New York University Press, 1957, p.35.

The system was condemned at the Brazzaville Conference of 1944, and abolished in 1946.³¹ What was the British system of government?

British administration officially began on April 1, 1916 when General Dobell was named, by an Order in Council to administer the territory. It should be recalled here that as Britain acquired Cameroon as a bargaining chip they thus showed little interest in it. Emmanuel Chiabi says the French were more anxious than the British to occupy Cameroon in the post-war period.³² While the French made clear their intention to administer Cameroon directly as a French colony, the British were content with the administrative structure that linked their Cameroon with Nigeria.³³

Britain requested and the League of Nations granted their request to administer Cameroon as part of their colony of Nigeria, an "integral part of Nigeria" thus a substate.³⁴ It is evident that such an arrangement, which leads some scholars to refer to Cameroon as a "colony of a region of a colony", was more to foster administrative facility than to integrate Cameroon with Nigeria. Our interest here however is neither the rhetoric justifying Cameroon's integration with Nigeria nor the application of Nigerian laws in administering Cameroon but the fact that British Southern Cameroons comprised four administrative divisions: Bamenda, Ossidinge, Kumba and Victoria. The last two Divisions contained the bulk of those who would become border groups notably the Bakossi, Bakweri, Balong Balondo and the Mbo. The difference between these British administrative divisions and those established earlier

³¹ Raymond-Marin Lemesle, *La Conférence de Brazzaville de 1944: contexte et repères*. Paris: C.H.E.A.M., no date provided, pp.53-54. Laurent Gbagbo, *Réflexions sur la conférence de Brazzaville*. Yaounde: Editions Clé, 1978, pp.29-35. *Conférence Africaine Française de Brazzaville du 30-1-1944 au 8-2-1944*. Paris: Ministère des Colonies, 1945.

³² Emmanuel Mucho Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon. A history of substate nationalism and disparate union, 1914-1961*. Volume I, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 1997, p.12.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ As early as 1921, the Report on the Cameroons Province says that the Southern portion of the British sphere of the late German colony of the Cameroons was by then called the "Cameroons Province of Nigeria", p. 47, ICOMM.

on by the Germans was the splitting of the former Victoria District to form the Victoria and Kumba Divisions. Civil officers administered these Divisions.

The chief administrator, the Resident, Major F. H. Ruxton, began the administration in 1921 with a dedication to emphasise native administration. The Resident instructed the Assistant District Officers (ADOs) to regroup peoples of their Districts and establish warrant chiefs who would act like Headmen or the “eyes” of the administration at the lowest level. It was for this reason that F. B. Carr of Kumba Division divided his Division into twenty-four village areas, each under a salaried village head.³⁵ Victoria Division was at first divided into two Native Districts-Buea and Victoria but later, in 1931, the Balong Native District was created and added to it.³⁶ It is fundamental to note here that the ADOs and the chiefs in charge of these respective village areas were those who were directly concerned with the administration of and matters concerning border administration and upkeep. The chiefs for example were held responsible for any of their subjects who escaped or crossed the boundary and were caught without official passes.

As they had in Nigeria, the British administration also took an interest on the character of the society they governed. In the Cameroons for example, Indirect Rule was easily adapted to the Northern and NorthWestern Chiefdoms, which had a more organised and centralised authority. With regard to the more decentralised and small independent societies of the South and Southwest, which included the border groups, they conducted a series of reports (Assessment, Reassessment, Intelligence etc), which provided them with information about the various ethnic groups to be administered.

³⁵ *Annual Report* for Kumba Division for the year 1924, Ba 1924/1, pp. 20-21, NAB.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Chiabi reports the shortage and the inexperience of British colonial administrators who administered Southern Cameroons throughout their period of administration:

The Southern Cameroons became also a “dumping ground” for inexperienced colonial administrators ... Divisional Officers (DO) were expected to have had nine to twenty years of experience. In Cameroon, ..., these stipulations were often ignored or violated, and it was common to find probationers- officers who were so-to-speak, doing internships.³⁷

In 1921 for example, the ADOs for Kumba and Victoria, F.B. Carr and A.G.T. Gier respectively were probationers.³⁸ Usually, the few available British administrators were assigned various duties at the same time. In 1929 for example, the ADO of Buea was also in charge of the Provisional Prison, the Buea Treasury, and the Native Administration. The Resident, E. J. Arnett, supervised the Divisional Administration, served as magistrate and had to ensure the proper functioning of plantations. Kumba, Buea and Victoria were the chief administrative towns of the border peoples under British rule in the area under study.

From the start, the British colonial administration used the chiefs as the major advisory bodies turning them into “Native Authorities”(NA) each having its own “Native Court” and “Native Treasury”. Each “Native Court” and “Native Treasury” exercised judicial and fiscal functions respectively. Each NA was responsible for the smooth functioning of the administrative machinery of its area of jurisdiction. It was also the duty of the NA to provide health and educational services, deal with and

³⁷ Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p.13.

³⁸ Chiabi suggests that probationers were sent to administer the Cameroons probably because the territory was regarded as a substate and because it was calm and provided an easy training ground, see *The making of modern Cameroon*, p. 13.

provide funds for the overall advancement of its area.³⁹ The NA worked in close collaboration with the colonial administration.

Later on, there was a slight distinction in British colonial policy between Lugard's School and a new school that developed, the Cameron School. Cameron worked with Lugard. The Cameron School appeared as from 1930 with a new interpretation of the system of Indirect Rule altering the label to "Indirect Administration". Cameron's interpretation was more liberal and not restricted to preserving the personal and unfettered rule of the chiefs over their people. This new school abandoned the rather autocratic ideas of the Lugard School and concentrated on the Chiefs Council rather than the chief as the essential element in the Native Authority. This has been said to be the forerunner of the principle of "Local government" which continued into the post-colonial period.⁴⁰

It was as a result of this change in policy interpretation that from the early 1930s, the colonial administration began incorporating the literate classes using them as advisors where possible. By the end of the 1930s, some of the NAs of the border groups were selected to manage their own financial affairs- revenue collection and expenditure notably the Balong and the Victoria (Bakweri) NAs.⁴¹ The outbreak of World War Two frustrated all efforts by the administration to improve upon the representative nature of NAs. All attention was geared towards the war. Even after the war, the more the colonial administration opened NAs to literate and progressive forces, the more complicated and difficult it was to handle the two administrative systems. The system of NAs was becoming unpopular. The fact however that the

³⁹ Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p.166. For more on NAs and their roles in British West Africa, cf. Lord Hailey, *Native Administration in the British African territories, Part III, West Africa: Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia*. London, 1951.

⁴⁰ R.E.Robinson, "Why 'Indirect Rule' has been replaced by 'Local Government' in the nomenclature of British Native Administration" *Journal of African Administration*, 2,3, (1950):12-15.

⁴¹ Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p. 18.

chiefs were called upon to collaborate in the local administration of their areas later led to the formation of the Southern Cameroons House of Chiefs (SCHC) in 1960, an administrative organ that was absent in the French administered part of Cameroon.

What were the colonial judicial systems?

A DUAL SYSTEM OF COURTS

When the Allied army was occupying the territory, their systems of justice were substituted with the German legal system. Only military war councils of the army of occupation were authorised to handle all criminal affairs. The British like the French established a dual system of courts in Cameroon. In exercising justice, the French always made a distinction between Africans and Europeans, there were *la Justice Européenne* and *la Justice Indigène*. Following the European system of justice, by a decree of May 6, 1916, a tribunal was instituted by the French administration in Douala.⁴² Appeals from this court were taken to the court of AEF and the Court of Appeal or *Chambre d'Homologation de l'AEF*, which had extended powers into Cameroon. By decree of January 12, 1917, besides the Douala Tribunal, a Justice of Peace was created as existed in AEF. This system of justice remained in an embryonic stage until in 1920 when by decree of August 8, a Tribunal of First Instance was opened in Douala, its status and competence fixed just like those of the AEF.⁴³ This Tribunal of First Instance was attached to the appeal Court at Brazzaville. It was not until the passage of the decree of December 29, 1922 that this Tribunal was detached from Brazzaville and the Cameroon legal system acquired its autonomy that embodied: *Conseil d'Appel, Cour Criminelle, Tribunal de Première Instance*

⁴² *Rapport Annuel* pour l'année 1924, p. 53, CAOM.

⁴³ *Rapport Annuel* pour l'année 1924, p. 53, CAOM.

(Douala), and *des Justices de Paix Ordinaire*. It would be superfluous to go into the details of all of these.

The French instituted what was called, Purely Indigenous Courts-*les Tribunaux Entièrement Indigène*, which were for the Africans or the *sujets*. These embodied two sections; Court of Village Chiefs and Indigenous Courts. In the Court of Village Chiefs, the village heads passed most of the judgements in criminal and civil matters, but only the local administrator could administer sanctions on crimes, on rebellion and political offences. In the Indigenous Court, there were three members (a President and two African Assessors) who only had a consultative role in criminal cases. From 1916 to 1921, village and indigenous courts remained courts of little importance. By decree of April 13, 1921, a *Tribunal d'Homologation* was opened next to the Court of First Instance in Douala, which suppressed all strictly indigenous Courts. By a decree of July 31, 1927, Courts of First and Second Degrees replaced Indigenous Courts.

In the Districts, the French instituted, *Conseils de Notables* which were composed of important persons appointed by the Governor from names submitted by the chiefs, Heads of families, and local merchants of each ethnic group within the *Circonscription*. The local administrator was required by decree, to convene the Council twice a year and to consult its members on the forms and rates for taxes and fees.⁴⁴ Here Africans only had a consultative role in government initiatives, but however, the administration sought to give representation to all the ethnic groups in the *Circonscription*. In Douala for example, in August 5, 1933, the Governor named a new Council of Notables containing eight Duala and six other Africans from the

⁴⁴ *Rapport Annuel* pour l'Année 1933, p. 6, Archives of the Ministry of External Affairs in Paris hereafter cited as AMEA.

immigrant groups.⁴⁵ A significant remark about the French judicial system was that the French were quick to punish individual chiefs who stepped out of line.⁴⁶ What was the nature of the judicial system in the British Cameroons?

Under the British in the Cameroons the judicial system was that of Nigeria, except that the Supreme Court of Nigeria had no jurisdiction. There was a Provincial Court of which the Resident was Judge with full powers. The officers in charge of Divisions were Commissioners of the Court with powers limited to two years imprisonment. All Commissioners of the Court had jurisdiction over Europeans as well as locals. Full copies of the proceedings in cases with sentence of over six months' imprisonment were sent to Nigeria for confirmation.

According to the 1922 Report on the British sphere, the Governor in Executive Council reviewed all capital sentences.⁴⁷ The criminal law was the Criminal Code of Nigeria. Flogging was only allowed under the Code in exceptional circumstances in cases of slave dealing and burglary, and all summary punishment was done away with. Administrative and disciplinary proceedings were illegal. The civil law was the English Common Law. The law was modified by the proviso that British Courts shall in Civil Cases affecting the locals recognise local law and custom when not repugnant to natural justice and humanity, especially in matters relating to marriage and inheritance.⁴⁸

A District Officer (DO) or Assistant DO (ADO) in charge of a Division had jurisdiction in civil matters where the debt, damage or claim did not exceed £50, and

⁴⁵ David Gardinier, *Political behaviour on the community of Douala, Cameroon: reactions of the Douala people to loss of hegemony, 1944-1955*. Ohio: Ohio University, 1966, p. 8.

⁴⁶ An example was the case of the Douala chiefs as reported by Ralph A. Austen and Jonathan Derrick, *Middlemen of the Cameroons Rivers. The Douala and their hinterland, c.1600-c.1960*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.144.

⁴⁷ *Report on the Cameroons Province for the year 1923*, p. B3, ICOMM.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

in criminal matters could inflict a fine of £50 and /or order imprisonment for two years. A flogging of twenty-five lashes was added if the case was one where flogging was allowed under the code. Other Commissioners could try civil cases where the claim involved did not exceed £25, and in criminal cases could order a fine of £25 and/or three months imprisonment. All sentences of imprisonment in excess of six months, sentences of corporal punishment exceeding twelve strokes, and sentences involving a fine of £50, required confirmation by the Chief Justice, who for that purpose was furnished with a full copy of the proceedings, together with a report by the officer trying the case.⁴⁹ The Chief Justice reviewed all capital sentences and if confirmed by him were considered and decided by the Governor of Nigeria.

One of the major judicial institutions of Indirect Rule was the establishment of Native Courts by the Resident from 1916 to 1922, to meet the needs of the different Districts. These courts were constituted by warrant approved by the Lieutenant Governor. The warrant stated that the area of the court's jurisdiction, defined the powers conferred upon it, and named the chiefs appointed as members. These courts adjudicated, between locals only and their law and customs, together with such alien law as they were expressly authorised to administer. According to the 1923 Report on the Cameroons Province, the object of this all was to make the local and the Provincial courts competent parts of one judicial system and to relieve the latter of work, which could be done by the locals themselves.⁵⁰

Native Courts were created in different categories notably A,B,C and D like the NAs. Category "A" courts were those, which had powers in civil and criminal cases except for capital cases (those involving death sentences which could not be

⁴⁹ *Report on the Cameroons Province* for the year 1923, p. B3, ICOMM.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

carried out except when confirmed by the Government). Category "B" courts included those which could exercise jurisdiction in civil action in which debts or fines did not exceed £50. The courts also handled criminal cases where the offence was punished by not more than two years imprisonment, 24 lashes or a fine of £50 or the equivalent in the local law and customs. Category "C" courts included those with civil jurisdiction over cases whose fines did not exceed £10 while for category "D" courts the fine was £5 with criminal cases punishable up to three months imprisonment and twelve lashes.

Even though the local people advocated for a plurality of courts, the administration viewed the maintenance of the courts as financially expensive. This was a much cheaper option for the administration to operate than a full blown judicial system involving professional, trained lawyers. It was for this reason that the Native Courts in Victoria Division for example were reduced in number from fifteen to six between January and December 1918.⁵¹ Native Courts were set up along the borderlands on the British side notably in the lands of the Bakweri, Balondo, Balong and Bakossi. From the coast inland, there were the Victoria (C), Tiko (D), Bakweri (C), Lower Balondo (D), Upper Balondo (D), Balong (D), Bakossi (D), and the Ninong (D) Native Courts. The NAs worked with the Native Courts and British administrative officers to ensure a smooth implementation of Indirect Rule. These courts formed the core of all traditional authorities and were fully recognised no matter whether they were fake, unrepresentative of tribal values or artificially created. How did the British and the French control the boundary that was drawn between them?

⁵¹ *Annual Report 1918*, Victoria Division, File No. 329/1917G, NAB.

BOUNDARY CONTROL AND POLICING

As early as September 7, 1922, there were instructions under which the local people required permits from the Inspector General of Police to enter French Cameroon.⁵² The French authorities for non-payment of tax could prosecute those who did not show this permit to the French guards before crossing the boundary. An important moment in the administration of the Anglo-French boundary in the Cameroons was marked by the despatch of the Governor of French Cameroon to the Senior Resident, Buea on the subject of "passports for Natives between British and French Cameroons".⁵³ He reported that it had been brought to his notice that some Africans had left from the French to the British side without an official pass and suggested that such persons be followed up and made to return for they had broken the law under which they were placed. As a principal reason given to halt this situation, the French government said that such clandestine trespassers helped to spread epidemics. The French administration also expressed the need to prevent crimes from one side of the boundary to the other. Thus they hoped the Resident would agree with the French government on the imposition of passports to black trespassers.⁵⁴

It was in response to this French proposal that the Resident sent a confidential memorandum to the Secretary, Southern Provinces, Lagos with the observation that the real reasons for the French proposal were neither health nor crime prevention but to stop the recent influx into British Cameroons of large numbers of labourers from

⁵² *West Africa*, Report on British sphere of the Cameroons for the year 1923, ICOMM.

⁵³ Despatch no. 129 of June 24, 1925, CO 649/30, PRO.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, the emphasis is mine. The stress on the colour of trespassers was necessary for it was important to distinguish very quickly and let go European missionaries who were allowed to trespass without official passes

the French side to work in the plantations.⁵⁵ While awaiting a reply to their proposal, the French posted guards along the frontier to prevent emigration but it was easy to elude them.

According to the Resident what the French apparently wanted was for the British to extend the Immigration Restriction Ordinance to locals and turn back those who had no passports.⁵⁶ But again he observed that it would be very difficult to enforce such a measure; the boundary was of great length, say 275 miles (out of this distance the portion under study is about 135 miles); it intersected tribes and could be crossed at innumerable points. It would therefore not be practicable, except at great expense, to enforce a system of passports on those people, who came under the French description of *Voyageurs Noirs*. The Resident observed that their Movements were not clandestine.⁵⁷

For the British government, it was difficult enough to maintain an admittedly far from effective control along a part of the boundary. An effective passport system, it was observed, would probably kill trade between the two countries, but the French viewed that event with equanimity if it meant that thereby emigration was entirely checked.⁵⁸ To the French, it was more serious to lose men than money.

The Resident observed that a rigid passport system would have wider implications than the reduction of inter-Camerouns trade.⁵⁹ There was first and foremost the plantation labour question. It was observed that sometimes people went across the boundary not just for plantation labour but also for various other reasons.

⁵⁵ Despatch no. 129 of June 24, 1925, CO 649/30, PRO

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Letter no15513/23 of October 8th, 1923, CO 649/30, PRO.

⁵⁹ Despatch no. 129 of June 24, 1925, CO 649/30, PRO .

That is why for most of 1925 for example, four to five hundred Basossi (a kin and neighbours of the Bakossi) people went over the boundary from the French to the British side, not for plantation labour but due to exactions by the French in labour and tax. Even before that, by mid 1924, a large number of Bamoun people crossed over the border from the French side into the Bamenda Division on the British side due to political discontent in Foumban.⁶⁰ All these people were refugees and the application to them of the Immigration Restriction would mean that future immigrants would have to be deported, a measure not easy to carry out. When the British expressed their difficulties with imposing passports on Africans, the French decided to go ahead with their plans and forbade the people under their administration from leaving the territory without the authority of the Governor or his delegates.⁶¹ This restriction was a direct outcome of the flow of French subjects from the French to the British Cameroons.

THE USE OF BOTH CUSTOMS AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS ALONG THE BOUNDARY

By December 31st, 1926 among the European staff in charge of the Cameroons Province were two collectors of customs, one in the port of Victoria and the other in charge of customs stations on the French or Eastern frontier. Initially both customs and police departments were employed on the boundary to repress smuggling and to collect duties to raise revenue. When the amount used to prevent smuggling and to control the boundary began rising above the revenue it collected, the British administration replaced the customs preventive service by the police along the boundary.

⁶⁰ At Foumban, the French had a great deal of trouble with some of the followers of the Sultan, chief Njoya who was anti French. Chief administrator of colonies to the Commissioner of French Republic, September 19th, 1932, AgeFom 989/3430 CAOM.

⁶¹ Despatch no.1070 of December 29, 1925, CO 649/31, Cameroons 1926 PRO.

There were four clerks and thirty-four preventive service men employed on the Cameroons frontier distributed over four major stations all of which fell under the section of the boundary under study, Tiko, Mundame, Mpundu, and Ngab.⁶² The customs preventive service had proved to be totally inadequate and smuggling was rife. It was so serious that British firms were quite unable to compete with the smuggled trade. For an example smuggled tobacco and French cigarettes from *Societe Jean Bastos*, killed the sale of tobacco and cigarettes in the European shops in Victoria, British Cameroons; consumers could buy for £10 what would cost them £16 at the nearest Eastern Nigerian port town of Calabar.⁶³

The police finally rejected various alternative schemes for increasing the strength and efficiency of the existing customs preventive service. The preventive work was to be carried out by a trained disciplined body of men (preferably Cameroonians) who could work at any time, in case of necessity. According to oral sources, sometimes it was possible for traders and smugglers to negotiate with or "settle" the Customs officers who were mostly Nigerians and did not hesitate to take bribes and allow smuggled goods across the boundary.⁶⁴

It was further proposed to increase considerably the number of stations to which preventive men were posted. Such stations were not to be revenue-collecting stations; their functions would be to divert to the revenue stations as much as possible of the intercepted imports, which were smuggled at the time.⁶⁵ After this, other customs stations were opened in the interior at Bombe (Bakundu), Mbonzie, Tombel-

⁶² Despatch no.1070 of December 29, 1925, CO 649/31, Cameroons 1926 PRO.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Interview with John Ndobe Ngwese, retired businessman, on May 15, 1999 at Ninong, Cameroon. Also see Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, pp.113-114.

⁶⁵ The total force required at these stations was composed of : 1 Commissioner, 2 Sergeants, 3 Corporals, 4 Lance-Corporals and 58 Constables.

Loum road, Muesoh (Mwambong), Ebonemin (Ninong), Nyan (Elong), and Mwabi (Poola). The total cost estimated for the first year was £3,210. Regarding the length of the boundary to be patrolled and the prevalence of smuggling at the time, neither the force suggested nor the expenditure involved could, according to Governor Graeme Thomson, be regarded as excessive. Eventually it was suggested that all extra revenue obtained by the adoption of the change should substantially exceed the cost of maintaining the boundary.

THE LAISSEZ-PASSER

With regards to border administration proper, it was as early as 1917 that the French forbade all clandestine emigration in Cameroon. By a decree signed that year, all the inhabitants of Old Cameroon (Kamerun) were forbidden to leave the colony without an authorisation of the Commissioner or of the head of the respective administrative unit or *Circonscription*.⁶⁶ This decree was reinforced eight years later by another.

The *Laissez-Passer* was initially instituted as we have seen by the French government ostensibly for health reasons. It was to control the spread of sleeping sickness in the French administered part of Cameroon. From 1923 to 1946 it was strictly implemented in Cameroon. From January 30th 1923, there was an *arrete* restricting the movements of the local people and by further decrees of May 6th, and November 4th, 1924, what the French administration called *vagabondage* was suppressed.⁶⁷ What the French administration meant by *un vagabon*, according to Kaptue, was hardly applicable to the African way of life

⁶⁶ JOC, No.3 of January 1, 1917, p. 318, CAOM. Also see file No. Vt 38/17 Exodus of the population, (Translated file title), NAY.

⁶⁷ Leon Chedjou Kaptue, "L'Administration coloniale et la circulation des indigènes au Cameroun: Le Laissez-Passer, 1923-1946", *Afrika Zamani*, a Review of African history, nos. 10 and 11, Yaounde, Cameroon, 1979, p.163. Despatch by Mahoude to the Head of the Region of North Cameroon, dated March 27, 1924. Vt 38/17, NAY.

where there was no fixed notion of a home for home was every where.⁶⁸ The French administration in instituting punishment on those arrested for *vagabondage*, hoped to maintain the people in their respective administrative units for easy exploitation. The punishment was from 15 days to 6 months of imprisonment.⁶⁹ Still eager to maintain the people within their own administrative units so as to have easy and quick access to them whenever they needed labour, the French administration passed a major decree on July 9th, 1925, in which mention was first made of the words *Laissez-Passer*.⁷⁰ Article III of the decree reads: " In the interior of the territory, the authorisation to move from one's administrative unit to another...will be done by the presentation of either: a Laissez-Passer, or a work permit issued by the administration."⁷¹ It was either the Governor or his delegates who were to grant this authority and no authority would be granted unless a deposit of 500 francs was made payable on return and a special tax of 25 francs to include a passport was paid.

The *Laissez-Passer* contained the bearer's name, the name of his village and its chief, the purpose of travelling and the length of time or approximate duration of the stay. If a European did not sign it, it was considered invalid and the date had to be current. Later, a medical visa was added to it as well as a fingerprint usually of the index finger of the bearer's left hand. Despite all these precautions, there were many cases of escape for it was impossible, as the administration admitted, to catch trespassers for according to them, all Africans look

⁶⁸ Kaptue, *L'administration coloniale*, p. 164.

⁶⁹ Marchand to Heads of Circonscriptions, No. 49 of August 18, 1928, APA 11367/A, NAY. Also see JOC, of May 6th, 1924, p.358, NAY.

⁷⁰ JOC, No. 127 of August 15, 1925, pp.322-325, CAOM.

⁷¹ Ibid. p. 323. The translation is mine.

alike “ rien ne ressemble plus a un negre qu'un autre negre”.⁷² The institution and control of the *Laissez-Passer* was one of the major reasons for the constant flights to British Cameroon.

It was probably due to boundary control problems on sea as well that the French later issued another decree stating that persons travelling from the French to the British Cameroons or inversely should undertake passport formalities.⁷³ Such persons had to have a *Laissez-passer* from the emigration and immigration services.⁷⁴ The *Laissez-passer* was made compulsory for journeys made both by land and by sea. Chiefs whose subjects escaped and were caught were strictly punished by the French administration. This made the chiefs, in turn to impose fines or corporal punishment on any caught escapee or his family member.⁷⁵

Those caught by the administration had to do unpaid labour on public works before regaining their liberty. Sometimes, they were made to cut grass, dig holes; they were caned publicly to set an example and in the case of smuggling the goods were confiscated.⁷⁶ In Victoria Division for example, the capture of two groups of smugglers in Bimbia waters during 1928-1929 resulted in the seizure of goods valued at a total of £1, 218.⁷⁷

⁷² Chief of the Circonscription of Edea to the Commissioner of the Republic, December 11, 1930, APA 11367/A, NAY. Kaptue, “L’administration coloniale”, 179.

⁷³ This decree was passed by the chief of security for Free French Africa, Captain Legret cf. APA 1119, *Laissez-passer principes*, avis du 9 mai, 1942.

⁷⁴ Report by Granier, December 14, 1940, A PA 11801/B, NAY.

⁷⁵ Eye witness accounts by Ntoko Fritz Mukete and Blasius Nzume on May 17, 1999 at Ndom, Cameroon. Interview with Professor V.G.Fanso on July 8th, 1999 at Yaounde, Cameroon.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Tc/ 1923/1, see memo. From Residence Cameroons Province to Secretary, Southern Provinces, Enugu, June 26th 1929, NAB.

THE COLONIAL ECONOMY OF THE BORDERLANDS

The Anglo-French boundary divided ethnic groups whose livelihood traditionally depended upon an exchange of goods with either a part of their group or other closely related groups directly across the boundary. The imposition of the Anglo-French boundary therefore seriously threatened economic interdependence among border groups. What were the economic orientations of the British and the French? What were the principal sources of revenue and how did it affect the lives of the border people?

A major source of colonial revenue was taxation. Before the advent of the Germans, African subjects owed their chiefs loyalty, there was no taxation. It was in 1903 that Governor Puttkamer, by Ordinance no. 53 of May 16th, introduced the notion of taxation. Tax was put at 3marks for men and 2 marks for women. The local people protested the imposition of taxes. In the Douala circonscription for example, two notables; Joseph Bell and Edimo Elang were taken to court for protesting against taxation and were condemned to five years of imprisonment and sent back to Campo, their place of birth.⁷⁸ Tax was progressively increased from 3 to 5 and later to 10 marks.⁷⁹ It was in 1917 that Capitation (head tax) tax was re-enforced in the French sphere with a possibility of payment by undertaking *prestation* at 1franc a day of labour. By 1920, women were made to pay capitation tax of 3 Frs. for those without children and 1franc for women with children. Women with more than two children were exempted.⁸⁰ In 1921, tax for women was increased to 5 francs for those without

⁷⁸ *Rapport Annuel* pour l'année 1924, pp. 3-4, CAOM.

⁷⁹ This was around 12F 50cents of French currency and 10 pence a mark, but this rate depreciated after the Allied victory to about 6pence a mark, for more on currency parity, see next chapter.

⁸⁰ *Rapport Annuel* pour l'année 1924, p. 5, CAOM. The French explained the taxation of women without children by the fact that they had no excuse remaining at home whereas they could carry out economic activities.

children and all those with one or more children were exempted. Two years later, tax for men was increased to 15francs while women without children paid 10 francs or ten days of labour. Ngoh reports that in two Districts in the North, children over twelve years also paid the capitation tax-a situation, which was non-existent in the British zone.⁸¹ In places where commercial activities were at an embryonic stage, like in Kribi, Edea, Yaounde and Ebolowa, tax could be paid in good quality ivory or rubber. For ivory, below 6kg was evaluated at 3 francs; above 6kg was 8 francs while good quality rubber was evaluated at 1.50 francs per kg.⁸² For proof of tax payment, each individual received a metal piece or a box, which he had to carry along and show on request. Those exempted from taxation were workers, officers and soldiers, customs officers, civil servants and carriers for the administrator who earned a monthly salary.

Besides the capitation tax, French subjects had to pay a host of other taxes like the following: tax on trade, tax on recruiting labour, tax on hunting rights, tax on enrolment in civil registry, tax on living in a government area, tax on slaughtering cattle, market tax, landing tax for ships sailing on French waters, tax on the authorisation to recruit drivers, tax on Indigenous Courts, tax on permits to carry arms, tax on passport issuance, tax on the right to build in Douala, Edea and Kribi, and tax on organising celebrations and merry making among others.⁸³ All tax defaulters had to pay 1,000 francs or serve three months imprisonment.

⁸¹ Ngoh, *Camroon*, p. 105.

⁸² JOC, No. 1, November 1, 1916, p. 4. CAOM. For more on Capitation tax in French Cameroon, AgeFom 2689/3, CAOM.

⁸³ JOC, No. 3, January 1, 1917, pp.2-8, CAOM.

In addition to the capitation tax, there was a form of compulsory labour tax called *Prestation*, which was strictly a tax, which yielded labour for work on railway and public works. This tax was an annual obligation on all African adult males and it was instituted in French Cameroon by decree of October 9, 1925 with a slight increase of the daily rate from 1 to 2 Frs. a day in centres like Douala, Mbanga, Nkongsamba, Edea, Eseka and Yaounde.⁸⁴ Elsewhere it was 1 franc 50 cents. If work exceeded the usual ten days, workers were sometimes given some minute remuneration. By 1926, the maximum length of time a worker could put in was 10-15 days. Sometimes when they were taken to work at more than 225kms from their villages, workers were given a ration in kind throughout the period of work. When work exceeded, some small compensatory ration in kind was given. Provisions for health, nutrition, housing and transport were often grossly neglected.⁸⁵

The use of the *Corvée* or forced labour by which the administration utilised force to recruit people to work for free made the French system of taxation burdensome on the taxpayers and they found as a solution, escapes, through bush paths to the British zone.⁸⁶ The system utilised brutal local administrative guards who constantly harassed the people for proof of tax payments. This caused the people to work out ways of escaping such controls by taking refuge in the neighbouring British zone until the exercise was over. Some administrative reports record the brutality

⁸⁴ *Rapport Annuel* pour l'année 1926, pp. 8-9, CAOM.

⁸⁵ Leon Kaptue, *Cameroun. Travail et main-d'oeuvre au Cameroun sous régime Français 1916-1952*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1986, pp. 106-126. From Commissioner of the Republic to Minister of Colonies, No. 7gm of March 24, 1926, AgeFom 2689/3, CAOM. Also see JOCof August 4 and July 13, 1922, CAOM.

⁸⁶ On interviewing some of our informants, it was said that the tax collectors' maltreatment of the people also contributed to the constant flights. Interview with Professor Martin Njeuma on August 2nd 1999 at Buea, Cameroon.

committed regularly by these administrative guards' like Petrus Simo and Foneba on the Elong people.⁸⁷

Sometimes, escapes were organised by chiefs. There is the example of one Elong village called Mwangwekan, which was cut into two by the Anglo-French boundary. The chief, Ngounte with the bulk of his subjects were placed under British administration while twenty-two of his people and a part of the village were subjects of the French administration. The administration of this village was a great trouble for the French because each time the officials passed to collect taxes, Ngounte arranged for his people to escape and take refuge in the British zone.⁸⁸ They did the same for *prestation*. The people did so because tax was higher in the French zone than in the British zone and wages were relatively higher including better working conditions.⁸⁹ The minister complained that the salaries paid in French Cameroon were very low and wanted the situation to be redressed. To show this disparity in wages, some workers in the Njombe plantation converted workers' salaries from francs to shillings to show how minimal their salaries were compared to those paid by the British in neighbouring towns like Tiko and Victoria. The revelation discouraged many local workers of the border area from working on the French side of the boundary.⁹⁰ The news paper, *La Dépêche Coloniale et Maritime* reports that due to the high taxes, poor

⁸⁷ Report No. 294/M of January 5, 1938, by administrator Gariod, p. 7, APA 11796/C, NAY.

⁸⁸ Report No. 294/M of January 5, 1938, by administrator Gariod, p. 7, APA 11796/C, NAY.

⁸⁹ Minister of Colonies to the High Commissioner, Yaounde, July 19, 1939, No. 79, Aff. Pol. 2689/3/5 CAOM.

⁹⁰ Commissioner of French Republic to the Director of the Njombe plantation, No. 746g of October 25, 1923, Aff. Pol. 2689/3/5, CAOM.

wages and appalling working conditions on the French side, many workers fled to the British zone.⁹¹ What was the system of taxation in the British zone?

Other than the customs, the principal sources of revenue on the British zone were the poll tax, the pedlar's licence and the jangali tax. These direct taxes were paid through the District and village heads. All able-bodied African male paid the poll or capitation tax. Exceptions were made for the old and infirm, scholars, policemen and members of the government staff specially seconded for service in the Cameroons. The Germans had earlier introduced this tax but at a higher rate: 10 marks for major towns and areas of high paying capacity and 6 marks in Districts or parts where the higher rate appeared to be beyond the paying capacity of the people. The German system of poll tax was retained in all its essentials, but at a reduced rate. In Victoria and Kumba Divisions, which were the chief administrative areas of the border groups under study, the rate was 8s. Further inland, at Ossidinge Division for example, the rate varied from 7s to 3s while in the Bamenda Division it stood at 3s 6d.⁹² There was however one marked difference. Under the Germans all the tax went to general revenue, but under the British, half of the tax was paid to revenue. The other half was allocated for expenditure on works and services of public utility calculated to promote the development of the Division in which the tax was collected. At the early stage of British administration, Africans who were unable or unwilling to pay the poll tax were made to pay with their labour but this practice was later abolished. Village chiefs were responsible for the collection of this poll tax. They retained 10% of the sum collected as payment for their services. In areas where the bulk of the people were

⁹¹ "Le regime du travail au Cameroun", issue of July 17, 1925, CAOM. To remedy these poor conditions between 1922 and 1925, the French government introduced what was called *la ration en nature* comprising food usually rice (500g), meat (125g) and groundnuts (300g) per worker. This made the workers to develop remarkable muscles which enabled them work harder and for longer hours hence enhancing productivity. Private employers gave "chop money" of 6 francs per worker a day.

⁹² *West Africa*, Reports on the British sphere of the Cameroons for the year 1921, p.57, ICOMM.

plantation labourers, the workers paid their taxes to the plantation managers who handed them over to the District heads. This system solved the problem of shortage of staff for tax collection that was faced by the British colonial administration.

Another local tax that yielded appreciable revenue was the pedlar's licence or travelling trader's tax. This was also a German tax that was retained. It was an annual tax payable by any African who traded beyond the limits of his village. Persons who owned cattle had to pay the jangali or cattle tax of 1s per head for their cattle through the village heads. Ngoh reports that this British system of taxation worked well and without difficulties.⁹³ Africans on the British side therefore, were not overburdened with a tax which did not exceed an income tax of 1s. 6d. in the £. Besides taxation, both governments got revenue from customs duties.

Both the British and the French governments on the major roads and recognised trade routes crossing the Anglo-French boundary established customs stations. From 1916 to about 1919, there were very few customs and preventive posts along the provisional boundary. After 1922 when the partition was confirmed, many more customs and preventive control posts were opened along the Anglo-French boundary.⁹⁴ These posts were at Victoria, Tiko, Misselele, Mudeka, Mpundu, Mombo, Mundame, Bombe, Ebubu, Mbonzie, Muesog, Nyan, Mwabi, Misso and Hunyopa.⁹⁵ Also, the number of patrol and customs officers along the boundary increased as the years went by. Cameroons Reports stipulate that officers of the British preventive service for example, increased from 67 in 1927 to 99 in 1930 and

⁹³ Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p.105.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ngoh, Ibid. Fanso, "Trans-Frontier relations", pp.325-328. Map below (p. 155) shows customs posts along the boundary.

later to 138 in 1939.⁹⁶ The British and French customs and preventive services usually operated in the same environments on their respective sides of the boundary.⁹⁷ In the British Cameroons, the German Tariff of customs dues remained in force until November 1, 1921 when the Nigerian Tariff replaced it and the fiscal boundaries between Nigeria and the Cameroons were abolished.⁹⁸ On the whole, customs dues and direct taxes made up the bulk of government revenue and it was because of the importance each power attached to customs revenue and the territorial trade within its sphere that there was a constant increase in the number of customs and preventive posts along the boundary. One of the tasks of these customs service was to check the flow of currency across the boundary. How did the boundary affect the currency that was in use?

Under the Germans, the currency in use in Kamerun was the German Mark. With the ousting of the Germans from the territory, the Mark was still in use for a while, a period during which both Mandatory powers settled their administrations. Both the French and the British administrations encouraged the use of western currency by paying the expanding labour force in European coin. They also insisted on receiving taxes in cash rather than in kind. According to Michael Crowder,⁹⁹ notes were generally slow to be accepted by the Africans especially in French West Africa, it was not until 1916 that notes currency were made legal tender in Nigeria under which Southern Cameroons was administered.

⁹⁶ *West Africa*, Reports on the Cameroons Province for the years 1927, 1929 and 1939, ICOMM.

⁹⁷ Pictures (pp. 156-161) below show the remains of the British and the French customs houses at Mbonzie-Edisse CDC camp; Tombel-Loum road; Mundek; and Mundame beach. The structures are now used by some local people as living quarters.

⁹⁸ *West Africa*, Report on the Cameroons for the year 1921, p. 57, ICOMM.

⁹⁹ Crowder, *West Africa*, p. 279.

The currency in use in the British sphere was the Pound Sterling -£.s.d. while the French used the French colonial franc-c.f.a.-*La Communauté Française Africaine*. British currency had earlier been introduced in the nineteenth century along the coast when the British struggled to replace the slave trade with legitimate trade. When the Germans annexed Cameroon, the Mark was introduced but following the partition of Kamerun in 1916, the sterling and the franc were in full usage in their respective spheres. The monetary systems on both spheres were closely related to those of the Mandatory powers so as to ensure that international trade would not be unsettled by changes in the rates of exchange. The increasing circulation of European currencies led to the introduction of modern banking institutions to assist the progress in trade. The British established banks like Barclays and the Bank of British West Africa with branches in Victoria while their French counterparts opened the *Banque de l'Afrique Occidentale* and *La Banque Internationale pour le Commerce et l'Industrie* (B.I.C.I.C) with branches in Douala. Up to 1925, the German mark was still in circulation in parts of Southern Cameroons. This was particularly along the boundary with French Cameroon where it was officially still kept in circulation with the franc.¹⁰⁰ As compared to the franc, Sterling enjoyed an international reputation and a marked degree of stability. This was why although Southern Cameroons suffered some currency difficulties in its internal trade; externally it enjoyed some advantages having Sterling as its principal foreign exchange currency.

The exploitation of natural and human resources of the borderland

Following the large-scale expropriation of the very fertile soils around Mount Cameroon for plantation agriculture, the German colonial government prescribed restricted reserves for the local Bakweri and Duala who originally owned the lands.

¹⁰⁰ *Annual Report on the Cameroons Province* for the year 1925, NAB.

By 1914 German planters held nearly 3,000,000 acres of land and employed some 18,000 workers.¹⁰¹ At that time there were some 58 estates in the colony, which cultivated a variety of crops, including rubber, palm products, cocoa and to a lesser extent tobacco, kola, tea, coffee and bananas.

In 1914/15, following British occupation of the area, the properties of German planters were confiscated and turned over to the Custodian of Enemy Property. When shortly afterwards the British took over the administration of the area, a government department was formed to manage all of the plantations. By 1922, the British Mandate Authority decided to get rid of them as the administrative costs of maintaining them were said to be prohibitive. The British Mandate Authority considered the option of returning the plantation lands to the Bakweri but finally decided to put them up for auction, with a restriction on bidding by ex-enemy nationals. Very few were sold. Two years later, in 1924, another auction was held in London, this time without restrictions on German bids. The former German owners bought almost all the estates. By 1924, although British Southern Cameroons was under British rule, there were three times as many German expatriates as British and the trade pattern in the territory was dominated by Germany. It was to Germany that the bulk of the plantation produce was still shipped and from which one half of the territory's imports were derived.

At the beginning of the World War II, the Custodian of Enemy Property expropriated the German estates again and considerations were given on how to dispose of them. The Bakweri elite group agitated for their retrieval but eventually, the British Trusteeship Authority decided to buy the plantations from the Custodian of Enemy Property for £850,000 and lease them to the Cameroons Development

¹⁰¹ Piet Konings, *Labour resistance in Cameroon. Managerial strategies & labour resistance in the agro-industrial plantations of Cameroon*. Leiden: African Studies Centre, 1993, p.37.

Corporation (CDC) in 1946 for a period of 60 years renewable.¹⁰² The CDC was charged with the responsibility of developing its estates and to pay special attention to the workers' social welfare. It had to pay direct taxes to the government and all its profits had to be used for the benefit of the people of the Trust Territory.

According to the Cameroons Report for 1921, the plantations were "dotted along the Anglo-French boundary from Tiko to Essossung".¹⁰³ Those that were very near to or closely affected by the boundary were the plantations in Tiko, Missellele, Penja-Njombe, Buba, Tombel, Ngab, Nyassosso, Kola-Nkute, Ngol and Essossoung. The plantation of the African Fruit Company, Tiko, was very close to the boundary and along the coastline. That was precisely where pillar number 16 was placed. This plantation was not cut through by the boundary but due to its closeness to the boundary, the Anglo-French Boundary Commission demanded the full support of the managers before delimiting that portion of the frontier. The Westafrikanische Pflanzungsgesellschaft Victoria (W.A.P.V) owned the Misselele plantations. This was a very extensive and well-developed plantation and its main crops were rubber and cocoa. When the Germans left, the Picot line drawn by the British and the French cut through the plantation leaving a smaller portion of the French side.¹⁰⁴ This resulted to further protests by the French who asked for an adjustment of the boundary to their advantage. After modifications, the British eventually took over the entire plantation resulting in an Anglo-French rivalry over the area.

¹⁰² Konings, *Labour resistance in Cameroon*, p.39. S. H.Bederman, *The Cameroons Development Corporation: partner in national growth*. Victoria: Bota CDC, 1968, p.19. By same author, *Plantation agriculture in Victoria Division West Cameroon, An historical introduction*. Paris: CNRS, 1975, pp. 349-360.

¹⁰³ *West Africa*, Report for the Cameroons Province for the year 1921, p.66, ICOMM.

¹⁰⁴ Victor Julius Ngoh, "Anglo-French rivalry over the Misselele plantations, 1916-1920: A case study on the economic motives for the partition of Africa", *Journal of the Third World Studies*, XII, 2, (1995): 273-299.

Another border resource that was exploited by both colonial administrations, were the tobacco plantations of Penja Nyombe/Njombe and Djongo in the lower Mounjo.¹⁰⁵ After efforts to resolve who should own these plantations, they were eventually claimed by the French. It was probably by way of compensation that other plantations along the boundary like those of Buba, Tombel, Ngab and Nyassosso were given to the British. These other plantations grew mainly coffee, cocoa, palm-oil, tobacco and to a lesser degree kola. The tobacco that was grown around this Kumba area and beyond was good quality and mostly exported. The area also had large units of timber exploitation notably at Ebonji, Etam, Mahole and Bakole in the North West. These timber concessions had a processing unit at Etam where there was a sawmill.¹⁰⁶ Further north was the Kola Nkut (Nkute) coffee plantation established by the Germans on two villages Kola and Nkut. Under the Germans, both villages cultivated the plantation with relatively no problems. The provisional partition cut through the plantation leaving Kola in the French zone and Nkut in the British zone.¹⁰⁷ Both administrations decided to resolve this problem through their land commissioners. Eventually the plantation was ceded to France while Britain was given the Essosung tobacco plantation.¹⁰⁸ From fieldwork, I collected data that one C. F. Raethke owned

¹⁰⁵ Marc Michel, "Les plantations Allemandes du mont Cameroun, 1885-1914" *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*, TomLVVI, No.207 (2e trimestre, 1970): 189.

¹⁰⁶ S.N.Ejedepang-Koge, *The tradition of a people*, p.296

¹⁰⁷ Anglo-French Boundary Commissioner to Resident, Letter No. 17/2/1939, APA 11383, NAY.

¹⁰⁸ The owner's son came and visited the plantation again in 1985 with the hope of seeing how to revive the farm and thus offering more jobs for the local people. In the annex are letters that were exchanged between the son of the German plantation owner and the Chief of Ndom village.

this plantation from 1903 to 1914. When the British took over this plantation, they changed the original product from tobacco to tea.¹⁰⁹

To the North of Essosung was another German plantation along the boundary and its exploitation caused problems for the British and the French administrations. The Ngol tobacco plantation belonged to the K.E.G Company and after the 1914-18 war, the Germans had left no authentic plan of the plantation.¹¹⁰ The Picot line cut through this plantation and as a result the British and the French colonial administrations represented by their local administrators Ripert and Williams tried to resolve its division and exploitation through several meetings.

While negotiations were going on, the local people of neighbouring villages on both sides of the boundary (Ngol-Manehas, Nsung-Mwamenam, Asomengoe and Ninong) appropriated some of the land of the Ngol plantation and exploited it fully with coffee, cocoa and banana plants.¹¹¹ When the plantation was finally ceded to the French, the chief of Ngol imposed a capitation tax on exploiters from the British zone. The boundary commission proposed a lease contract of thirty years for the exploiters renewable. In order to convey the plantation products to the coast for exportation, both administrations embarked on constructing and improving upon the German communication infrastructure notably roads and railroads.

The first motorable road, which was built by the Germans, ran parallel to the boundary from Douala through Mbanga, Loum, Manjo, Nkongsamba, and Melong to the Western Province. This was the sole motorable road that transported persons and

¹⁰⁹ Letter No. 65 of 17/2/1939, APA 11383, NAY. These tea bushes have now grown very wild and are like giant trees. Pictures (p. 162) below show the ruins of the manager's compound and his house.

¹¹⁰ Anglo-French Boundary Commissioner to the Senior Surveyor, Anglo-French Boundary Commission. Memo No. BC:8/1938/27 of February 6, 1939, APA 11383 Plantation de Ngol, NAY.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

goods from Northern Nigeria through Northern Cameroon, the Western, and Littoral Provinces to the coast. The road was in the French administered zone but was used by both the British and the French administered peoples. It really was the only way by which people could move from the Victoria and Kumba Divisions to the Bamenda Division. The French maintained this major road and tightened their control on the heavy flow of goods especially that which was directed to the seaport in Douala.

Still on the French side was the German Northern railway line, which ran from the coast at Douala to Nkongsamba. This line also ran adjacent to the boundary and as a result the French government frequently recruited labour for its maintenance mostly from the border population. On the other hand this situation served as a job advantage to these border peoples. According to some informants, the work put in was usually far too much for the wages paid.¹¹² On the British side the only roads, which were designed for motor traffic, were Victoria to Buea (16miles), Victoria to Bibundi (25miles) and Buea to Tiko (18miles).¹¹³ These roads were of permanent construction with stone bridges and culverts. The Germans appeared to have given little attention to the building of public roads and rail roads on this part of the territory for what was more in use were roads and railways constructed in the plantations to convey raw materials to the coastal sea ports at Tiko and Victoria. The West African Plantation Company, Victoria, is reported to have had a railroad with numerous branches serving their coastal plantations.¹¹⁴

The British administration constructed 20 miles of road north of Kumba and 12 miles south of Ossidinge but the streams intersecting these roads were bridged

¹¹² Interview with some people at Bombe Bakundu headed by John Epoke and Manfred Meloko on the 11/5/1999.

¹¹³ *Annual Report for the Cameroons Province, 1928, NAB.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

with temporary structures. However, by the mid-50s, the British had constructed the Kumba-Mamfe road, which connected Cameroon (Western border) to Nigeria (Eastern border). Communications generally throughout the territory were very difficult owing to the rough and rocky nature of the country. The major rivers used for water transport were the Rivers Meme, Moungo, and Wouri. The last two were navigable for six to seven months in a year. The Moungo for the most part acted as a natural boundary and was navigable from the Moungo River delta to the Mundame beach. Water transport was known to be the cheapest means of transporting bulky commodities over long distances.

The principal ports of import and export in the area under study were at Tiko, Victoria, and Douala. There was a natural wharf at Tiko, which was approachable for steamers of considerable draft. Tiko was declared a seaport on August 1st 1928. Products from the Mpundu and Meanja plantations, which were transported, through the Moungo River by launches and lighters were exported through the Tiko port. The Victoria and Douala ports were beautifully situated with deep-water close-in shore. These like Tiko, were the major ports for the shipping of imports and exports. After the colonial exploitation of natural resources and the means of transporting raw materials to the coast for exportation to Europe, we shall now look at how the human resources were also exploited.

Under German rule the system of forced labour, not only for public works and railways, but also for privately owned plantations near Victoria, was adopted policy. Compulsory labour was entirely government controlled with poor working, housing, and health conditions. When the British took over, they also utilised forced labour during the early years of their administration before using voluntary labour. They later abolished forced labour for private concerns and official

recruitment. The only compulsory labour that was permitted was for public works and services such as road construction and transport, in the districts to which the labourers belonged. The major employers of manual labour were the administration, the various Native Authorities, and the plantations management. There were also some few local private planters like Chief Ntoko of Bakossi who owned large cocoa farms and employed labour as well. Planters generally had difficulties in acquiring sufficient labour from the domestic communities surrounding the coastal plantations. Some of the main reasons for this were: the area was sparsely populated; the local population hated working for the expropriators of their land; harsh and appalling working conditions and plantation labour was often equated with slavery. More importantly, the local communities were largely self-sufficient and were exposed to early contacts with western trade, religion, and education. They did not want to 'degrade' themselves from brokers in the trade between Europeans and farmers of the interior. Some of them also planted cocoa, which gave them cash and made them employ labour too. As a result, labour had to be 'freed' from the interior through various forms of coercion to the plantations of the coast.

With the British, labour was thoroughly systematised with the use of Labour Commissioners and other officials. Regulations for the housing, feeding and medical treatment of the labourers when at work were far better than those across the boundary. The British authorities impressed upon the German planters the need to improve upon the conditions of service prevailing on the plantations so as to make plantation labour more attractive. Motivational inducements then introduced included the provision of larger and better food rations, small plots of land for food cultivation, usually called 'chop farms', higher wages and sometimes reimbursement of transport

expenses.¹¹⁵ The construction of motorable roads and the creation of increased transport facilities promoted labour migration in those regions, which were most remote and disconnected from the plantation areas.

Some Districts lost population while others grew. Labour was drawn to a considerable extent from the more thickly populated regions of the Central, Western and Northwest resulting in a reduction of the population of those areas, which moved to swell the population of the plantation areas. That explains why the population figures of Bamenda, Kumba Ossidinge and Victoria Divisions which stood at 220,000; 62,766; 53,281; and 22,867 respectively in 1921 rose to 188,133; 67,024; 63,115; 35,829 in 1927.¹¹⁶ One of the reasons for this attraction was the fact that the British banned all compulsory labour and improved the working and living conditions of the plantation workers as opposed to what obtained in the French sphere. Under the British, migration to the coast became an important means of earning cash much needed for direct taxation.

The demand for labour was high and almost 50% of the total labour force on the plantations at the time came from the French Cameroon particularly from the Yaounde area, either having been there for some time or having gone there recently. This population movement affected the supply and availability of labour. Leon Kaptue distinguishes two types of movements, which he calls positive and negative migrations.¹¹⁷ Negative migrations were those, which led to the shortage or loss of labour in an area while positive migration led to the solution of the problem of labour recruitment. French Cameroon suffered from negative migration and as more and

¹¹⁵ Konings, *Labour resistance in Cameroon*, p. 59.

¹¹⁶ *West Africa*, Reports on the Cameroons Province for the years 1921 and 1927, pages 52 and 105 respectively, ICOMM. There was a movement of people from Bamenda to the other towns, that explains the drop in that particular area.

¹¹⁷ Leon Chedjou Kaptue, *Travail et main-d'oeuvre au Cameroun sous régime Français 1916-1952* Paris: L'Harmattan, 1986, p.93. Also see APA 10779, Main d'oeuvre et immigration 1937-1947 NAY.

more workers left for British Cameroons, the territory registered an acute shortage of labour. On the British side, the effects of positive migration and labour gain enhanced productivity. According to Konings, the percentage of migrant labour force reduced as the years went by; from 52% in 1926, it fell to 13% in 1950 and later to 5% in 1960.¹¹⁸ The reasons for this decrease could be the efforts of the French Mandate Authority to stabilize labour within its territory. Also, numbers were driven down because of the mechanization of the agro-industrial system of exploitation and more likely the stabilization of the labour force. Between 1946 and 1960, this decline in the labour force was greatly compensated by an increasing flow of labour from the Northwest and Western highlands and from Nigeria.¹¹⁹ The British never complained about the influx for it meant more manpower and taxes for the administration. In the British zone even though daily wages were not very high, more liberal ration allowance and other inducements such as a bonus for good work were provided. Moreover it was galling to the French to be losing manpower especially to the Germans who still owned those plantations at the time. The recruitment of labour in the French Cameroon for another territory was not prohibited, but was subject to the authorization of the Administration. It is interesting to note however that on the British side, the exit of women was prohibited by order of June 30th, 1917 indicating that emigration was considered by both administrations to be unfavourable to the development of the country. This specific ban on female out-migration suggests that the government wanted to maintain a stable percentage of its procreation force. It could also be that because women were involved in illegal trade across the boundary, the administration wanted to keep them within their confines.

¹¹⁸ *West Africa*, Reports on the Cameroons Province for the years 1921 and 1927, pages 52 and 105 respectively, ICOMM.

¹¹⁹ Konings, *Labour resistance in Cameroon*, p.68.

In the French zone, the administration used forced labour or *Corvé* for the building of communication infrastructure and government residential quarters. Forced labour was defined as the use of force by the administration to acquire labour for government or public usage. Both men and women were forced to dig and maintain public roads and the duration of this forced labour was six weeks after which the worker was given a clearance card called "Samafou" by the workers. This could possibly be a deformation of the French phrase *ca m'a fait* meaning, "this is me done"- a kind of self-resignation to a compulsory task. The official duration of labour was hardly ever respected by the administration. Commutation was possible at the rate of 2francs per day of labour but was rarely allowed in practice. Progressively, the number of days was increased and a person could be made to work two or more times a year. The result was massive flights to the British zone, which offered better working conditions. Government soldiers sent to supervise the work were very stern and harsh on workers. Two men among several others were reported to have lost their lives in this harsh labour system in the persons of Messrs Fabian Abade (Bakossi) and Ngale Ngomba (Bakweri).¹²⁰ Before the Second World War, in 1930, a major principle was put in place by the convention of the International Labour Organisation. Following the ILO code, after 1930 the promulgation of free labour was reinforced in Cameroon by the law of January 1st 1953 by which no person could be subjected to forced or involuntary labour.¹²¹ Progressively voluntary labour replaced forced labour in Cameroon.

¹²⁰ Interview with some eye witnesses to this labour system, Blasius Akwe Nzume and Ntoko Fritz Mukete on May 16, 1999 at Ndom-Bakossi, Cameroon.

¹²¹ In 1953, a Labour Office was opened in Cameroon that recruited free labour. Rapport Annuel de l'année 1954, p. 170, CAOM.

Corvé was also used in the construction of Government Residential Quarters or *Les chantiers d'utilité publique* at Nkongsamba. Many sun-dried bricks had to be made by the labourers as an obligation to the administration. This called for a strong labour force, a good part of which came from the neighbouring border groups, notably the Mbo, Bakossi, Balondo and the Balong. This work was styled by the workers as "Njockmassi" which meant "work in vain" or unpaid labour. Because France was trying to operate the administration with as few European personnel as possible and at minimum expense, a great deal of the work took place under the direction of African chiefs who supplied the labourers and food needed for the construction projects. Under such conditions waste and abuses by the chiefs were bound to occur. The administration punished workers who deserted and farmers who did not produce foodstuffs demanded of them. These requisitions imposed on the people caused massive desertions by conscripts who fled to the British zone. Besides labour migrations, some of the reasons for boundary criss-crossing were trade and smuggling.

As early as 1917, twenty years before the boundary was demarcated, the British began reflecting on the area's economic potential. According to the Colonial Office Report of that year, Walter H. Long, the Secretary of State for Colonies noted that if the French imposed import and export duties along the boundary before the end of the war, Britain would reciprocate. Eventually that might put an end to trade between the two spheres especially in the North with the importation and trade in spirits.¹²² In that same year the Government remarked that numerous local traders brought their goods mostly palm oil and kernels by canoe across the proposed boundary from Douala to Victoria and Tiko. Besides Rio del Rey

¹²² Long to Governor of Nigeria, No. 2428/1918 of January 4, 1918, CO649/15, PRO.

on Cameroon's extreme Western boundary with Nigeria, the other two harbours in the British zone were Victoria and Tiko where the bulk of trade in the region under study was conducted. By 1917, local trade across the boundary was not very intense. Fourneau however proposed that the French government should collect duties on goods crossing the provisional boundary but Long turned down that proposal. This was on the grounds that the actual trade going across that boundary was very small and would hardly pay for the cost of maintaining customs stations on the boundary.¹²³

Article 7(v) of Mandate B required the Mandatory powers only to "exercise a strict control over the sale of spirituous liquor" for the Liquor Traffic Convention (LTC) and the Arms Traffic (AT) were to be applied in Cameroon and Togoland.¹²⁴ This was important for the small but constant amount of smuggling that went across the boundary at the time was based on liquor, wines, beers and cigarettes. Under the Germans, licences to sell liquor were granted to certain companies and no restriction was imposed on sale, except that soldiers and police were not allowed to purchase liquor of any sort without a written permit. The situation appeared to have been well under control.

It is interesting here to outline the difference between the British and French economic and trade policies. They both initially endeavoured to ensure that the trade of their administered territories was conducted with the metropolis or with metropolitan companies within the territory. The contrast in policies raised the problem of price dissimilarities between the two spheres. In the name of "tariff assimilation" the French extended to their colonies the tariffs protecting French industry, thereby effectively forcing the colonies to buy French products and to sell

¹²³ Despatch of November 26th 1920, CO649/21, PRO.

¹²⁴ *West Africa* Report on the British sphere of the Cameroons for the year 1922, p.58, ICOMM.

their products to France.¹²⁵ By contrast, the British policy of importing European goods from the cheapest possible sources imposed relatively low import duties but fairly high export duties.¹²⁶ Unlike the situation in the French zone, there was no policy of preventing foreign firms from operating in British colonies. The result was that it was cheaper to buy in the British zone and sell at a higher price in the French zone. Many traders therefore bought from markets in Victoria, Tiko, Kumba, Tombel and Mwambong to sell at Douala, Mbanga, Loum, Nkongsamba and Melong. Goods that were usually smuggled for sale from the French to the British side were tobacco, salt, clothes and stockfish. Such smugglers took the Loum- Kupe- Tombel road to avoid customs control. Sometimes they went from Tombel to Edibinjock to Mombo and then to Mbanga; this was a popular route used by the Balong traders.¹²⁷

Under the British, (by a Proclamation of November 15th, 1916) the importation of all trade spirits was prohibited and by a further proclamation of July 3rd, 1920, the importation also of injurious spirits, such as absinthe was prohibited.¹²⁸ Also, the distilling of any spirits in the British sphere was made a criminal offence in Cameroon as in the rest of British West Africa. Imports from the UK were allowed and encouraged. Additionally, the Germans had forbidden the import of muzzle-loaders and powder. Local people were not allowed to bear arms except in cases where an employer certified that his employee was responsible and reliable. In that case, the employee(s) could carry a short gun. The rest of the people were permitted

¹²⁵ J. A. Ballard, 'The colonial phase in French West Africa' in J.F. Ade Ajayi and I.Espie (eds.), *A thousand years of West African history*. Ibadan: University Press, 1965, p. 449.

¹²⁶ Fanson, 'Trans-Frontier relations', p.319. It is possible that the British were sufficiently confident of the strength of their own trading position that they later disdained measures to divert colonial trade artificially to Great Britain and they used this economic openness of their own empire as an argument for forcing open the trade of other colonial empires. No doubt there was a degree of change with the Depression in the 1930s.

¹²⁷ Interview with chief Ntoko Fritz Mukete on May 16, 1999 at Ndom village and also with a former smuggler, of the Bakossi group-British zone, John Nnode Ngwese on May 14, 1999 at Bangem.

¹²⁸ *West Africa Report on the British sphere of the Cameroons for the year 1922*, p.58, ICOMM.

only to carry a weaker gun, the muzzle-loader, for the protection of their crops and for hunting. The import of these guns was strictly limited and their distribution controlled.¹²⁹

Before the introduction of the Nigerian Tariff on November 1st, 1921, no clear records were kept of or duty charged on imports from the French sphere. Around 1923, when customs barriers were imposed, ethnic groups on the West of the Mounjo River resisted these barriers. This was because the Mounjo was the natural outlet for their trade down to the coast or by the Northern Railway line to the port of Douala, which was placed in the French sphere.¹³⁰ The situation was aggravated that same year by a fall in the value of the Franc resulting in a disturbing effect on some imported articles in British Cameroons. This caused a marked degree of smuggling from the adjoining French territory, for example trade in cigarettes and spirits, which sold more cheaply in East Cameroon than in British Cameroons.¹³¹ The border people took a prominent part in this clandestine boundary trade which was carried on to a large extent by the Bakossi, Duala, Balong, Bakweri, Mbo, Balondo and their neighbors of both the British and the French spheres. This profitable illegal trade attracted many non-border people from other ethnic groups notably the Yaounde, Bafia and Hausas to settle along the border.

These same reports also reveal that the number of persons arrested and convicted for smuggling and irregular boundary crossing increased with time. Of the 68 persons arrested in 1927, 56 were convicted; in 1930, 258 were arrested and 238 were convicted while in 1931, there were 748 persons arrested and convicted.¹³²

¹²⁹ *West Africa* Report on the British sphere of the Cameroons for the year 1922, p.58, ICOMM.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.* Also see from Governor to Secretary of State for Colonies, December 29, 1925, No. 1070, CO649/30, PRO.

¹³² *West Africa*, Reports on the Cameroons Province for the various years, ICOMM.

Fanso attributes this increase in the number of arrests to the watchfulness of the preventive men and also to the large number of inexperienced smugglers joining the trade.¹³³ This petty smuggling along the Southern portion of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary particularly dealing with goods and currency was rampant. In the cash crop growing areas of the South, notably in Bakossi land where planters hid the bulk of their harvests and sold it in French Cameroon, smuggling of coffee and cocoa was high.¹³⁴

In the riverine areas and along the part of the boundary where the River Moungo formed the boundary, canoes and other small boats were used in this illegal trade. As a result, British and French patrol officers of the police and customs departments used motor-launches and other speedboats, which enabled them to track down smugglers and carry-out large seizures of contraband goods along the coast and River Moungo. Water-Guards also tracked down smugglers on the British side. All those arrested were taxed double for their goods and if they could not pay, they were punished. Consequently, some took the flight option and abandoned their goods on seeing the customs officers.¹³⁵ According to Martin Njeuma,¹³⁶ chiefs were involved in breaking the rules for they organised smuggling expeditions, which were very profitable. Border farmers, particularly neighbourhood women who crossed the boundary several times in the same day to their farms and homes, aided smugglers.

¹³³ Fanso, 'Trans-Frontier relations', p.332-338.

¹³⁴ Interview with Ngama Francois at Ebonji village on May 18, 1999.

¹³⁵ Some informants and former smugglers like John Nnode and Mayong Emmanuel reported that sometimes they were forced to dump their goods either in the forest or in the River Moungo when confronted by customs officers.

¹³⁶ Interview with Professor Martin Njeuma on August 2nd, 1999 at Buea, Cameroon.

They usually put the contraband goods in the farm baskets and covered them up with food crops or vegetables. Customs officers on either side of the boundary seldom suspected them. Farm and market women along the boundary played a significant role in this clandestine trade for according to Fanso, unlike men, they were not required to obtain travel papers to cross the boundary to their farms and nearby markets.¹³⁷ French administrative reports contain complaints about the difficulties faced by the administration in controlling border groups notably the Mbo (Mwangwekan), Bakossi (Mwamenam), Balondo, Balong and the riverine Mungo, Duala and Bakweri.¹³⁸ From interviews in the creeks of Mokuta, Modeka, Misselele and Kombo, fishermen recounted stories of how they had fished clandestinely and cunningly escaped from French patrol customs boats.¹³⁹ French control apparently was more a problem to them than that of the British. There were constant complaints of harassment of the local fishermen by the French guards. Some of the informants laid stress on the fact that the guards usually arrested women and young girls and took them away, probably because they were more vulnerable. This tightened control of the boundary was perhaps geared at safeguarding the economic (human and material) resources of both spheres. How did the 1929 world crisis and the World War II affect boundary movements?

The 1929 World Crisis and boundary movements

According to Susan Martin, in French West Africa, the crisis of the 1930s had its greatest impact upon European traders and officials: "the crisis underlined their

¹³⁷ Fanso, 'Trans-Frontier relations', p.336.

¹³⁸ *Rapport* du 4 Janvier, 1938 et du 28 Janvier, 1938, APA 11796/C, NAY. *Rapport* du 12 Juin, 1939, APA 11801/B, NAY. *Rapport* du 8 au 14 Décembre 1940, APA 11801/B, NAY. *Rapport* du 15 Mai, 1946, APA10417/C, NAY.

¹³⁹ Interview with the chief of Mokuta, Ebirabo and a group of village elders on April 26th, 1999 at Mokuta. The bulk of the population today in those fishing port creeks are the Ogoni from Nigeria.

weaknesses: the narrow colonial revenue base; the absence of local credit sources; and the "archaic" commercial structure of many firms".¹⁴⁰ African farmers were forced to bear fresh financial burden as taxation shifted from customs duties towards fixed capitation taxes. Many local farmers fled to towns yet there too employment opportunities were shrinking and wages falling. Thus began the gradual transformation of the impoverished peasantry into the urban poor, a process which Coquery-Vidrovitch argues continues today.¹⁴¹

Others share Martin's assertion that the burden of the crisis was shifted upon the peasantry. According to Albert Nzula, the crisis resulted in mass impoverishment and ruin of the peasantry as the burden of the crisis was transferred on the shoulders of the toiling masses of the colonies in Africa especially.¹⁴² Agriculture was undergoing a process of accelerated degradation. The local farmer had to grow export crops despite the falling prices in order to obtain money to pay taxes. The lower the price of export crops the more he had to produce even to the point of starvation. African peasants in French West Africa were reduced to the level of bare survival and deprived even of the reflex to revolt.¹⁴³

The prices of raw materials produced in the colonies as well as wages were lowered drastically. Of the three major products Cameroon was producing (palm oil, palm kernels and cocoa) there was a drop of 4% on the total tonnage of production

¹⁴⁰ S. M. Martin, "The Long Depression: West African export producers and the world economy, 1914-45". In I. Brown (ed.), *The economies of Africa and Asia in the inter-war Depression*. London: Routledge, 1989, p. 81.

¹⁴¹ C. Coquery-Vidrovitch (ed), "L'Afrique et la crise de 1930 (1924-1938)", *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer*, 63 (1976):388-96.

¹⁴² Albert T. Nzula, Ivan I. Potekhin, Aleksander Z. Zusmanovich, *Forced labour in colonial Africa*. London: Zed Press, 1979, p.92.

¹⁴³ Martin, "The Long Depression", p. 81. Coquery-Vidrovitch, "L'Afrique et la crise", pp. 411-12.

despite the fact that this was a young colony with newly installed equipment.¹⁴⁴ Many plantations and other business units folded resulting in labour redundancy. In forestry exploitation, most sites were closed, a few barely hung on just to keep specialist workers for their training had been long and costly to the company. In the Nkongsamba Circonscription for example, in 1931, there were a total of 5,850 workers involved in trade, rural farms, forestry and industrialisation exploitation units but by 1932, the number reduced to 2,350.¹⁴⁵ Some of the redundant workers decided to go back to their places of origin while others preferred to remain in their former places of work. In the agricultural sector, most planters stayed longer in Cameroon because they could not afford to return to France. The French administration sent masses of unemployed people by railroad to their places of origin to avoid vagabondage and other social ills, and did so by force. Mass ruin and starvation became increasingly widespread among farmers due to impossibility of obtaining any suitable price for their agricultural products. Many left the villages for the towns where they met with the rising wave of unemployment in plantations and working sites of public utilities and railways.¹⁴⁶ Colonial governments simply did not recognize the problem of unemployment. To combat the Depression, the French administration in Cameroon reduced the prices of goods and cut the costs of railway freight as well as taxes on trade. Furthermore it increased the head-tax by seven percent because of the falling prices.¹⁴⁷ Capitation tax was high and the administration did nothing to lower it. The local people paid more taxes like the medical tax and a

¹⁴⁴ Government measures taken to overcome the crisis in French Cameroon, Letter from Chamber of Commerce to Mr. B. Diagne of May 14, 1932, Aff. Pol. 2535/5, p. 2, CAOM.

¹⁴⁵ *Rapport Annuel* pour l'année 1932, p. 131, CAOM.

¹⁴⁶ *Rapport Annuel* pour l'année 1932, pp. 130-1, CAOM.

¹⁴⁷ Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p. 107. Nzula et al., *Forced labour*, p. 100.

tax on women even those pregnant and those breastfeeding.¹⁴⁸ Government revenue dropped on both sides and both administrations reduced the size of the administrative establishments. Martin says that, the Long Depression on the other hand caused less of a fiscal crisis in British than in French West Africa but that notwithstanding, the early thirties saw vigorous tax protests in the British territories.¹⁴⁹ As a result of the rebellion, British officials were ultimately forced to reduce, and in some cases to abandon tax imposition.

Ngoh says that in British Cameroons, it was only later on that the government decided to tax the chiefs, institute personal taxation on income, and in 1932 froze the head-tax.¹⁵⁰ As European owned plantations fell short of expectations, indigenous-owned plantations were reorganised into separate small plots and distributed to small holders. The point I am making about the Depression is that a good part of the laid-off workers went across the boundary on their way home without respecting boundary rules. Those from areas under French control leaving plantations under British control for example needed to have a pass to cross over. Besides the financial burden, it was cumbersome for the border people to go to the administrative pass-issuing centres situated some 15 or more miles away for a *Laissez-passer* to use and visit relatives living just under one or two miles away.¹⁵¹ The next crisis period that had an effect on the boundary was the post-World War Two period when both territories faced labour

¹⁴⁸ Chamber of Commerce to Mr. B. Diagne, Aff. Pol. 2535/5, 1930/32, p. 1, CAOM.

¹⁴⁹ Martin, "The Long Depression", p. 81. In December 1929, the introduction of Direct taxation in Eastern Nigeria led to the "Aba Riots" or the Igbo Women's War, accompanied by an export market boycott and by many expressions of economic grievance. In the Gold Coast, an attempt in 1931 to introduce an urban income tax met with such opposition that it was shelved for several years. European government salaries were cut by 10% in 1932 to cover the resulting revenue deficit.

¹⁵⁰ Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p.107.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Mayong Emmanuel on June 18th 1999, and with Mukete Abel on April 20th, 1999 at Mombo (Balong), Mbome Daniel and Ngape Nicholas on April 13th and 14th at Mwangwekan village, Cameroon. The bulk of the people were leaving from the British to the French zone.

shortages and currency crises.¹⁵² The situation caused many restrictions on cross-boundary movements. But first of all let us examine the situation during the war.

World War Two and the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary.

It should be recalled here that as from the close of 1937, the Anglo-French Land Commissioners were already demarcating the boundary beginning from the sea northwards. Works of delimitation and demarcation came to a halt with the news of the outbreak of the war in Europe. In the Cameroons, just before the outbreak of the war, the British and French Mandate administrations were faced with the problem of pro-fascist propaganda and espionage activities aimed at winning over the sympathy of Africans for their erstwhile German colonial master.¹⁵³

Pro-German activities took off from the French administered part of the territory precisely in Douala where in 1933, a pro-German society was formed called Kamerun Duala Volksbund.¹⁵⁴ One year after its formation, the founder Peter Mukuri Dikongo and his assistants Peter Ebwea and Hans Ferdinand spread the movement across the Anglo-French boundary into the British zone changing its name to Kamerun Eingebornen Deutsch Gesinnten Verein (KEDGV).¹⁵⁵ On the British zone the headquarters of KEDGV activities was in Tiko, one of the major border port towns belonging to the Bakweri group. According to Ralph Austen and Jonathan Derrick, this was a small group of about twenty members who requested the

¹⁵² With the outbreak of the Second World War, the Long Depression entered its final and severe phase. In British West Africa, the war led to the establishment of marketing boards which gave officials the same degree of control over trading networks as French officials had already achieved in Senegal. The boards rapidly began accumulating cash surpluses, which were widely invested in Europe or used to support the war effort. By the mid 50s, the idea of using these surpluses to reshape the economies of West Africa was timidly developing.

¹⁵³ Before the war, Europe had been divided into two opposing blocs: on the one hand was the Allied bloc comprising Britain, France and other lesser powers and on the other hand was the Fascist bloc made up of Germany and Italy among others.

¹⁵⁴ File no. Vb/b (1940) Kamerun Eingebornen Deutsch Gesinnten Verein, NAB.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. NAB.

enrolment of its members in the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft, Germany's official colonial propaganda association.¹⁵⁶

The KEDGV was probably not committed to Nazi political goals but the members were certainly a threat to French interests. When six of its members were arrested, the rest fled to the British Cameroons.¹⁵⁷ The existence of such an organisation however provided French Cameroon authorities with fresh fuel for their beliefs that some unlikely combination of German Nazis and pro-Africanist forces was acting against them. Most important for this study is that this pro-German group was based and operated mostly in the border towns like Tiko and Victoria in the British zone.

In quick succession to the KEDGV, was the Auslandes Deutsche Bund (ADB) exclusively made up of Germans resident in British Cameroons. Again the main areas of its activities were Tiko and Victoria. Even though British residents complained about these pro-German and anti-British activities in Victoria Division, the British Mandatory administration remained indifferent until the outbreak of the war. The two hundred and ninety two Germans at the time in British Cameroons could easily outnumber the two European and seventy-five African rank and file policemen in the territory if it came to war. When it was rumoured before the war that the ADB had acquired large amounts of arms and ammunition through German merchant ships at Douala and Victoria ports, the British administration became seriously concerned.

Police records showed that the Germans had one hundred and forty-four rifles and fifty-six revolvers. The British administration organised a police search of all the

¹⁵⁶ Ralph Austen and Jonathan Derrick, *Middlemen of the Cameroons Rivers. The Duala and their hinterland, c.1600-c.1960*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.173.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. For more on German activities in British Cameroons also see Anthony Ndi's contribution in D. Killingray and R. Rathbone (eds.) *Africa and the Second World War*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986.

German plantations, as they feared an eventual German attempt to regain her former colony-it was a National Socialist policy to regain the "lost colonies". The importance of this fear to our study is that it triggered tighter administration and control of the boundary. The decision to strengthen security measures to forestall any German attempt to seize Cameroon was epitomised by a reinforcement of the police squad from Nigeria and the imposition of official passes or Laissez-passers for crossing the boundary. Since there were many more Germans in the British than in the French administered zone, the French administration also responded to the outbreak of the war by closing the frontiers with British Cameroons. Access was only possible after the presentation of a Laissez-passer because they wanted to avert any migration of German Nazis from the plantations in the British to the French zone.

In the British zone also, there were fears of pro-Nazi regime in the nearby French Cameroon after the fall of France in 1940 and the establishment of the Vichy regime. Relations between both administrations became tense. Each immediately restricted the passage of people, goods and currency to and from the other. French Cameroon was forced by circumstances to be pro-Vichy. On August 30th, 1940, the Free French Movement (a French government in exile established after the fall of France) staged a coup d'etat, which brought French Cameroon into the war on the side of General De Gaulle. France instituted forced labour to help the war effort and tried to prevent Africans from fleeing to British Cameroons where obligations were lighter.¹⁵⁸ The restrictions themselves caused numerous problems; arbitrary interpretations of the restrictions caused many more. Individuals with homes on one side of the frontier and fields on the other experienced many inconveniences, as did members of ethnic groups whose relatives or chiefs lived on the other side of

¹⁵⁸ Gardinier, *Cameroon*, p.58.

the frontier.¹⁵⁹ These groups among which were the Bakossi, Bakweri, Duala, Balondo, Balong, Mbo and the Mongo hoped for an easing of border restrictions and in some cases minor rectifications of the boundary in order to place all of the lands or all of their ethnic group within one territory. The demands to ease border restrictions were stronger in the South of the two territories where economic advancement especially on the French side was more rapid and the restrictions more rigidly enforced than in the North.¹⁶⁰ Meanwhile an important aspect of colonial administration that affected border groups was the socio-cultural domain notably in the fields of education, language and religion.

THE SOCIO-CULTURAL ORIENTATION

Educational activities began in Cameroon in 1844 with the Baptist Missionary Society and from then until the withdrawal of the English Baptists in 1886 (following the German Annexation of Cameroon), the Baptists enjoyed an evangelical monopoly in British Cameroons. German and Swiss missionaries arrived in that same year and together with the government took over education in Cameroon. Within a couple of years, the Germans opened government schools at Douala and Victoria. This is important because these schools drew pupils from the neighbouring areas, which were later divided by the Anglo-French boundary. By 1910, the German government had become tougher on educational policies, making school attendance compulsory and dropping out from school became a punishable offense.¹⁶¹ Most important for this study is the fact that the medium of instruction was the German language, a medium, which lasted only as long as its initiators. However, despite the German government's stringent standards and engagement in educational activities,

¹⁵⁹ Interviews with Akangkwe and others on May 13, and 17, 1999 at Kupe III, Cameroon.

¹⁶⁰ Gardinier, *Cameroon*, p.59.

¹⁶¹ Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p. 139.

education remained in the hands of missionaries during and after their rule in Cameroon.

The British colonial government did not pursue education vigorously in Cameroon. The government was less involved and indifferent as opposed to the missions. Schools, which fell under four categories, provided elementary education: Government schools; Native Administration schools; Mission schools and "Hedge", unofficial or vernacular schools. The main goal of the government was to train Africans to serve in the colonial administration as civil servants, clerks and petty businessmen and security officers. On their part, the Native Authority (NA) saw education as a means of serving ethnic groups, clans and villages while to the missions education was regarded as a means of spreading their religion by training catechists, teachers, pastors and clerks.¹⁶² The British Education Policy for Nigeria, which was applied in the Cameroons in 1926, dictated education in British Southern Cameroons. In government schools, the medium of instruction from the intermediate level onwards was the English language and entry age did not exceed 13 years. The use of the vernacular in the early stages of elementary education in general was allowed. Chiefs took great interest in visiting the NA schools while accompanying the DO and the Superintendent of Education on their visits to these schools. The NA schools followed the same curriculum as government schools but the people provided the teachers, their living quarters and the school buildings while the NA met the cost of books, equipment and teachers' salaries. For these reasons, their teachers were less qualified than those of the government schools. The government was also faced with the serious problem of lack of an adequate qualified teaching staff in their schools.

¹⁶² Emmanuel B. Ngwa, 'Western education in Southern Cameroons between the wars (1922-1939)'. Postgraduate thesis, (Maitrise), 1982 University of Yaounde, Cameroon, p.24. Crowder, *West Africa*, p.24.

This problem persisted until 1940 when an Elementary Training Centre was opened in Kake, Kumba Division, which served the entire territory with trained elementary teachers.¹⁶³ As far as secondary education was concerned, there was no college in Southern Cameroons before 1939. All qualified British Cameroonians had to go to Nigeria for further education. It was in 1939 that the Roman Catholic Mission opened the first secondary school for boys at Sasse in Victoria Division. In 1950 the Basel Mission opened a similar institution at Bali in Bamenda Division. From the start, the attendance of girls in schools was low as compared to boys. Parents were reluctant to send girls to school as they saw this as a waste of time and money. After government and Mission encouragement, many more girls began attending school and about 58 girls were reported to be attending schools by 1923 in the entire territory.¹⁶⁴ The Roman Catholic Mission at Soppo opened an elementary school for girls, but later in 1956 was transformed into what became the first girls' secondary school and transferred to Okoyong, Mamfe Division.

The educational cycle was reduced from nine to eight years. This was divided as follows: two years infant classes (Infants I and II), four years elementary classes (Standards I, II, III and IV) and two years middle classes (Middles I and II). Education was financed from school fees, the sale of produce from school farms, grant-in-aid from the NAs, Government expenditure and Mission funds. The last group of schools, the "Hedge" schools were of mushroom growth and usually the offspring of the former Basel Mission schools. They were not of a permanent nature and no statistics were kept. They taught little or nothing beyond congregational singing in the German or Duala languages. Usually, these "Hedge" schools lacked the basic educational facilities until the Government, NA or Mission were in a position to

¹⁶³ Ngwa, "Western education in Southern Cameroons" p. 279.

¹⁶⁴ *Report on the Cameroons* for 1923, p.43, PRO.

give them support. One of these schools opened in the French administered part of Bakossi, Mouamenam in 1927.¹⁶⁵ According to the Annual Report of 1923, French Educational organisation was laid down by the decree of July 25, 1921.¹⁶⁶ This legislation was completed by another series of texts, which determined the categories of schools, school programmes and the teaching methods. The administration also gave allowance for the creation of what was called *Mutuelles Scolaires* (these were mutual aid societies formed by pupils of the same school to assist members whenever the need arose). The French administration opened Village, Regional and Superior schools.¹⁶⁷ The administration allowed Mission schools to operate as well as some Private schools. There was also what was called "Bush schools" or *les Ecoles de brousse*, which were the equivalent of vernacular schools in the British zone.

Village schools were opened to children of all levels of the society even though preference was given to the children of chiefs to prepare them for Regional schools. Village schools were opened in some border villages like Mouangel, Manengole, Bakwat and Ekangte in 1950. These schools were meant to satisfy the immediate need of the pupils, which according to the administration was to spread spoken French. In 1925 a Regional school was opened in Nkongsamba, which was fed by the neighbouring border village schools.¹⁶⁸ Governor General Antonetti in this same year introduced the use of vernacular in a transitional period between the Village and the Regional schools but he laid much emphasis on the use of the French

¹⁶⁵ Interview with one of its pupils, Germain Enongene, at Mouandong, Mouamenam on April 30, 1999.

¹⁶⁶ *Rapport Annuel* du gouvernement Français sur l'administration sous-mandat des territoires du Cameroun, 1923, p.19. CAOM.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. p 26, CAOM. Also see Engelbert Atangana, *Cent ans d'éducation scolaire au Cameroun. Réflexion sur la nature, les moyens et les objectifs de l'entreprise (1885 à nos jours)*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996, pp.439-443.

¹⁶⁸ *Rapport Annuel*, pour l'année 1925, p.30. NAY.

language in schools.¹⁶⁹ It was not until in 1948 another decree was issued reorganising education that the first secondary school or *collège moderne* was opened at Nkongsamba.¹⁷⁰

Education in French Cameroon was left mostly in the hands of the missionary societies. They opened the first schools at the start of French occupation and by 1937, there were 85,000 French Cameroonian children in mission elementary schools with the French Roman Catholic Missions accounting for 35,000 followed by the American Presbyterian Mission-31,000; the French Protestant Mission-18,000 and the American Adventist Mission-500.¹⁷¹ There were a few schools run by the Norwegian mission while the Government schools had a total of only 10,000 pupils. By 1939, the government opened an Advanced Primary School at Yaounde, a Professional Health School at Ayos, a Teachers' Training School -*Ecole Normale*- at Foulassi, and some secondary and technical institutions in Douala. Regarding teaching staff, Ngoh says that in 1944, there were three French Inspectors of schools, thirty-eight European school teachers, ten of whom had no teaching diplomas and two hundred and fifty unqualified African monitors.¹⁷²

The Government worked in close collaboration with the Missions and supported them financially. As from 1923, the Government gave thirty thousand francs to private education annually as aid. Also, a premium of one hundred and fifty francs was given per student in mission schools if they succeeded in the *Certificat*

¹⁶⁹ L.C.Gray, J.O'Connell, D.Scallon, *Education and nation building in Africa*. London: HMSO, 1965, p.9, NAY.

¹⁷⁰ *Rapport Annuel*, 1948, p.133, NAY.

¹⁷¹ *Rapport Annuel*, 1937, p. 129, CAOM. L'Enseignement au Cameroun, IAC 68, NAY Also see APA 12066/s, loc.cit.

¹⁷² Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p.102.

d'Etudes Primaires (C.A.P.).¹⁷³ The Government also trained Assistants who taught in the various religious institutions. It is important to state here that the French laid emphasis on technical education. The French Protestant Mission at Ndoungue for example trained pupils for professions like carpentry, bricklaying, and woodwork. These were the kind of schools that benefited from government aid.¹⁷⁴

With early trade transactions between English traders and the coastal peoples of the Cameroons, the local peoples began making efforts to communicate with British traders and missionaries along the coast in "broken English" or Pidgin English. The language soon became a common means of communication between the colonial administrators and the administered people as well as a commercial language. It should be recalled here that with the German annexation of Cameroon, the German language had been prescribed in schools alongside the local Duala language. Pidgin English became an unofficial language but was still in use. When the British and the French took over the administration of the territory, each of them carved out their spheres of influence within which their respective languages-English or French - were imposed. As border areas increasingly became a zone of opportunities and a cultural 'melting pot', many more people used either the Duala language or Pidgin English in their daily transactions. Besides language, religion was also an organized system that was implanted on both sides of the boundary and resulted to across-boundary movements.

The defeat of the Germans in the First World War, favoured the establishment of two organized missions in British Southern Cameroons: the Roman Catholic and the Basel Missions. There was a French Roman Catholic Mission in

¹⁷³ Gray et al, *Education and nation building in Africa*, p.10

¹⁷⁴ *Rapport Annuel*, 1948, p.133, CAOM.

Bamenda, which arrived in January 1921; and an English Roman Catholic Mission in Victoria, which arrived in March 1922.¹⁷⁵ The Roman Catholics had missions at Victoria, Buea, Ossing (Mamfe), Bekom and Kumbo (Bamenda). After the war, indigenised movements sprung from the disorganized remains of the Swiss/German Basel Missions, which reinvigorated the Basel Missions enterprise in that part of the territory. The Basel Mission was based at Victoria, Bombe and Nyassosso (Kumba), Besongabang (Mamfe) and Bali (Bamenda). It is not intended here to elaborate on the great diversity of missions and their activities in Cameroon but to state that the missionary factor was one of the common causes of cross border movements. The Government placed no obstacle of any kind in the way of expansion of missionary work. This meant that Missionaries could go anywhere they wanted to evangelize and visit each other. This was why they were one of the groups that criss-crossed the boundary regularly. African catechists were free to go where they liked and to preach in whatever language they wanted. This situation later led to problems with the administration on the French side where missionaries increasingly used Pidgin English in church and in schools.

On the French zone, once the Germans were defeated, the French authorities expelled all missionaries of German nationality from Cameroon. The activities of the Basel Mission were taken over by the *Missions Evangeliques* of Paris.¹⁷⁶ This new Mission hoped to unite the Evangelical, Basel and Native Baptist churches in Cameroon. They established a printing press and a theological school very close to the boundary, at Ndoungue. They also opened a college at Libamba and a Youth centre at Douala.¹⁷⁷ Another mission that was established in the French

¹⁷⁵ *Report on the Cameroons Province*, 1923, p.44, PRO.

¹⁷⁶ Ngoh, Cameroon, p.99.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

administered part of Cameroon was the Lutheran Fraternal Mission of American origin. Their area of evangelization was largely based in the North of Cameroon. The 7th Day Adventist Mission was very prominent in the Central and Southern Cameroon. A local church, which was prominent and attracted the attention of the French administration, was the Native Baptist Church with a local clergy headed by Pastor Lotin Same. Probably because of disputes over leadership in this church, the administration did not recognize it as an independent religious body until 1949. The Catholic Church arrived in Douala through the Holy Ghost Fathers in 1916 and by 1935, their major Seminary at Yaounde produced its first Cameroonian priests.¹⁷⁸ The Catholic mission opened many schools and missions all over the territory. They opened a vicarage in Douala.

The Catholic Mission adopted Pidgin English as their teaching medium. Most of the Catholic catechists and early converts learned their doctrine and received baptism in the coastal areas where Pidgin English had become the lingua franca long before the German annexation of Cameroon in 1884.¹⁷⁹ Both the English and the French missionaries used Pidgin English, it is reported that the French fathers had by far fewer difficulties in expressing themselves in Pidgin English than in English language. It was French Father, Mgr. Joseph Plissoneau of the Nkongsamba diocese, 1920-1930, who first wrote a Pidgin English series of Gospel books with commentaries, a catechism and a Bible history book.¹⁸⁰ The adoption and use of these books in both British and French Cameroons developed to such an extent that in

¹⁷⁸ Ngoh, Cameroon, p. 100.

¹⁷⁹ Edwin Ardener, "The nature of the reunification of Cameroon". In A. Hazlewood, *African integration and disintegration: case studies in economic and political union*. London: Oxford University Press, p.297.

¹⁸⁰ Fanso, "Trans-Frontier relations", p.397.

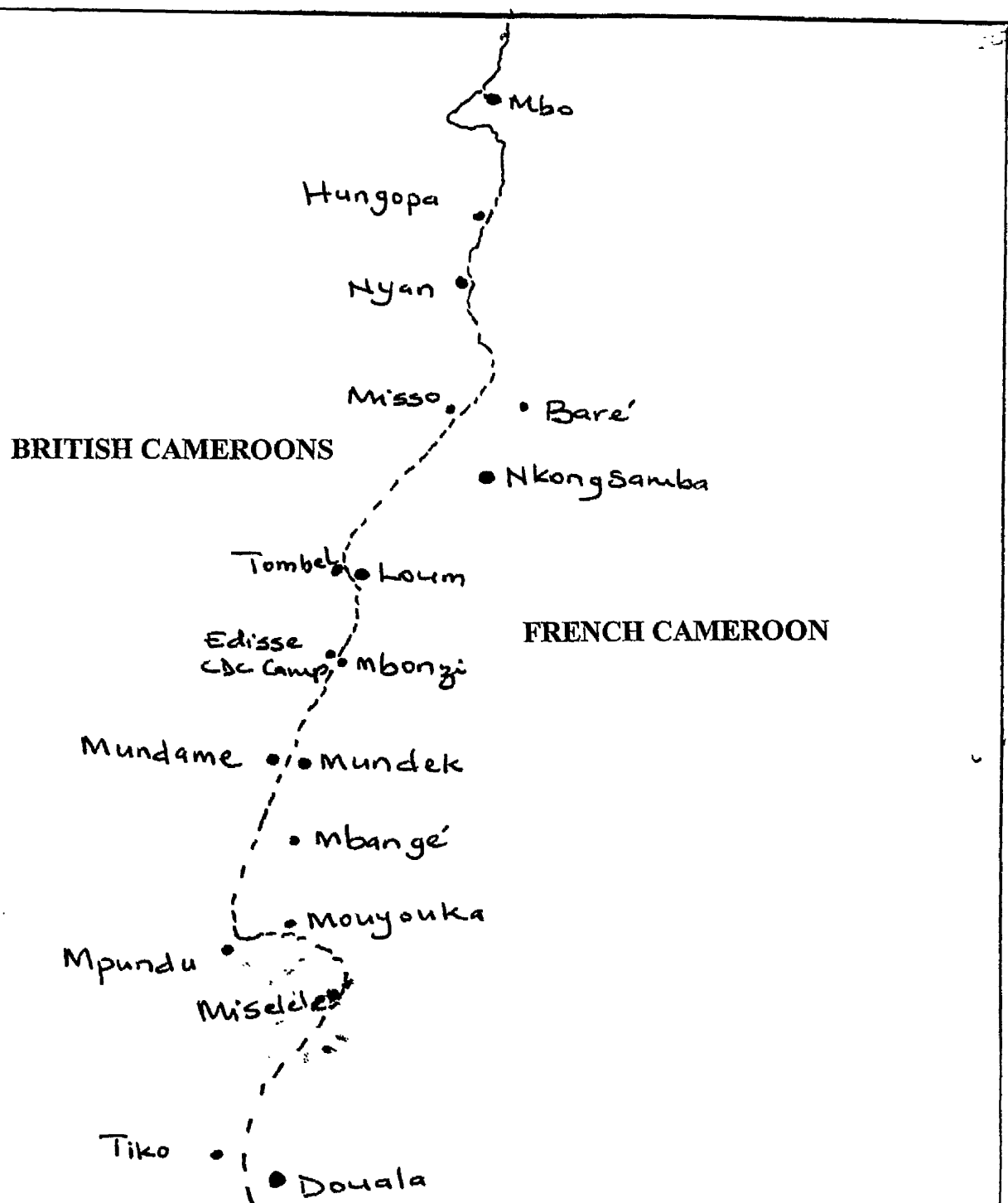
Dschang in French Cameroon, the Government felt it had to intervene to stop it and save the French language. According to administrative reports, the French Government warned that they would penalize the Catholic Mission if the use of Pidgin English in their churches was not discontinued immediately.¹⁸¹ It is important to say here that Pidgin English became the common medium of communication widely used and understood across the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon.

Despite the widespread use of Pidgin English, it was possible that in one family or village along the border, members were divided and depending upon which side of the boundary they found themselves they had to think and stand for either the British or French nation and values. This situation was not only a problem for the border people but sometimes also for the administration. For example one of the reasons why the French administration tried to stop the intensive use of Pidgin English in French Cameroon was that it saw Pidgin as the language of British subjects. The administration feared that its spread on their side of the border might create an opportunity for the local people to want to be British subjects or even for the British to want to claim back those border areas on the French side.

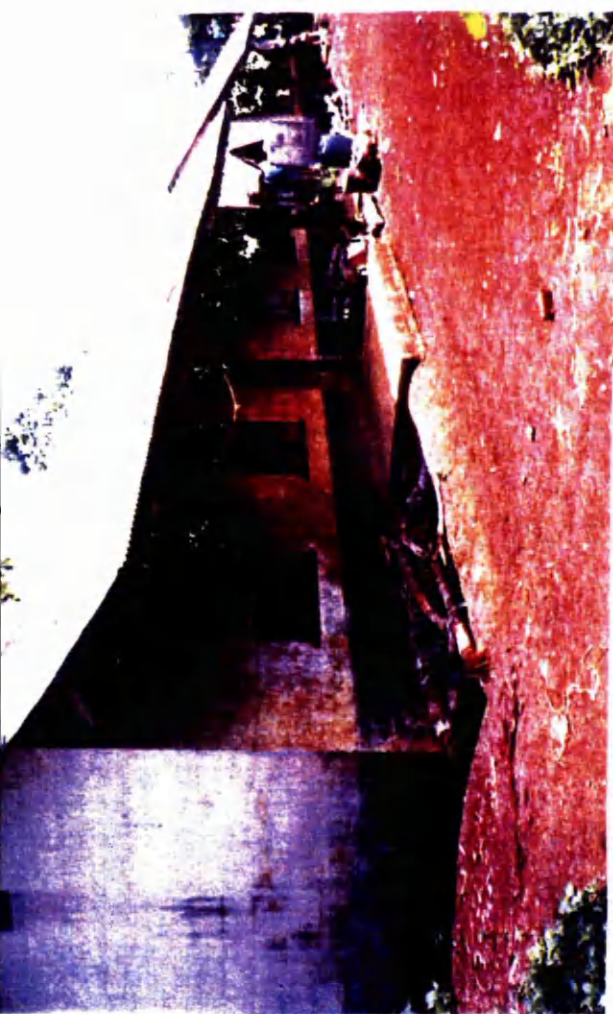
After examining the administration of border people, it would be interesting to now find out how much collaboration on the one hand, and tension on the other hand existed between both colonial administrations in the process of borderland administration. In other words, we shall attempt to answer the question as to how far was border administration successful?

¹⁸¹ French administrator to Mgr. Plissoneau, Vicaire Apostolique de Dschang, APA 1108/A, NAY. Fanso, 'Trans-Frontier relations', p.397-398. Map (p. 163) below shows that by the early 60s, the entire border zone under study fell within the zone in which 75% of the people spoke Pidgin English.

CUSTOMS AND PREVENTIVE STATIONS ALONG THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH BOUNDARY IN THE CAMEROONS



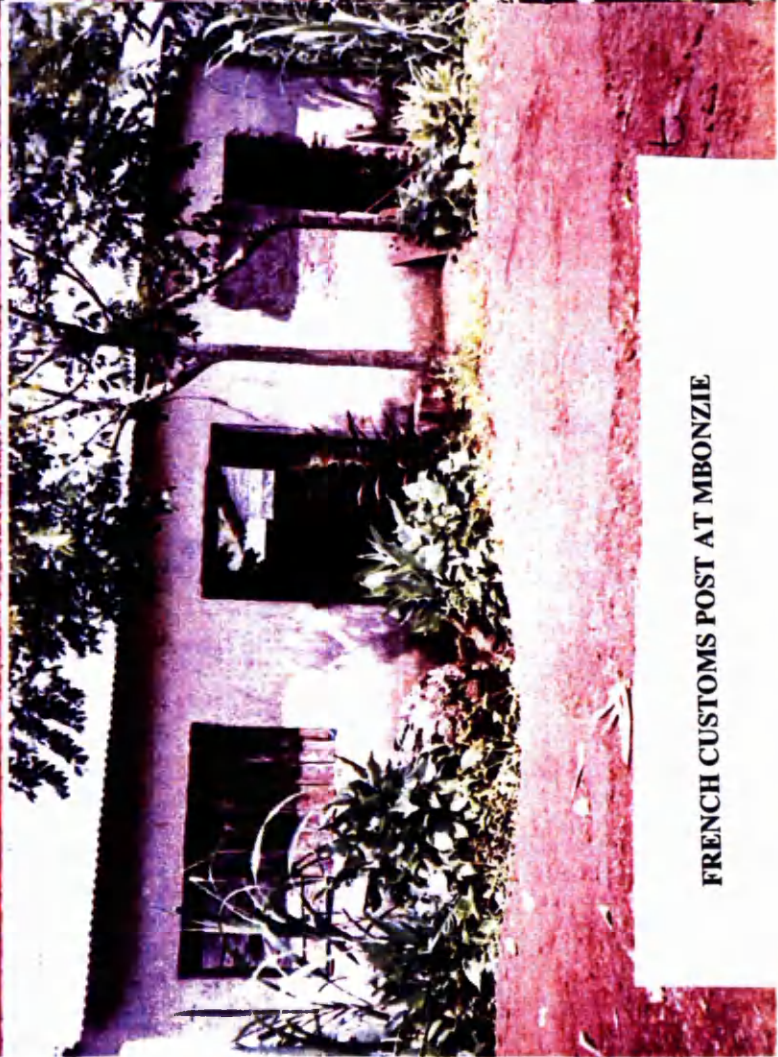
Source: Adaptation from interviews and V. G. Fanso, "Transfrontier relations and resistance to Cameroon-Nigeria boundaries, 1916-1945". Postgraduate thesis (Doctorat d'Etat), University of Yaounde, 1985, p.327.



BRITISH CUSTOMS POST AT MBONZIE



FRENCH CUSTOMS POST AT MBONZIE





BRITISH CUSTOMS POST AT TOMBEL-LOUM ROAD





FRENCH CUSTOMS POST AT TOMBEL-LOUM ROAD



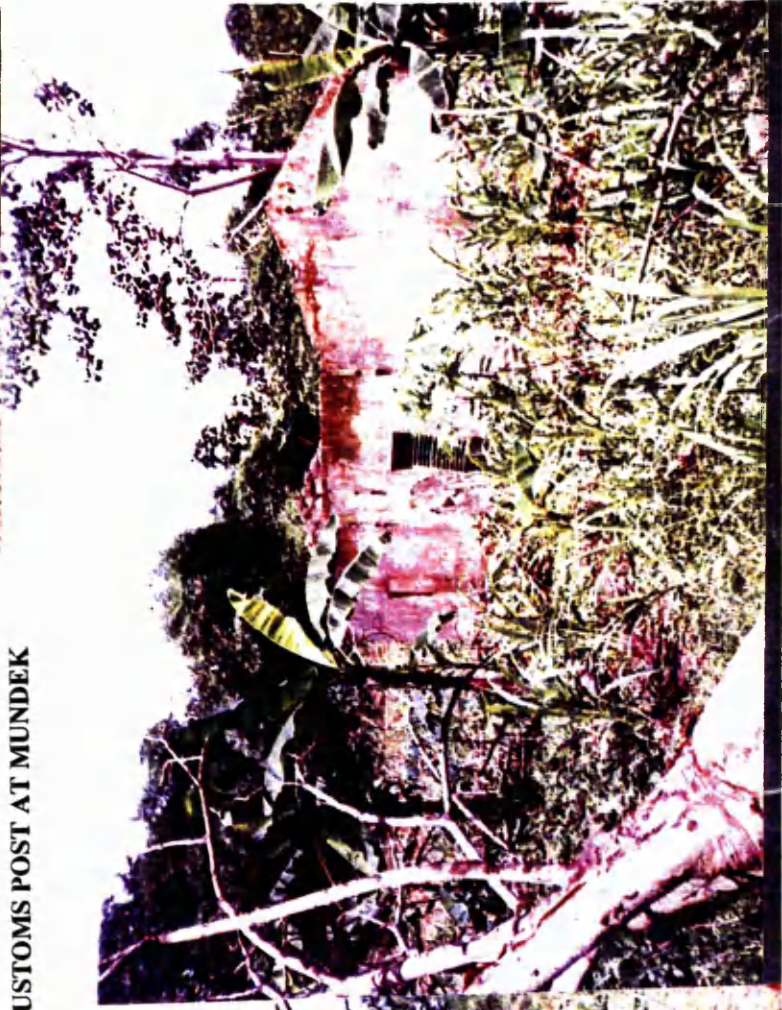


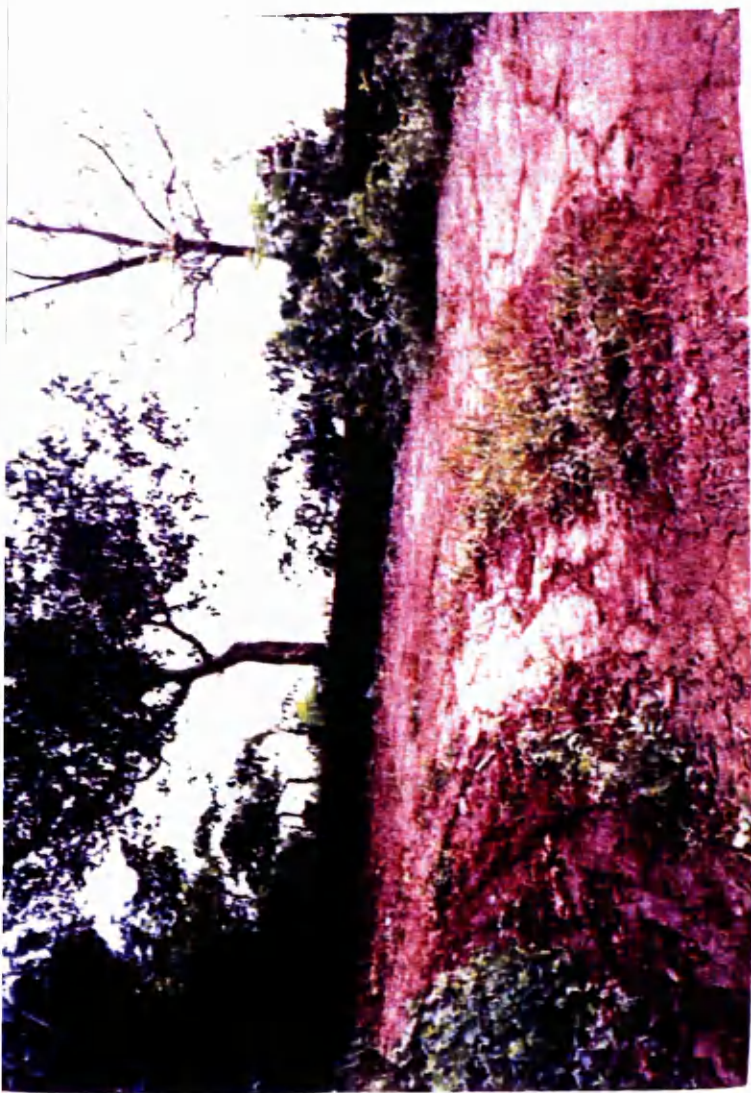
BRITISH CUSTOMS POST AT MUNDAME BEACH





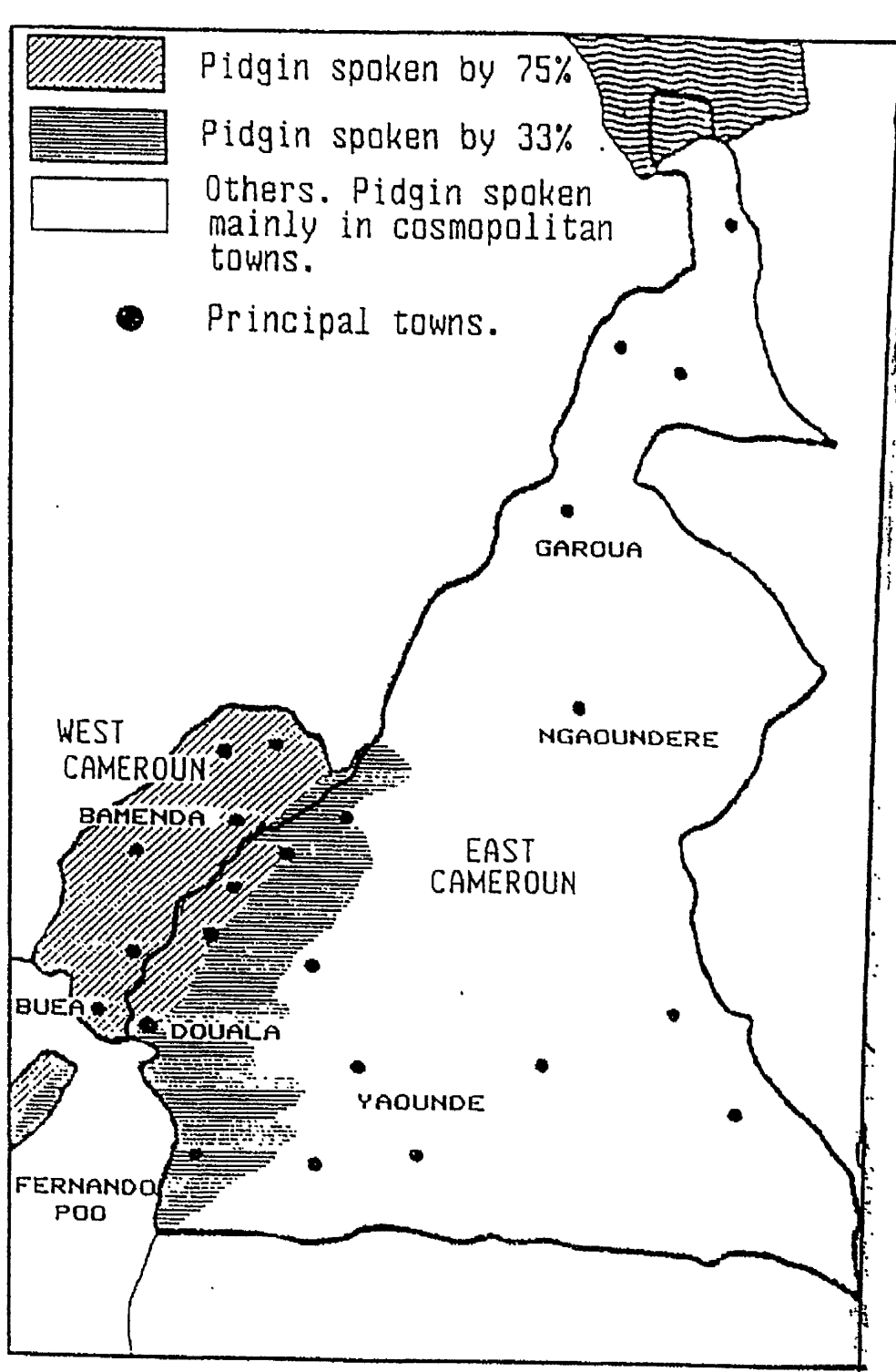
FRENCH CUSTOMS POST AT MUNDEK





**RUINS OF THE HOUSE OF THE MANAGER
OF THE ESSOSSUNG PLANTATION**

THE SPREAD OF PIDGIN ENGLISH IN CAMEROON DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD



Source: A. I. Asiwaju and P. O. Adeniyi. *Borderlands in Africa. Nigeria*: University of Lagos Press, 1989, p.224.

CHAPTER FOUR

COLLABORATION AND PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY BOTH ADMINISTRATIONS

The first section of this chapter examines the collaboration between the British and French administrations in the making and administration of the Anglo-French boundary in the Cameroons. The section will explore co-operation through written correspondence and face-to-face meetings. Co-operation became easier with the setting up of the Anglo-French Joint Boundary Commission. The Commission undertook joint projects that had to do with the planning, delineation and demarcation of the boundary.¹ Efforts at collaboration were sometimes frustrated by attempts by both administrations to exploit border resources.

Section two of this chapter discusses the major barriers to increased Anglo-French cooperation over border administration. These barriers were in effect differences in colonial policies and governmental practices, language, culture, currency, and economic exploitation. There was the psychological difficulty of having to cross the boundary physically. The administrators and the administered people felt these differences.² Emphasis in this section will be on the administered people, the border people.

¹ Delineation means the selection and definition of a specific boundary site while demarcation means marking the boundary on the ground. For more on key words and terms in boundary terminology, Ian Brownlie, *African boundaries. A legal and diplomatic encyclopaedia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979, p. 3.

² In the previous chapter, the political, economic and social systems of both administrations were examined in detail but now, only highlights of those major differences, which hindered a smooth cooperation between both administrations and the border people will be analysed. Also, it is important

ANGLO-FRENCH COLLABORATION AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR

When the First World War broke out Britain and France decided to jointly attack Kamerun following their joint success in Togoland in August 1914. The unity of purpose in evicting the Germans was to strip Germany of its colonies and to share them out amongst the victors. Ngoh reports that this Anglo-French joint action in Kamerun was taken in spite of the colonial rivalries between the two Allied powers.³ Britain and France it should be recalled pushed their cooperation to the formation of a joint Anglo-French force called the West African (the African or the Cameroon) Expeditionary Force (WAEF) in September 1914. When the WAEF captured Douala, the Germans were forced to retreat further inland to Yaounde where they established their new capital.

Anglo-French collaboration continued from the outbreak of hostilities, through the war and after the war. Before the end of hostilities, both administrations agreed that in order to successfully oust the Germans from the territory, they had to establish a joint rule or a Condominium by the close of January 1915. In this chapter our interest is not to know whether the Condominium was applied or not but with the level of mutual agreement to collaborate in the administration of the territories jointly conquered by the Allied Forces (Douala and its environs). By the end of hostilities the Allies decided to partition the territory using the Picot Line. The British and the French realised the need to form a joint team of specialists from both sides to demarcate the boundary.

From 1916 to 1922, the British and the French administrations collaborated in the drawing of the Picot Line; they made revisions to this provisional boundary

to note that the perception of barriers somewhat changed with time for as time went on what was earlier perceived as barriers became negligible.

³ Ngoh, *History of Cameroon*, p.128. See the same source for the reasons for those colonial rivalries.

through the signing of the Franco-British Declaration of July 10th 1919. In approving the mandate on July 20th 1922, the League of Nations invited the future boundary commission to utilise natural lines as much as possible and to make slight modifications to avoid separating peoples from their villages and farmlands. Some of the correspondence between both governments after 1922 was centred on boundary adjustment and administration. The Governor of Nigeria for example wrote to the CO that he was ready to meet with the French and proceed with boundary discussions.⁴ The British called upon the French to appoint members of the boundary commission so that they could begin the demarcation of the boundary. Between 1925 and 1933, both governments worked together and made minor adjustments on the southern portion of the boundary.⁵

The Commissioner of the French Republic wrote to the Resident, Buea proposing that they meet in Buea (British zone) instead of Douala (French zone) to plan the demarcation of the boundary.⁶ Owen W. Firth, Senior-Resident was appointed by the British administration to head the British Land Commission. A copy of his letter of appointment was sent to the French suggesting that they use the same format so as to maintain uniformity in administration. This letter read thus:

On instructions from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I hereby appoint you to be chief of the British Commission, which will, in conjunction with the Commission, survey and demarcate the boundary between in accordance. With the instructions, of which a copy is enclosed for your guidance, which instructions have been incurred by the Government.

⁴ *Annual Report on the Cameroons Province* for 1923, PRO. Governor of Nigeria to CO, Telegram of February 9th 1924, CO 649/30. Also see dispatch from the Governor of French Cameroon to the Senior Resident, Buea, No. 129 of June 24, 1925.

⁵ Details on these adjustments will be discussed in a later chapter. See *1922 Annual Report on the Cameroons Province*, CO 649/29, PRO.

⁶ Commissaire de la République Française to Resident Buea, No. 1723/AP of September 15, 1937, AgeFom, carton 932, dossier 2970. Archives National de France, Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, hereafter cited as CAOM.

You will be in entire charge of the British section of the Commission.
In the event of your being incapacitated by illness or other cause.....
will act as Chief British Commissioner.⁷

Both administrations decided by decree of August 25, 1937 to institute this joint Commission in the territory. On October 16, 1937 the Commissioner of the French Republic in Cameroun (French Cameroon) appointed René Dugast to head the French Land Commission.⁸ The two governments agreed and fixed the date of the start of work of demarcation on December 1, 1937. Both administrations decided that for an easy co-ordination of work, the commissioners and technicians of both commissions were to meet regularly to demarcate the boundary. Anglo-French co-operation was more noticeable in the domain of boundary demarcation and administration. We know that British and French local administrators met regularly and drew up protocols following preparatory investigations, which were followed up later by specialists of both governments. British and French administrators exchanged official visits on both sides of the boundary.

EXCHANGE OF OFFICIAL VISITS BY BRITISH AND FRENCH

ADMINISTRATORS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BOUNDARY

According to a Colonial Office Report, the provisional boundary was impracticable and it was due to the friendly relations that existed between the French and the British administrators that the administration of the boundary went on smoothly:

The present "so-called" provisional boundary is admittedly impracticable. From a geographic, ethnographic, or political point of view it is unsuitable.

⁷ Mission de délimitation, Cameroun-Nigeria (1937-1939), No. 1723/AP of September 15th 1937, AgeFom, carton 932, dossier 2970, CAOM.

⁸ Mission de délimitation, Cameroun-Nigeria (1937-1939), No. 1723/AP of September 15th 1937, AgeFom, carton 932, dossier 2970, CAOM Dugast had spent the major part of his career in Cameroon. As early as 1932 he had already been proposed by his government as chief of the Land Commission for the French. Dugast spoke English, and between 1935-1936 he undertook a mission to the Union of South Africa. Also see *Journal Officiel du Cameroun*, for the year 1937, hereafter cited as JOC, NAY.

That no friction or difficulties have arisen is due to the friendly relations, which have existed between the French and the British District Officers.⁹

These friendly relations were perceived through official visits at all levels. Following a report on the Cameroons under UK administration by Her Majesty's Government, relations between the British and French administrations were cordial.¹⁰ Both administrations held regular meetings towards the demarcation and administration of the boundary as from the end of hostilities through 1919, 1922, 1926 and 1927. It was in the light of continuous collaboration that officers of the Forestry Department met in 1928. Two officers of the Forestry Department were appointed from both sides of the boundary to co-operate in the protection and reforestation of degenerated areas at the Northernmost section of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary. They both exchanged visits after which a report was drawn up with proposals for improved collaboration in the future. To the South of the boundary, at Douala, British naval officers assisted in the activities marking the celebrations of French Bastille Day of July 14, 1933. According to an article in *L'Eveil du Cameroun*, officers of the British ship "WESTON" were present and assisted in the festivities at Douala.¹¹ The British marine officers left on Monday July 16 and their participation had been a further expression of closer Anglo-French co-operation.

In October 1936, the British Resident at Buea travelled to Douala on an official visit to meet his French counterpart. He spent a few days in Douala and is said to have been treated with the greatest hospitality and courtesy. In return, *Monsieur le*

⁹ From A. J. Harding to Strachey July 8 1919, *Cameroons 1919*, CO 649/18 PRO.

¹⁰ Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the administration of the CAMEROONS under British Mandate for the year 1936, p. 7, ICOMM. Hereafter, all other reports by HM's Government on the administration of the Cameroons will be cited as - *Report on the Cameroons*. Some of these reports are also found in the SOAS main library.

¹¹ "L'Aviso <WESTON> a Douala", *L'Eveil du Cameroun*, no.113 du 1er Aout, 1933, p.4, CAOM. The officers stayed in Douala for three days during which they played a football match with their French counterparts of the "Sporting Club".

Delegué Commissaire de la République Française, paid a visit to the Resident, Buea in December of the same year.¹² The following year, relations between both administrations remained cordial as French authorities offered assistance to the many British officials who passed through French territory on their way to Bamenda Division. The use of roads in the French territory by British officials was regular. In his article in the *Guardian*, a British journalist made mention of this fact: "the British always crossed to use the French roads when driving long distances, because the ones on their own side are so appalling".¹³ Manifestations of Anglo-French amity were expressed in 1939 when at the request of the British administration in Nigeria, a British police detachment comprising 40 men took part in a march past in the capital of French Cameroon, Yaounde. This was in respect of activities marking the 150th Anniversary of the French Revolution.¹⁴ Again, Anglo-French friendship was shown by the arrival of a British naval vessel, "Bridgewater", at Douala from July 22 to 25, 1939.¹⁵

In May 1946, health technicians of French Cameroon and their counterparts from British West African countries, including British Cameroons, met at a veterinary medical conference in the Gold Coast. Discussions centred on the problems of movement of cattle from place to place and the prevention of the spread of diseases. Participants examined the possibility of producing various vaccines to control the spread of animal diseases as the herds sometimes moved across international boundaries. In Dakar, in April 1947, representatives of African colonial

¹² *Report on the Cameroons* for the year 1936, ICOMM.

¹³ Richard Cox "Avoiding trouble along the Cameroon frontier. A delicate task for Britain" *The Guardian*, Friday May 20, 1960, CO 554/2568, PRO, a copy of the article is put in the annex.

¹⁴ AgeFom cart.1002, doss. 3511, *Cameroun, bulletin d'Information et de Renseignements*, 1937-1939, CAOM.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

administrations held a meeting. One of the major problems examined in this April, 1947 meeting was that of "liaison" between the British and French colonies in west and central Africa.¹⁶ They also discussed the improvement of the communication infrastructure between the British and French spheres of Cameroon notably roads, railways, telephone and telegraphy.

In London, discussions were undertaken in 1947 between representatives of Britain and France for the development of co-operation between the two countries in their colonies. The representatives laid much emphasis on economic co-operation within their African colonies. These talks were continued in Paris in February 1948 and focused on policies to be adopted on the prices of commodities, trade, communications and inter-African exchange.¹⁷ Both parties also talked about the coordination programme of the development of their colonies. According to the Annual Report of 1948, in the Month of July, Rene Hoffherr, High Commissioner of the French Republic in Cameroon went to Nigeria where he contacted his British counterpart. Both men examined the numerous common problems that hindered the smooth and close co-operation between them.¹⁸

From 1951 to 1955, the collaboration and exchange of official visits continued between both administrations. In 1951, medical officials from both sides held talks of co-operation and three years later special measures were taken by both governments concerning trade across their common boundary. According to Resolution 164 (VI) of the Trusteeship Council, both administrations had to take measures to facilitate the movement of persons and trade transactions across their common boundary.

¹⁶ *Rapport Annuel du Gouvernement Français aux Nations Unies sur l'administration du Cameroun place sous la Tutelle de la France, l'année, 1947*, p.19, CAOM. Hereafter, all such reports by the French Government to the United Nations on the administration of French Cameroon will be cited as – *Rapport Annuel sur l'administration du Cameroun*.

¹⁷ *Rapport Annuel sur l'administration du Cameroun*, 1948, p.16, CAOM.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Specialists on both sides met and adopted measures like the use of identity cards, *laissez-passer*, importation and exportation taxes in the hope of avoiding smuggling. These measures according to the French administration's report to the UN eased border trade and gave satisfaction to the border people.¹⁹

In June 1955, the administrative officer from Garoua in the French Trust Territory visited the British Northern Cameroons and stayed for two weeks. During his stay he was studying the British method of administration through the Native Authorities.²⁰ It is important to state here that Garoua, in Northern Cameroon from where the French administrator came was one of the areas in which traditional rulers exercised great authority. In the British zone, these were the kind of societies (Bamenda Division for example) in which Indirect Rule through Native Administration worked best. It should be recalled here that this was because the local rulers, chiefs and *Fons* served as Native Authorities with courts, councils and treasuries. The British administrative system worked well and won the admiration of the French administrator at Garoua. By December 1955, the French Geological Exploration Company (S.E.R.A.P.C.A.) carried out some research work across the Mounjo River into the British zone, precisely in Victoria Division at Mpundu and Moliwe.²¹

Further evidence of co-operation was reported in 1956 when there were regular contacts between the British administration in Buea and the French Department of External Affairs in Yaounde. Also, by November of the same year, a party of French agricultural experts visited British Cameroons to study methods of

¹⁹ *Rapport Annuel sur l'administration du Cameroun*, 1954, p.28, CAOM. This Report also gives the various security measures adopted by the British and French customs services along the boundary.

²⁰ *Report on the Cameroons* for the year 1955, p.17, ICOMM.

²¹ *Ibid.*

combating "Panama Disease". An outbreak of this disease had occurred in banana plantations in the French Cameroons adjacent to the Southern section of the boundary.²² Throughout this visit, the British Consul at Douala helped in transmitting correspondence between the two administrative Headquarters. To the North of the boundary, several village disputes were settled by cross-the-border co-operation between British and French administrators.²³ A good number of people from British Cameroons attended the 1956 French Annual Agricultural Fair at Maroua. Before and during this Fair, there were frequent contacts between the local administrators on both sides of the boundary.

The following year, along the southernmost part of the boundary, officials of both territories collaborated and planned a special meeting in Douala. The aim was to discuss forest administration and policy. This meeting was between the *chef du service des eaux et forêts* of French Cameroon and the conservator of forests in British Southern Cameroons.²⁴ In 1958, prior to the establishment of customs stations along the boundary, the Police Departments on both sides worked hand in hand. From 1958 through 1959, monthly meetings were arranged between the Southern Cameroons Police Department (S.C.P.D.) and the French security liaison work - *Sûreté Générale* (S.G.) on the incidence of terrorism in the French zone. Widespread attacks by terrorists necessitated the reinforcement of police in the Southern Cameroons and a tighter control along the Southern portion of the Anglo-French inter-Cameroons boundary. Both administrations hoped that these measures would prevent the incursion of terrorists into Southern Cameroons. Both administrations

²² *Report on the Cameroons* for the year 1956, p.6, ICOMM.

²³ *Ibid*, p.7, ICOMM.

²⁴ *Report on the Cameroons* for the year 1957, p.6, ICOMM.

collaborated to apply the provisions of the Immigration Ordinance on those illegal immigrants caught.

THE SITUATION OF PROHIBITED IMMIGRANTS

According to CO Reports, French Cameroonians used the British Cameroons as a base for armed raids into the French territory.

In order to protect British territory against terrorists and to prevent its use as a base for raids into the neighbouring Cameroun Republic large – scale detention and screenings were made. The procedure for dealing with terrorists entering British territory was to declare them Prohibited Immigrants.²⁵

These French Cameroonians were mostly insurgents of the UPC party, *Union des Populations du Cameroun*, in exile or who had escaped from the territory following the banning of the party in 1955. The U.P.C. was seen by the French administration as a radical political party, which called for the immediate independence and reunification of both British and French Cameroons. The party was banned in French Cameroon in 1955 but became active in Southern Cameroons from then on. It was finally banned in the entire territory in 1957.

When the British administration caught partisans of the UPC, they were declared Prohibited Immigrants (P.I.) and deported to French Cameroon. Under the Aliens (Deportation) Ordinance, the Governor-General of Nigeria could make a Deportation Order against such alien(s) if he deemed it to be conducive to public good. Thirteen cases were so dealt with in 1957, and three in 1959 (between November and December). The three persons declared P.I.s were Joseph Tekam, Daniel Nouwou and Aloysius Nkamdum.²⁶ Tekam was declared a P.I. in November and repatriated. Nouwou was charged with assaulting the police but broke his bail and

²⁵ From Governor General Nigeria to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, No. M2 of September 30th 1960, CO 554/2569, PRO. Also see extracts from official reports No. WAF.78.01 of February 2nd 1960 sent to the Federation of Nigeria on February 3rd 1960, CO 554/2562, 1959, PRO.

²⁶ See Parliamentary Questions, No. WAF. 825/78/01 PQ2 of February 23rd 1959, CO 544/2565, PRO.

a warrant for his arrest was issued. An application was made to have him declared a P.I. while Nkamdum was detained but later released and not deported.

If a person had been declared a P.I., he committed an offence under the Immigration Ordinance by being in Nigeria or British Cameroons. If such a person(s) was caught he might be convicted or escorted to the border and released. Even though the British administration collaborated with their French counterpart over this issue, the object of Nigerian laws and regulations governing repatriation was not basically to hand over fugitives or refugees for trial to their home government. However, there was also the urgent desire to rid the British Cameroons and Nigeria of aliens who were a potential or real threat to law and order in the British Cameroons.

There was a distinction between those called Political refugees (P.R.) and P.I.s. Political refugees were given a chance to go elsewhere than the French Cameroons if they so wished. A good example was the case of the U.P.C insurgents apprehended in British Cameroons. Two of the insurgents expressed the desire not to return to French Cameroon and were allowed to go to Sudan and afterwards to Egypt. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies underscored this point in the House of Commons when he said: "The House will be aware that a number of refugees coming from the French Cameroun have been allowed to leave, when they have been genuine political refugees, for the Sudan and Egypt".²⁷ Unlike the P.R.s, the P.I.s were returned to where they came from or simply pushed across the border.

²⁷ Contribution made by Julian Amery during the discussions on political refugees from French Cameroon, see extract from official report of December 1st 1959, CO 554/2565, 1959, PR.O. Those classified as P.R.s were for the most part, the leaders of the UPC parties. It should be recalled here that it was not the objective of the Nigerian Laws governing repatriation to hand over refugees to their home governments that was why the administration found it a better option to give the opportunity to the P.R.s to go elsewhere other than the French Cameroon if so wished. This option was not applicable to others who were declared P.I.s.

The Southern Cameroons government also declared officials of the One Kamerun (O.K.) party P.I.s and made deportation orders against them.²⁸ When Nde Ntumazah, a founding member of the OK party requested the British administration to issue a passport to him, to travel to the UK or Switzerland for health reasons, his request was turned down. According to a CO Report, it was observed that there was nothing wrong with his health.²⁹ Under the Aliens Deportation Ordinance, the Commissioner for the Cameroons, on January 25, 1961 made deportation orders against two officials of the OK party Gabriel Echokol and Yossa Issidore. They were arrested and escorted to the frontier on the same day and warned not to return. When they arrived in French Cameroon, they were arrested by the administration and imprisoned.³⁰ Terrorists were usually declared P.I.s and sent back home where they could be imprisoned or indeed killed.³¹ However, P.I.s and other deportees could appeal British administration if they so desired before they were turned back home. Despite the above efforts of collaboration by both administrations, there were major barriers to that cooperation.

BARRIERS TO INCREASED CO-OPERATION

Differences in politics, administration and law were contributory factors against a smooth collaboration between both administrations on the one hand and the administered people on the other hand. The British colonial policy of Indirect Rule

²⁸ The O.K. party was an offshoot of the UPC, which continued the reunification idea after the ban on the UPC. Its leaders were Nde Ntumazah and Albert Mukong.

²⁹ From Iain Macleod to Fenner Brockway, No. WAF. 825/18/01 of September 12 1960, CO 554/2568, PRO.

³⁰ Following the arrest of terrorists from French Cameroon in November 1960, the French Cameroon administration hoped that those arrested would be handed over to them but this was not done. *Afrique Levant 1953 – 1959*, Cameroun, Cart. III Doss. I, Presse et Documentation, I – 30th November 1960, p. 7, AMAE. Also see Parliamentary Questions of February 14th 1961 and the accompanying notes, CO 554/2565, PRO.

³¹ Contribution made by Mr. Dugdale to the House of Commons on December 1st 1959, CO 544/2565, PRO. The British administration expressed concern for the execution of such persons in their countries of origin.

progressively imposed the British administration upon their subjects, which was different from that experienced by their brothers on the French side of the boundary. We have seen above that the nature of the position and power of the chief was different in the two systems. To the West of the boundary, at least in the initial phase of colonization, the British political officer was an adviser who only in extreme circumstances interfered with the chief and the "Native Authority". This collaboration in the early 1900s (i.e. 1900 – 1930s) made the colonial government to use the chiefs as auxiliaries. Some of the reasons for this early collaboration were economic and the need for manpower: "Without the revenue or manpower to extend colonial rule, the British depended upon friendly local rulers even if they were slave – owners..."³² These early collaborative relationships were sometimes tolerated for the survival of alliances between both parties. Towards the 1950s, there was a gradual discarding of this alliance with the chiefs by the colonial authority. One of the reasons was the increasing number of western educated Cameroonians and the upsurge of the call of nationalism.

The border people in the British zone appeared to be a lot more attached to their tradition than did their counterparts on the other side. There were for example more spontaneous manifestations of this attachment amongst the Western educated groups in the British than in the French zone. Present examples like General James Tataw, and Minister Emmanuel T. Egbe usually join the masses when they perform open performances of traditional dances. Mention should also be made of chief Mukete of Kumba who unlike his French-speaking counterparts of Loum and Mbanga, has always attended official meetings in the political capital in his traditional outfit.

³² Richard Rathbone, *Murder and politics in colonial Ghana*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993, pp.22-23.

Unlike the British, the French administration as it operated in Cameroon placed the chief in an entirely subordinate position to the political officer. The French were more interested in the potential efficiency of local chiefs than in their legitimacy. We have seen the examples of chiefs Ewane Nti and Essoumboua. The French-speaking border people were brought up in the image of the French man. The French system of societal stratification into the *evolués* and the *sujets* dislocated the society into two groups.³³

Another important barrier to increased collaboration was that of language. Most of the British administrators could not speak the French language and vice versa. It was however important for both parties to communicate in the administration of the boundary; that was why in choosing the boundary commissioners, both administrations did everything to choose men who could speak both languages. One of the important qualities was the ability to speak and understand the language of the collaborating administration. Administrators who spoke both languages were rewarded. That was why Allen was appointed to succeed Firth as head of the British Land Commission, because of his ability to speak the French language. On the French side, Dugast was also appointed head of the Boundary Commission because he could speak English.³⁴ This language difficulty was also felt among the border people who found it very difficult to communicate on the one hand with the administrators on their side of the boundary, and on the other hand with those across the boundary. At border control posts and during tax collecting exercises, border people were

³³ These terms have been explained in chapter three.

³⁴ Commissioner of the French Republic to Resident, No. 1723 of September 15 1937, AgeFom 932/2970, CAOM.

sometimes obliged to express themselves in both the French and the English languages to officers from both sides of the border to avoid harassment.³⁵

In an effort to allow the people a gradual understanding and knowledge of the English language, the British allowed the use of the vernacular in teaching in NA schools with a bit of English. The use of English language was imposed only in higher studies. On the other side of the boundary, the French educational system was hostile to using the vernacular in schools. We know from L. C. Gray and the others that at the beginning of their administration, the French maintained that in their view, the best training for an African was an education in the finest traditions of Metropolitan France through the medium of the French language.³⁶ During the interwar years, the French gave priority to eight local languages in French Cameroon. By decree of April 21, 1933, signed Bonnacarrere, the French administration gave priority to the following local languages: Yaounde, Boulou, Foulbe, Bassa, Bamileke-Bandjoun, Bamoun, Arab, and Baya.³⁷ If a French subject spoke or understood any one of them well, he/she was given 1,500frs per year for 5 years duration. If before the expiration of five years, proof of mastery of more languages was shown, the *prime* or incentive was received definitely. This money had to be given in the presence of the top civil servant of the territory.

A significant result of this language barrier problem was the increased use of Pidgin English along border areas. It is important to outline Dugast's viewpoint on

³⁵ There were cases reported in the Mounjo and Elong groups where people from the British zone with proof of tax payment were harassed and forced by the French tax officers to pay tax again on the French side. A major handicap that these people had was to express themselves in the French language. See the *Report* of 14/8/1922, from DO Victoria Division to Resident Buea, Mungo right bank and estuary Douala, settlements on, Qf/e/1922/1, pp. 11-12, NAB.

³⁶ L. C. Gray et al. *Education and nation building in Africa*, p.8.

³⁷ From chief administrator of colonies to the Commissioner of the French Republic, April 21, 1933, AgeFom 989/3421 Affaires Politiques (Indigènes), 1933, CAOM. ¹ AgeFom, cart.989, doss.3421, Affaires Politiques (Indigènes) 1933, CAOM. Mention should be made here that these languages were not used for scholarly purposes.

this language issue that as early as 1938, almost all the chiefs of the borderlands notably the Moungo, could read and write French and English.³⁸ This could be a bit of an exaggerated statement but it is however true that due to the immigrant nature of the border population, the chiefs who became administrators of “strangers” as well needed to be bilingual or at least express themselves in Pidgin English to ensure a smooth running of their offices. This does not however mean that one had to be bilingual to be made a chief.

Differences in the nature of economic exploitation of border resources were also responsible for the barrier to increased cooperation between both administrations and among border groups. The French, unlike the British, undertook a high level of forestry exploitation in their portion of Cameroon. The French administered part of the boundary from the sea to Mount Manenguba which being rich in forest vegetation offered huge expanse of forests. Tons of timber were floated down the River Moungo to the sea port in Douala from where they were transported to France. Forestry exploitation was not carried out to a large extent in the British zone where much of the land was covered by cultivated land. In British Cameroons, the major economic activity was plantation agriculture. Even where the French carried out agriculture, there were differences in crop species to those grown in the British zone.

The French grew mostly coffee, bananas, some cocoa and oil palms with the use of people they called *Planteurs* or planters. These were usually those local people who opened and owned their own farms and employed labour. On the British side, the cash crops exploited mostly were tea, tobacco, rubber, some cocoa and palm trees. In the case of forestry exploitation, the planters hired equipment and employed labour to

³⁸ Dugast to Commissioner of the French Republic, letter No. 276 of 19/09/1938, 932/2970, CAOM. As a bilingual (English and French) administrator, Dugast's emphasis here was more on the language issue than on the function of the chieftaincy.

fell and saw the wood before sale. There was no great cooperation between the French exploiters of the East and the plantation owners to the West of the boundary. This difference was also remarkable in the nature of market products and commercial companies on either side of the boundary. At the start of the Mandate, British economic influence was predominant in Cameroon especially along the coast and in Southern Cameroons. The main British commercial firms were: John Holt and Co. Ltd., Richard and William King Ltd., Hatton and Cookson Ltd., Sanaga River Trading Co., Bank of British West Africa Ltd. and the shipping company Elder Dempster and Co. Ltd. The French at this time had only *La Compagnie Forestière Sangha-Oubangui* and *La Banque Française de l'Afrique Equatoriale*.³⁹ When the British later on began withdrawing their administrative and economic hold on Cameroon, most of their commercial firms withdrew from Cameroon and settled in Nigeria as many French firms moved into French Cameroon.⁴⁰ Some of these French firms were; Glamour, S.H.O, C.F.A.O, C.F.S.O., Maurel, C.A.C., S.F.C.N., and Co. Pastorale. French products flooded the markets in East Cameroon while on the British side, British goods were imported either directly or through Nigeria. In border markets however, goods from both sides were available.⁴¹ In close association to differences in market products and commercial firms was the difference in currency between the two spheres.

³⁹ Alain Peloux. "Le régime monétaire dans les régions du Cameroun occupées par le corps expéditionnaire Franco-britannique de la conquête au partage" *Annales de la Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines*, 5(1973): 8. There were other French commercial concerns but the most prominent were in the forestry, banking and transport sectors.

⁴⁰ Alain Peloux. "Le régime monétaire dans les régions du Cameroun occupées par le corps expéditionnaire Franco-britannique de la conquête au partage" *Annales de la Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines*, 5(1973): 8.

⁴¹ Some of the goods were smuggled into the markets. Traders of such goods were always on the look out for customs officers and ready to run away with the goods into the bushes on sight of any official. This was a typical scene of these border markets. Two of the major British commercial interests in the Banking sector that moved to Nigeria were the Bank of British West Africa and the Barclays Bank. There was also the Printania that was closed down as well.

One way of understanding the intensity of this currency difference is to examine the disparity in the status and value of the British and French currencies in the territory. From the beginning of the conquest of Kamerun to April 24, 1915, the official currency in Kamerun was the German Mark.⁴² However, in the North there was some small quantity of British currency, which circulated, and in the South, the French currency. This initial stock of foreign money increased with the start of military campaigns for the British and the French military officials paid their soldiers with their respective currencies.

The mark, shilling and franc had fluctuating values in Europe and in the territory. While the Allied forces accepted the mark at a rate of 10 pence to one mark, this rate quickly depreciated with the Allied victory to 6 pence to one mark. The border people like the rest of the other people of the territory were allowed to pay their taxes and do their purchases in the German mark for it still remained legal tender. From then on, the Allied powers began the progressive substitution of the mark by the franc and shilling. The British Undersecretary of State at the Colonial Office and the French Minister of the Colonies agreed to fix the value of the mark at 9 pence and 0.95 centimes.⁴³

From the proclamation of April 24, 1915 to that of August 5, 1915 (this marked the date from which Britain recognized the French franc as legal tender in areas of Kamerun that were jointly conquered by the Allies), efforts made to establish parity between the British and French currencies resulted in 1 pound sterling being equal to 25,32 francs.⁴⁴ Because this rate between both currencies was not confirmed

⁴² On this day, Dobell made a proclamation by which he recognized the silver Mark as legal tender in Kamerun. It is recalled here that General C. Dobell was the head of the administration of the part of Kamerun jointly conquered by the Allied forces.

⁴³ Peloux, "Le régime monétaire dans les régions du Cameroun", p. 7.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p.8.

by any decree or proclamation by Dobell, it was not effectively implemented. This currency barrier posed a great handicap to traders, commercial houses and consumers along the boundary. Traders and others accepted the franc according to its exchange rate in London, given by the local British banks in large commercial centres like Douala. Those in possession of the stronger and more stable currency sometimes exploited this situation of unclear exchange rates.

When the franc was 25,32 to the pound, there were no major problems but when the franc began depreciating further, people began to prefer the mark and the shilling, while steering clear of the franc. The pound sterling was much more widely accepted in Cameroon than the franc because at that time, British political and economic influence was more predominant in Cameroon than French. Also, the pound sterling was a strong, gold-backed currency based on a much firmer political foundation than was the franc at the time. To remedy the situation, the French Government realized the urgent need to set the value of the franc and the pound sterling.⁴⁵

Paris and London opened up negotiations to balance the value of both currencies. Dobell did recognize the franc as legal tender in areas of joint conquest at one mark twenty pfennig for a franc, and one pound sterling for 25,396 francs by August 5, 1915. Probably due to the difficulties faced by both administrations in their efforts to solve this currency difference, they allowed the use of all three currencies from August 1915 to the close of hostilities. Dobell asked the Bank of British West Africa, which was the bank of the Allied administration, to accept German and French currencies following the exchange rates of the last two proclamations. This implied that all three currencies were accepted. After the war, the value of the franc kept on

⁴⁵ Peloux, "Le régime monétaire dans les régions du Cameroun", pp. 9-13.

depreciating. In April 3, 1917, the rate was fixed at 1 mark = 0.85 centimes = 8 pence and by December of the same year, it was 1 mark = 0.75 centimes = 7 pence.⁴⁶ By October 1, 1920, further depreciation of the franc threatened an upgrade of the mark. It was however by the decree of December 13, 1925, enforced by that of April 10, 1926 (by Governor Theodore Marchand, Commissioner of the French Republic in Cameroun, 1923-1932) that legal tender accepted in French Cameroon were notes of the *Banque de l'Afrique Occidentale*, and the French gold and silver coloured coins. After having been in an inferior position for long, as from 1932 the franc was having an important status as the pound sterling and was the only currency in use in the greater part of Kamerun (French Cameroon). It later completed its revenge after the reunification of both spheres, for it became the only currency recognized in the entire territory.⁴⁷

Besides differences in currency, the idea of having to physically cross the border presented a psychological barrier to increased cooperation amongst the border people. The Eastern and Western borderlands were separated for the most part by the River Mounjo over which for a very long time there was no bridge. The only major motorable road was the Kumba-Tombel-Loum road and this was a seasonal road not designed to handle all kinds of traffic. Along the Mounjo at Mundame, a ferry was used to transport goods and people across the river. Heavy trucks were not allowed to go on the ferry.

Crossing the boundary also had a symbolic or psychological impact. Because of the imposition of the boundary, border people who could no longer neither visit

⁴⁶ Peloux, "Le régime monétaire dans les régions du Cameroun", pp. 9-13.

⁴⁷ From then until today the only currency utilised in Cameroon is the Franc CFA. There are growing concerns in Cameroon today about the future of the Franc CFA with the introduction of the Euro. Some foresee a devaluation of the FCFA and an eventual instability while others say a devaluation of the FCFA should not be tied to the introduction of the Euro. See *Le Messager*, Cameroon Weekly Newspaper of December 28 2001, interview by *Le Messager* with the financial expert Dr. Francois Tiani Keou.

their kin nor cultivate their farmlands on the other side of the boundary felt completely frustrated. Crossing the boundary sometimes made the people to feel insecure even when they were within the same village. There is the possibility of the reader to assume that as the boundary followed a natural barrier crossing it presumably posed the same problems before and after the partition. The kind of problems it posed after the partition and which we are outlining here in this research were problems with border police, customs and tax officers. In the village of Mwanwekan for example which was divided into two by the boundary, villagers from the British side visiting the French side were always alert to the passage of either French Forest Guards or tax officials.⁴⁸ On the slightest signal of the presence of any such persons or an administrator, they hurriedly crossed over to their own side, which was considered safe and secure. Communicating across the boundary was frustrating. While the boundary lasted as a physical barrier, border people did not have easy access and interaction with each other and at all times as they would have wanted. Knowing that one had to cross the boundary and run the risk of being caught without an official pass was a major setback to most border people. We shall now examine the difficulties faced by the British and the French governments in the administration of borderlands.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF BORDERLANDS

The third section of this chapter examines the border zone as a difficult zone to administer. Some of the reasons for this difficulty were the fact that it was a zone of

⁴⁸ Since forestry exploitation was a major interest to the French administration, forest guards were constantly harassing the people for felling trees without government authorization. *Report of 14th June 1932, from Chamber of Commerce to Monsieur Blaise Diagne, Deputé Chargé de Missions pour le Gouvernement Français à Douala. Affpol, Cart. 2535 doss.5, CAOM.*

immigration, a zone with a very "recent" population, a zone of violence and terror.⁴⁹ The difficulties and turbulence of the border zone under study were more of a problem to the French than the British administration. However because of mutual understanding and assistance, both administrations worked together to ensure a proper control of the boundary and give meaningful solutions to the border problems.

The border zone was a zone of immigration

The border region notably the Moungo area has been an area of constant flow of immigrants. The population is generally spread in small towns (except the cases of Manjo, Mbanga and Nkongsamba) situated along the road and railway which run parallel to the boundary from Douala to Nkongsamba. According to the 1976 census, the population of the Moungo was estimated at 276,456 persons, with a density of 74,21 persons per km.⁵⁰ Amongst the immigrants, the largest group was the Bamileke followed by the Duala, Hausa, Yaounde (Bulu and the Ewondo), Banen, Bafia and others. All these people came to the Moungo originally as plantation workers, a situation which could enable them to earn money to pay their taxes and needs of survival. It is to be recalled here that in the field of agriculture, the French concentrated on the expansion of cash crop production especially cocoa for the Africans, coffee and bananas for Europeans. French efforts concentrated on the production of cash crops for export to the benefit of the expatriate farmers. Very little was done to foster the development of food crop production. Cash crop production

⁴⁹ The border population is considered here as recent because in some areas the bulk of the people settled as a result of the presence of the boundary. These people were in other words attracted to the border zones because of the advantages offered by the area. Saying that border zone was a zone of violence and terror is no exaggeration, as it might seem to some readers for this was the seat of repeated acts of terrorism and killings as will be seen later on in this section.

⁵⁰ J.C. Barbier, J. Champaud, F. Gendreau, *Migrations et developpement. La region du Moungo au Cameroun*. Paris: Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique Outre-Mer, 1983, p.95. The name Moungo which the local people called the River was also given to the administrative District (it was later called "La Region du Moungo) through which the river flows. The population census for 1976 (Vol.I Tome 2) referred to the people who lived in the Moungo administrative District.

was a strong attraction to local people from around the Moungo and beyond. The Duala were the first locals to open plantations in the Moungo well before the Bamileke. When the Duala lost their trade monopoly in the coastal trade between European traders and the people of the hinterland, they turned their interest towards agricultural exploitation in the Moungo area because of its fertile soil. They opened big plantations of plantains, cocoyams, cocoa and coffee. Some authors have described this situation as *la colonisation agricole* by the Douala.⁵¹ Some other local people who owned some of the farms were the Balong, Pongo and the Mongo but compared to the Duala, they were few and their farms were small in size. As many immigrants entered the Moungo, the Bamileke outnumbered the Douala in the field of agriculture.

Until 1928, the Bamileke in the Moungo had been grouped as *Etrangers divers* but it was not until 1942 that the first demographic statistics were taken on the Bamileke immigrants in the Moungo. Following a report by the chief administrator of the Mbanga and Nkongsamba Subdivisions at the time, Reynaud, there were many Bamileke in the Moungo; 9,630 in Mbanga, 8,554 in Nkongsamba added to those in the other areas resulting to a total of 18,174. The Moungo had a rough estimate of about 40 to 43 thousand people at the time.⁵² By 1947, in some localities like the Manehas canton, the immigrants were more numerous than the local population: Bamileke 2/3, others 1/3 and the locals 1/3.⁵³ Maybe it is important here to look at the reasons for the Bamileke progress in their agricultural "colonisation" in the Moungo.

⁵¹ Barbier et al. *Migrations et développement*, p.100.

⁵² Ibid., p.97

⁵³ Subdivision de Mbanga, APA 11799/F, NAY.

The Bamileke worked initially for the Duala from whom they asked permission to grow some food crops on the plantations for their own use. Later they acquired their own farms around where they worked. Unlike their Duala employers, the Bamileke used mostly family labour and poorly paid labour. They used paid labour only when the need really arose.⁵⁴ The Duala planters progressively found great difficulties in paying their workers. For payment, some of the locals gave one of their wives or daughters to their labourer or sometimes a portion of their plantation.⁵⁵ As the situation of hardship progressed, and due to the decision not to work as labourers even for themselves, the Duala gradually passed on their plantations to the Bamileke immigrants. The new plantation owners then brought in and employed very many other Bamileke immigrants for very little or no wages with the understanding that after some years of service, they would be given their own lands to farm.

The immigrants soon discovered lands that had not been occupied. They then moved to these unoccupied and uncultivated lands where they eventually formed their own villages placing one of theirs as the chief. This was the origin of the growth of towns like Nkapa and Bomono.⁵⁶ In these new settlements, the immigrants first grew cocoa and palm trees around 1925, and by the 1930s they were growing coffee and bananas. The heterogeneous nature of the population of the border zone contributed to the difficulty in its administration. The French administration classified the Moungo area as:

An undisciplined region that has been rendered dangerous and risky by the proximity of the Douala region with which it shares several similarities. In this

⁵⁴ Barbier et al, *Migrations et développement*, p.121.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Barbier et al, *Migrations et développement*, p. 123.

Moungo region, instructions and orders given are generally received with disobedience and executed with bad faith.⁵⁷

In such a climate, the administrators' task was put to the test and rendered very difficult. When for example Reynaud was appointed Head of the Mbanga Subdivision, this was at a period when a campaign of compulsory labour, *Prestation*, was about to be carried out within his jurisdiction.⁵⁸ This labour was necessary for the construction of the road from Mbanga to Mundame beach. Reynaud's administrative superior, the chief of the Nkongsamba *circonscription* transmitted his worries about the administration of this border region to the Commissioner of the French Republic in Yaounde. He wrote that the Commissioner should not take into consideration the several letters of accusation that could be sent to him from the local population against Reynaud.⁵⁹

This was because it had been reported to the chief of the *circonscription* of Nkongsamba that Prince Bell of Douala had been holding meetings and discouraging local people from taking part in any form of compulsory labour called by the administration.⁶⁰ According to this administrative report, Prince Bell presided over a night meeting at Mundame at which he decided that a fresh complaint be sent to both the *Procureur* and the Commissioner of the Republic in Yaounde against the chief of

⁵⁷ Rapport Annuel, Nkongsamba, 1933, APA 11798/F, NAY. The translation is mine.

⁵⁸ The Subdivision of Mbanga was initially called the Subdivision of Nyombe. As from November 26, 1926, it was removed from the *circonscription* of Douala and put under the *circonscription* of Nkongsamba.

⁵⁹ Head of Nkongsamba Subdivision to Commissioner of the French Republic, Cameroon, December 15, 1932, *Rapport de Tournée* effectué par le chef de la Subdivision de Mbanga, du Decembre 1932 a Janvier 1933, APA 11798/K, NAY.

⁶⁰ *Rapport de Tournée* effectué par le chef de la Subdivision de Mbanga 1932 – 1933, APA 11798/K, NAY. Letter of December 15, 1932, APA 11798/K, NAY.

the subdivision of Mbanga.⁶¹ The chief of the Nkongsamba Subdivision addressed a letter to his subordinate telling him not to allow himself to be influenced by campaigns carried out against him by the local people. This negative influence of the Duala on the border groups against the administration is what has sometimes been called the "Duala virus."⁶²

The Duala influence did not end in the South of the Mounjo at Mbanga but was continued further North to Manjo, which is a town in the Manehas canton. By 1934, this administrative area was divided into two; the North had a strong Bamileke immigrant population and the South a strong Duala (notably Abo and Pongo) population. The few areas where the local Manehas population resided were conspicuously the poor areas of the canton. The immigrants had pushed the local population into the unfertile areas of their land. This was the same situation in villages like Nlohe, Manengoteng and Manengole.⁶³ This coexistence between the locals and the immigrants generated several problems especially as both groups competed for agricultural excellence in the eyes of the government. Usually, the farms of the immigrants were neater and better kept than those of the local people. The administration tried constantly to settle the quarrels and maintain a peaceful coexistence between them. In spite of these efforts, the Duala in Manehas still posed a problem to the administration.

The Duala in Manehas usually ran into problems with the administration because they considered themselves as equal to the administration in that they both hired labour from the local people. The Duala employed labourers to work in their

⁶¹ *Rapport de Tournée* effectué le chef de la Subdivision de Mbanga 1932 – 1933, APA 11798/K, NAY.

⁶² Barbier et al. *Migration et développement*, p.110.

⁶³ Head of Nkongsamba Subdivision to Commissioner of the French Republic, Cameroon, April 12, 1934, *Rapport de Tournée*, dans la Subdivision de Nkongsamba, APA 11797/B, NAY.

farms and paid taxes to the state. In the village of Nlohe for example, a good example of a large scale Duala planter considered at the time as a model planter was called Elimbi Joe.⁶⁴ The Duala, especially those who were wealthy and owned large farms saw themselves as the closest collaborators of the administration. Those who did not own farms acquired reputation as office clerks, accountants, bureaucrats etc, this gave them a sense of superiority over the other groups. One of the reasons for this Duala self-perception was that they were also the earliest collaborators of the European traders at the coast. They acted as middlemen in the trade between the early Europeans and the people of the interior. They, like their kin on the British side the coastal Bakweri, never wanted to do any menial or laborious jobs. Those they left for the immigrants. This attitude of theirs put them in constant trouble with the administration, which was constantly out to recruit labour.

The problem of "strangers" administration

An important factor that has contributed to the administrative problems of the border zone was the recent character of the population. There were villages formed by the immigrants or "strangers" purposely to escape from administrative supervision and exigencies.⁶⁵ These "strangers" made the Moungo a zone of refuge. There is the example reported by a French administrator who during his tour in 1933 around the Loum-Tombel area, discovered a very recently constructed village.⁶⁶ The village was just a few meters from the boundary and had about thirty houses and forty persons. On the signal of the arrival of the French administrator, all the villagers took flight to the British zone. These people were notably immigrants from Yaounde, Duala and

⁶⁴ Barbier et al. *Migration et développement*, p.111.

⁶⁵ The word "strangers" here refers to those immigrants who came from out of the Nkongsamba and Mbang administrative units.

⁶⁶ Barbier, et al. *Migrations et développement*, p.116.

Bafia as it turned out to be and they certainly did not have any proof of tax payment. The administrator gave them one week to pay their taxes and evacuate that village site which according to him was "too easy" for them to escape from any kind of control of the administration be it French or British.⁶⁷

A major problem faced by the French administration in the rule of the border areas was who to appoint as chief of the immigrants. As the number of immigrants increased, the administration decided that they should have their own chief a different chief from that of the locals. Such a person would work as *liaison* between the immigrants and the administration. Before 1938, the Bamileke who were the major group of immigrants were under the command of Jean Sah, while the other tribes notably the Hausa, Bamun, Yaounde, Bafia and the Duala were put under the authority of a Hausa, Adam Arab.⁶⁸ It is important here to examine a particular group of people called the Hausa who quickly gained the confidence of the administration. The Hausa traders came in from Northern Nigeria through Northern Cameroon, from the Western region notably the Bamun country into the Upper Moungo precisely in Nkongsamba. They came in caravans and settled very close to the train stations where they formed small communities.⁶⁹ They were known for their trade in cola nuts and cattle across Northern Nigeria and Cameroon.

In June 1939, to compensate Adam Arab for services rendered to the state, the administration appointed him paramount chief or *Chef Supérieur* of all the

⁶⁷ *Rapport Annuel* du Gouvernement Français au Conseil de la Société de Nations sur l'administration du Cameroun sous Mandat Français, 1933, APA 11798/H, NAY.

⁶⁸ *Rapport de Tournées*, effectué par le chef de la Circonscription de Nkongsamba, 1934-35. APA 11797/B, NAY.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

immigrants. This was also probably because the Hausa were one of the early immigrants and had kept a good relationship with the administration. This situation completely put off Jean Sah from whom tax discs were withdrawn (the right to collect taxes). Tension mounted between the two chiefs and the administration tried to reconcile them. Meanwhile Adam also realized that his authority depended largely on the ever increasing number of Bamileke immigrants in the Subdivision. Consequently, he agreed to have as an assistant, Jean Sah in his authority. This reconciliation was done in the presence of all the chiefs and notables in the Subdivision. During the reconciliation meeting, Adam requested equal respect and obedience from his subjects for Sah as they would pay to him. One of the immediate results of this reconciliation was that a surplus tax recovery (235,281frs in 1940 as against 215,045frs in the previous year) was realized.⁷⁰

The French administration helped sometimes to spur trouble among the immigrants. At Nlohe for example, the administrator placed another Hausa immigrant as chief of the village even though they were not the majority immigrants there. It is reported that a major reason for his appointment as head was because he had served the administration for fifteen years and was on retirement. After his successful service with the government, the administration judged him capable of administering local people placed under his control.⁷¹ This opposed him to the very influential and prestigious Peter Mbimbe who was the representative of the Duala.⁷² To reinforce this Franco-Hausa friendship, in 1939, the French administration supported the opening of

⁷⁰ *Rapport du 4ème Trimestre dans la Région du Moungo, 1939*, APA 10801/N, p.6., APA 108801/N, NAY.

⁷¹ *Rapport de Tournée dans la Circonscription de Nkongsamba par l'administrateur Menez, du 18 au 22 Aout 1937*, APA 11797/B 1934 - 1937, NAY.

⁷² Even though the Duala are not of the Moungo, they have very close cultural and linguistic ties with the groups of the Moungo. Thus while in the Moungo they do not feel they are strangers.

an Islamic school at Nkongsamba. Meanwhile, the Bamileke increased their competition with the Hausa in trade within and outside the Moungo region.

The borderland became a zone of political violence and terror

An important aspect of the border zone, which made it a problem to both administrations but mostly to the French, was the revealing nature of the border zone as a “shadow” zone or a zone of violence. This discussion will lead us into an analysis of how the UPC political party (*Union des populations du Cameroun*) opted for violence in response to the French colonial system. The UPC will be discussed in the next chapter but for the interest of this section, this was the first broad based political party formed in French Cameroon that included people from a wide range of border ethnic groups notably the Bamileke, Duala, Bakweri, Bangwa and the Bakossi.⁷³ The bulk of these peoples were related to peoples from Southern Cameroons and they used this relationship to support their plan for unification and the dismantling of the boundary. From its formation in 1948 until 1953, the party had no major conflicts with the administration yet the members maintained their goal, which was “immediate independence and unification”. This revealed the nationalist and anti-French nature of the UPC. From 1953, the authorities began interrupting their meetings by the use of force because it was deemed that the party was pro-Communist and had violent and aggressive propaganda. The situation deteriorated with time and members of the party were ready to fight back in case of any further disturbances.

From April 24 to May 15 1955, the party held several meetings in the Moungo area notably in Nkongsamba, Manjo, Njombe and Manengoteng in a climate of extreme tension. Government forces (the police and the gendarmerie) were sent to

⁷³ An examination of biographies of the major leaders of the UPC outlined in the next chapter will confirm that they were all from border ethnic groups and they stood for the dismantling of the boundary and the reunification of the two Cameroons.

disperse the meeting of Sunday May 15, this led to violent confrontations between the forces and the party members. Another meeting was held in the home of a UPC official in Loum, Andre Tchembou. Because the crowd exceeded the confines of his compound and occupied part of the road, the Head of the Subdivision of Mbanga Gerard Prestat (French administrator) ordered gendarmes to disperse the crowd by force.⁷⁴ The crowd resisted and the result was a great number of persons wounded on both sides.

Meanwhile, the town of Nkongsamba was in effervescence as UPC party militants held public meetings and resisted all attempts made by the forces of law and order to disband them. There was more bloodshed on both sides. In Loum, the UPC partisans invaded the local prison and set free all political and other prisoners. When all of this news reached Douala, the mobilization there was the most violent on both sides. On the side of the administration, there were pro-administration movements like the *Front National Camerounais* (FNC), headed by Chief Vincent Mbock who alongside the administration was fighting against the penetration of Communism in the territory. The administration regarded the UPC as the flag bearer of that ideology. Supporters on the side of the UPC were the *Jeunesse Démocratique Camerounaise* (J.D.C.), *Union Démocratique des Femmes du Cameroun* (U.DE.FE.C) and the *Confédération Generale des Travailleurs* (C.G.T.). On May 22 and 24, violent confrontations took place between both sides in the UPC strong holds of Koumassi and New Bell in Douala.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Achille Mbembe, *La naissance du maquis dans le Sud Cameroun (1920-1960). Histoire des usages de la raison en colonie*. Paris: Karthala, 1996, p.320. Also see Eugene Wonyu, *Cameroun de l'UPC à l'UC. Temoingage à l'aube de l'indépendance (1953-1961)*. Paris: L'Hamattan, 1985, pp. 44-58.

⁷⁵ An account of the killings that took place from May 22nd to 30th 1955 is found in file No. 6, Situation interieure. Les emeutes de Mai 1955, Serie AL-Afrique Levant, Sous Serie Cameroun, 1953-1959, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères hereafter cited as AMAE. ⁸⁶ An account of the killings that took place from May 22nd to 30th 1955 is found in file No. 6, Situation interieure. Les

By the 28th of May, the Headquarters of the UPC in Douala was burnt down and many of the properties of the UPC officials were destroyed. The administration declared that on their side, nine people were killed, one hundred wounded and numerous houses and vehicles were destroyed.⁷⁶ Nothing was declared on the opposing side. Violence spread from Douala to other parts of the country. What is of interest to us here is that the UPC, JDC and the UDEFEC were dissolved and banned in French Cameroon by July 1955.⁷⁷ Most of the UPC party officials took flight and sought refuge in the border towns on the British side of the boundary.

Meanwhile, from 1950 to 1954, a good number of French Cameroonians who arrived as plantation labourers had been established in British Southern Cameroons. In addition to these immigrants were an important number of UPC party insurgents who entered the territory as from 1955 onwards. The immigrants began requesting to be politically assimilated into Southern Cameroons. The Governor General of Nigeria and the Legislative Assembly of Southern Cameroons were to decide the possibility of granting their request.⁷⁸ It would in such a case have been possible perhaps for the Governor General of Nigeria to give them the right to participate in politics in British Southern Cameroons through an "Order in Council" but that did not happen. Due to the activities of the UPC partisans in French Cameroon, the British Government refused to give French Cameroonians residing in British Cameroon the right to vote or

emeutes de Mai 1955, Serie AL-Afrique Levant, Sous Serie Cameroun, 1953-1959, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères hereafter cited as AMAE.

⁷⁶ Mbembe. *La naissance du maquis*, p. 323.

⁷⁷ For more on the UPC political radicalism and their struggle for nationalism, see Richard Joseph, *Radical nationalism in Cameroun. Social origins of the U.P.C. rebellion*. OUP, 1977, pp. 171-289. Also see article in the news paper *La Vie Camerounaise*, No. 27 of March 9th 1956, "Dans son rapport a l'ONU, la mission de visit du Conseil de Tutelle fleurit les auteurs des troubles de Mai dernier.", (unsigned article) AMAE.

⁷⁸ Despatch No. 2274/AL of December 10, 1955, From the French Ambassador in Great Britain to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Serie: Afrique Levant, Sous Serie: Afrique Equatoriale Française (AEF) 1953-1959, No. 8, AMAE.

to be politically assimilated in British Southern Cameroons.⁷⁹ Meanwhile, the British government took tighter security measures along the boundary to stop UPC members especially the chief officials like Felix Moumie, Ernest Ouandie, Ruben Um Nyobe and Abel Kinge to cross over to the British side.

Most of them however were reported to have succeeded to cross over and were hiding at the border towns of Kumba, Tombel, Ebonji, Misselele, Muyuka and Tiko. Others like François Fosso, Rene Job Ngapeth, Joseph Kamsi and Gertrude Omog joined the group that crossed over and together, they demanded that the British government to give them British passports to go to the UN on an invitation. They were refused the passports on the grounds that they were neither locals of Southern Cameroons nor subjects of the British administration.⁸⁰ In February 1956, they addressed a petition to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees explaining that they were being shot at and about 5000 of them had escaped to the British zone and were homeless: "Over 5,000 refugees from the new republic – independent since January after 40 years of French rule – have already settled in this British territory, which is to vote next year on whether to join the Cameroon Republic or Nigeria."⁸¹ This was in short a call for assistance, which was never heeded.

In the meantime, officials of the party decided to reorganise the party and in this reorganisation, the border branch of Kumba was made the executive wing of the

⁷⁹ In the same file No. 8, see letter from Ministre de la France d'Outre-Mer to Ministre des Affaires Etrangères a Paris, No.339XD/GW of January 14, 1956, AMAE.

⁸⁰ From the French Consul, Lagos to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, letter No. 216/AL of November 4, 1955, AMAE. From Minister of Foreign Affairs to the French Ambassador in London, No. 3239/AL of September 15, 1955, Série: Afrique Levant, Sous Série: Afrique Equatoriale Française (AEF) 1953-1959, No. 8, AMAE.

⁸¹ Extract from article in *The Observer*, "700 flee from New Republic", published in Buea, Southern Cameroons on June 18th, 1961, CO 554/2568, No. 825/18/01, PRO. The votes referred to here were those of the plebiscites, which were organized in British Northern and Southern Cameroons by the UNO to determine the political future of both territories. The plebiscites of Southern Cameroons have been discussed in a later chapter.

party.⁸² The administration for their part continued with repression as many arrests were made in the French Cameroon. The safest place for the party to operate was across the border on the British side where they could hold meetings and send urgent letters quickly across to the other side. It is reported that the Bamileke border group for example were alarmed and distressed and were obliged to shelter their terrorist brothers and cousins from the French zone "who needed somewhere quiet to hide out and plan new raids".⁸³ Meetings referred to as "*Les Conférences Educatives*", were held in border towns like Kumba from the 21 to 23 February and on May 20, 1956.⁸⁴ These meetings were aimed at sensitising and educating partisans on the importance of their loyalty to the party's commitments.

In spite of these and other problems encountered by the UPC in Southern Cameroons, it was still tolerated in the territory. The leaders were sheltered by pro-unificationist leaders like John Ngu Foncha - leader of the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP). According to the *Daily Times* of August 12, 1956, the Commissioner of Southern Cameroons, J .O. Field in an address to the population in the border town of Tiko acknowledged that:

...the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* [UPC] has a right to exist in the territory like any other political party... There is no harm in having many political parties so long as the people so desire... although the French Government had proscribed the UPC for alleged Communist tendencies there was yet no proof of Communism in the activities of its leaders who took refuge in the territory.⁸⁵

⁸² Mbembe, *La naissance du maquis* p.331.

⁸³ Cox. "Avoiding trouble along the Cameroon frontier. A delicate task for Britain", *The Guardian* of May 20th 1960, CO 554/2568, PRO. A copy of the article is put in the Annex.

Mbembe, *La naissance du maquis* p.333. Also see letter No. 54 (1200/61) of June 12th 1961, from Patrick Johnston to J. Chadwick, CO554/2569, PRO.

⁸⁴ Mbembe, *La naissance du maquis* p.333.

⁸⁵ *The Daily Times* of August 12, 1956, NAB. This like *The Evening News* were Southern Cameroons based newspapers with contributions from some French subjects based in the British zone for a long time. Also see Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985*, p. 207.

Such a remark could be seen as reluctance of the British administration to co-operate with their French counterparts to arrest political refugees and hand them over. However, in less than a year after Field's statement in Tiko, in 1957, the UPC party was banned in Southern Cameroons. On the orders of the Governor General of Nigeria, the leaders and other members of the party were expelled from the territory. Ngoh says the deportation of the UPC members was at the request of the Endeley Government who had been criticised by the party for rigging the 1957 elections.⁸⁶ Expelled UPC party members started clandestine movements as the British administration issued arrest warrants and actually arrested hundreds of them.⁸⁷ According to the *Evening News*, of April 10, 1958, Um Nyobe's residence was besieged, all his furniture and personal belongings were seized and all his were arrested, driven out of town and killed.⁸⁸ On April 25, 1958, by the same report, "...twenty soldiers raped pregnant women and a ten year old girl..." at Fokoue village close to the boundary.⁸⁹

French Cameroon security forces sometimes took advantage of the situation and committed atrocities blaming it on the terrorists. A case in point is the Ebubu atrocities committed by security forces of French Cameroon. They committed

⁸⁶ Ngoh, Cameroon, 1884-1985, p. 208. The Endeley Government was the first Southern Cameroons Government led by Emmanuel Endeley when his party, the Kamerun National Congress won the 1953 elections in Southern Cameroons. More will be said in subsequent chapters on the political situation of both Cameroons and how they influenced the call for the dismantling of the boundary and reunification. Elections were held to determine the party that would form the government. The KNC won again in 1957 but lost to Foncha's Kamerun National Democratic Party in 1959.

⁸⁷ From Government House, Nigeria to CO, No. 499/v/867 of May 14th 1960, CO 554/2568, PRO. Also see article by Pieter Lessing, "Big army hunt for African terrorists", *The News Chronicle* of June 22nd 1960, CO 554/2568, PRO.

⁸⁸ From Commissioner of the French Republic in Yaounde to the Minister of Colonies, Nos. 3906 and 3907 of July 18th 1959 AgeFom 1007/.3571, Cameroun. Troubles maquis:UPC, 1955-1960. In this same file there are clipped articles from the newspaper *Marchés Tropicaux* of 1959 about terrorism in French Cameroon.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

massive murders and fled back on their side of the boundary. The British Commissioner R. V. Jones who carried out investigations on the murders concluded that the atrocities were committed by the Security Forces of the Cameroon Republic:

My impression is that both Colonel Blanc and Mr. Mvie have little doubt in their own minds as to who is responsible but that the Republic Government would prefer the matter to be regarded as regrettable but unproven and left where it is. That could not satisfy public opinion here and would leave the impression that Her Majesty's Government is conniving at brutal murder in what is still British territory. Delicate as the situation is, I consider the Republic Government should be pressed to admit liability and pay compensation, it being made clear that it should be very much in their own interest to do so in order to restore the badly shaken confidence in them in the Southern Cameroons.⁹⁰

Moumie, Ouandie and Kinge were deported to Cairo from where they began to plan organised violence for the border regions notably the Bamileke and Moungo regions in the near future.⁹¹ Some others were given political asylum in Khartoum, Sudan.⁹² From May to August 1959, the Bamileke region and the Moungo were boiling with violence from both sides. Many acts of sabotage were committed in the banana plantations in the Moungo. The population was called upon by the *Maquisards* or "terrorists" to go on strike and stop working for Europeans and form a National Front for the "total Liberation of the territory from the shackles of French imperialism".⁹³ The French administration labelled the UPC partisans as "terrorists" and attacked them with brutality. Meanwhile I do not share the usage of this colonial terminology

⁹⁰ From the Assistant Commissioner of the Southern Cameroons to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, No.16 Personal, WAF/E/26 of August 21st 1961, CO 554/2571, PRO. The Commissioner's detail report has exhibits of bullet shells found on the crime scene and eye witness accounts describing the type of uniforms worn by the killers.

⁹¹ Tambi Eyongetah and Robert Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*. London: Longman, 1974, p.148.

⁹² From the French Ambassador in Sudan to the Minister of foreign Affairs, letter No. 406/AL of August 13, 1957, AMAE.

⁹³ From Commissioner of the French Republic in Yaounde to the Minister of Colonies, No. 3977 of October 10, 1959 AgeFom 1007/3571, Cameroun. Troubles maquis: UPC, 1955-1960. Also see clipped articles from *Marchés Tropicaux*, ("Cameroon atrocities. Are these revelations true?", "Cameroun. La situation politique dans l'ouest Cameroun est inquiétante", "Cameroun. M. Ahidjo insiste sur la nécessité de lutter contre le terrorisme") in the same folder, CAOM, copies of these and other articles are in the annex.

for these partisans could also be perceived as freedom fighters struggling to free their country from the hands of a petty brutal and repressive colonial regime. In Penja in August of the same year, the administration discovered a camp of "terrorists" and 43 persons were arrested. They were equipped with bullet-proof jacket liners, bullets, machetes, clubs, iron rods and an open letter to all their combating colleagues and sympathisers. From this document, it was clear that there was a guerrilla network operating along the border zone.

The government of French Cameroon was preoccupied with the situation as it was rapidly developing along the boundary and had to seek more collaboration from the British authorities. For this reason, the Minister of state, C. Akwa, travelled to Buea and Victoria in British Cameroons to discuss the issue further with the authorities there.⁹⁴ The Government of French Cameroon was convinced that if their British counterparts tightened up border control as they were doing the circulation of the "terrorists" from the East to the West would be practically impossible. However, they did acknowledge and regretted the fact that the British authorities had very limited material and personnel to put into such an exercise. In order to get satisfactory results in such a venture, the French administration suggested that local chiefs of the border zone be told to watch out for the "terrorists" as well.⁹⁵ Meanwhile, UPC partisans remaining in Southern Cameroons met clandestinely in the border town of Kumba and decided that they would utilise all in their means to achieve independence and unification. In their understanding, they were only matching violence to violence. This decision sparked off wide spread terrorism along the border zone.

⁹⁴ From Commissioner of the French Republic in Yaounde to the Minister of Colonies, No. 3977 of October 10, 1959, AgeFom 1007/3571, Cameroun. Troubles maquis: UPC, 1955-1960, CAOM.

⁹⁵ From Ministre de la France d'Outre-Mer to Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, No. 109 of August 16, 1956, AMEA.

The Secretary General of the UPC party Um Nyobe did not go to Cairo but maintained communication with the others based there. The French authorities have described him as "a fearless and elusive outlaw who was thought to have mythical and magical powers".⁹⁶ Um Nyobe resorted to increased violence in the border region where he laid attacks on plantations, missions and missionaries, French government offices and officials, traders and other villagers. The rebels killed, kidnapped and wounded people; they invaded markets and looted shops. Border towns along the Mounjo were notorious areas for bloody confrontations between the rebels and the villagers. Rebel activities intensified in those border areas inhabited by large numbers of Bamileke immigrants. This made the French government and the rest of the people especially the Bakossi locals who were in constant war with the invading Bamileke to suspect that the terrorists were the Bamileke immigrants.⁹⁷ The huge number of immigrant Bamileke in this border region obtained land from the local Bakossi and made the region their home. It was from these "stranger" lands that most of the "terrorist" attacks against government forces and sometimes against other villagers were launched.

Violence intensified in the Mounjo as the territory approached and attained independence. In the month of April 1960 (referred to in the report as bloody April), "terrorism" continued in Douala, and in the Mounjo resulting to the death of several Africans and four Europeans including three Frenchmen.⁹⁸ French security forces were driving the "terrorists" towards the border villages and the villagers in turn for

⁹⁶ From Ministre de la France d'Outre-Mer to Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, No. 109 of August 16, 1956, AMEA.

⁹⁷ This tension between the two ethnic groups later, in 1966 led to widespread butchery and massacre in what was called the Bakossi-Bamileke war on the border, along the western foothills of the Kupe Mountain. See Ngoh, *History of Cameroon* pp.244-246.

⁹⁸ Ambassade de France au Cameroun, *Bulletin Mensuel d'Information Politique*, Série AL 1953-1959, Sous Série Cameroun, No. 5, V/5, AMAE.

security fled to the British zone from where they launched several frequent attacks. The French accused the British authorities of allowing "terrorists" to take refuge in the British Cameroons where they could rest and regroup.⁹⁹ Richard Cox observed that avoiding trouble for the British Government along the Cameroon frontier was a delicate task for the revolt on the French side was likely to involve the British Army. Cox continues that, paradoxically, Southern Cameroons was an area that "we have never taken any interest in and that we are too anxious to leave", implying perhaps that Southern Cameroons was not worthy of British military involvement.¹⁰⁰

It was later announced that the Federal Government of Nigeria was moving a battalion of the Queen's Own Nigerian Regiment to the Southern Cameroons to protect the frontier of the Federation of Nigeria. This was also to reassure the local inhabitants in the Nigeria-French Cameroon frontier zone in view of disturbed conditions in parts of French Cameroon and security operations to restore order there. This news was welcomed in the British Cameroons. British Cameroons was threatened by trouble spilling over from the Republic of Cameroon with armed troublemakers crossing the boundary at high frequency. There were two Nigerian battalions stationed in Southern Cameroons but the Nigerian Government knew that she could not allow these troops to stay there after September 30th 1960 for at midnight on that day, British (and Nigerian) authority over Southern Cameroons was to cease. The British administration in Nigeria was worried about this security problem along the border and was faced with the problem of whether to rely on reinforcements from Nigeria or to attempt to raise a local force in the Cameroons.

⁹⁹ *The News Chronicle*, June 22nd, 1960, article by P. Lessing, "Big army hunt for African terrorists", CO 554/2568, PRO.

¹⁰⁰ Cox, "Avoiding trouble along the Cameroon frontier.", *The Guardian*, May 20, 1960, CO 554/2568, PRO.

Either course however presented the difficulty of cost.¹⁰¹ Meanwhile arrangements for security after the withdrawal of British troops from Southern Cameroons were underway.¹⁰²

Two major proposals were advanced: firstly, it was suggested that inter-police liaison meetings be held frequently to see how to deal with the problems of refugee influx and terrorist threats. Secondly, there was the proposal to increase the frequency in patrols of the military forces of Southern Cameroons along the border.¹⁰³ Besides these major proposals, there were other observations of the possibility of stationing troops from French Cameroon into British Cameroons in an effort to reduce terrorist activities. There was however the fear that the presence of the troops might be offensive to the local people along the boundary. It was agreed that shortly before the French Cameroon troops (Commanders and Officers) were stationed in British Cameroons, they should be introduced to the people in a friendly way.¹⁰⁴ This would calm the fears and reticence of the border people towards the forces.

The Resident Lagos proposed that alongside all the other measures, there should be a possibility of easy transfer of Southern Cameroonians in the Nigerian Police Force into a Southern Cameroons Police Force. Some of the expatriate police officers were to stay on temporarily with the new Southern Cameroons Police Force to help it to get growing properly. Meanwhile, as terrorists kept infiltrating into

¹⁰¹ See replies and notes to the various Parliamentary Questions in the House of Commons on the security situation of Southern Cameroons, WAF/825/78/01, Q3, CO554/2564, PRO. Also read extracts from official reports of March 10th 1960 sent to the Federation of Nigeria on March 11th 1960, CO 554/2564, PRO.

¹⁰² Commissioner of Southern Cameroons to Secretary of State for the Colonies, No. 23 of May 16th 1961, CO 554/2569, PRO.

¹⁰³ From Lord Head to John Profumo, No. 33A of February 1st 1961, CO554/2569, PRO.

¹⁰⁴ From J. O Field to C. G. Eastwood, letter No. CC. 84/S4/115 of July 26th 1961, CO 554/2575, PRO. Of interest are also the minutes of the meeting held by technical experts of both Cameroons on July 24th 1961, CO 554/2575, PRO.

Southern Cameroons many more arrests were made at the border towns. In Muyuka and Kumba, there were reported cases of the arrest of alleged arms smugglers by UPC supporters.¹⁰⁵ Mrs. Cecile Teck who was a courier operating between Douala and Tiko across the boundary was arrested at Tiko with her husband in possession of UPC literature. Mrs Monique Kamen, the Vice President of the *Union Démocratique des Femmes Camerounaises* wrote to Mr. Fenner Brockway of The House of Commons, London requesting the release of Cecile and the husband.¹⁰⁶ They were both later put on bail after appearing before the Magistrates Court.¹⁰⁷

An important and militant wing of this terrorist organisation, which also took refuge across the boundary, was the *Armée de la libération nationale du Kamerun* (ALNK). There are reports of the arrests of some of the members of the ALNK (Examples were Samuel Fosso, Martin Njimi and François Tadjé) in Southern Cameroons from training in China where special military courses were dished out only to members of the group.¹⁰⁸ Many of the members were caught around Muyuka, Ebonji and Mbanga. In this situation of violence and confusion, people of various nationalities were present in the border area. It is not surprising therefore that one American and two Swiss Protestant missionaries in Southern Cameroons reported the presence of two Czechs and one Chinese at a small border village, Nyasoso

¹⁰⁵ From Commissioner Southern Cameroons to Colonial Office, No. 92 of November 30, 1960, CO 554/2569 Security situation in Southern Cameroons, PRO.

¹⁰⁶ From Monique Kamen to Fenner Brockway, No. 00097 of August 3rd 1960, CO 554/2568, PRO.

¹⁰⁷ From Governor General Nigeria to Secretary of State for Colonies, No. M2 of September 30th, 1960, CO 554/2575, PRO. Other UPC partisans arrested at Tiko at the same time were Mayo Beck and Yopa Louis from French Cameroon.

¹⁰⁸ There are copies of secret reports on the incidents in Southern Cameroons from September 1st to 23rd 1961, in the file CO 554/2574, PRO. Of particular importance is the letter from the Under Secretary of State for War to Mr. Fairclough, No. 6/E/33 dated October 9th 1961, CO 554/2574, PRO.

working with the "terrorists" from French Cameroon.¹⁰⁹ The terrorists were said to be largely Chinese Communist trained. This report led to serious security and a tighter boundary policing around pillar number 38 where these foreign terrorist assistants were said to be operating from.

It was very close to this area, around pillar number 37, that the Ebubu murders took place in which twelve CDC workers including two Nigerians were shot by the security forces of French Cameroon.¹¹⁰ This is what has been described as "the Ebubu Atrocities". On hearing this, the Secretary of State for the Colonies sent a telegram to the Commissioner of Southern Cameroons that read thus: "While we naturally want to avoid a quarrel with the Cameroun Government, particularly at this stage and over security arrangements in the frontier area, we obviously cannot let this deplorable incident pass".¹¹¹ The British administration proposed that the government of French Cameroon should promise a full enquiry into the affair and punishment to those responsible. They also hoped that the government of French Cameroon would offer compensation for the loss. On this, Ahidjo sent a fact finding mission which at first maintained that the evidence was compatible with the attack by the rebels. The mission intended to carry out full investigation on their side of the boundary and communicate the results to the British administration later.

This situation of terror enveloped the border zone as large numbers of refugees and some terrorists continued to seek asylum in Southern Cameroons. Nigerian troops had been moved to Southern Cameroons to guard against any spread of violence from

¹⁰⁹ From an Annual Report on the Cameroun Republic dated September 17th 1961, NAY, the Czechoslovakians and Chinese are said to have been there since June but the missionaries were afraid to report to the police for fear of retribution.

¹¹⁰ From Secretary of State for the Colonies to Commissioner Southern Cameroons, Telegram No. 117 of August 18, 1961. CO 554/2571, PRO. French Cameroon is referred to in these CO files as "Cameroun".

¹¹¹ Ibid.

the border. When Nigeria became independent on October 1, 1960, British troops replaced the Nigerian troops in the Southern Cameroons. One year later, troops of the military and the Gendarmerie from French Cameroon were sent into Southern Cameroons (Bamenda-October 1st, Kumba-October 2nd, Buea-October 3rd 1961).¹¹² Even after Southern Cameroons and French Cameroon became independent, Britons left in Southern Cameroons were armed in fear of a possible raid from the rebels. British troops were maintained in Southern Cameroons until the leaders of the new East and West States felt confident that the situation was under control or until an effective police force could take their place.¹¹³

The training camps of the “terrorists” were destroyed and some of their major leaders were arrested. The British troops stopped the reorganisation of the ALNK in the Mounjo. With all of these forces in Southern Cameroons and many of the UPC partisans either arrested or on exile, calm was established in the Bamileke and Mounjo regions. In the next chapter we will see the response of the border people to the boundary.

¹¹² Secret letter from Acton to Eastwood, No.CAM/POL/I/MO3 of 21/07/1961, Co 554/2575, PRO.

¹¹³ Confidential telegram from the Commissioner of the French Republic, Yaounde to FO, No. 160 of August 8th 1961, CO 554/2574, PRO. By the time Ahidjo became President of the Republic in 1960, he was determined to secure his position and sought to come to terms with opposition leaders. Meanwhile Moumie died in 1960 from poisoning in Switerland and the bulk of the resistant UPC members were on exile, relative calm was thus established in the Mounjo.

CHAPTER FIVE

AFRICAN RESPONSE TO THE IMPOSITION OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH BOUNDARY IN CAMEROON

We shall now look at the reaction of the border people to the boundary. Their reactions varied, from organised and group reactions to unorganised and spontaneous actions. People put their complaints to the UN visiting missions orally and also through written petitions. Political parties were formed which included in their programme the ambition to dismantle the boundary and achieve independence and unification for Cameroon. There were also cases of open rejection of the boundary as some border groups destroyed boundary landmarks. Others ignored the boundary by maintaining close socio-cultural relations across the boundary. Some criss-crossed the boundary without official passes while others destroyed boundary marks and attacked border guards.

It is important to say here that border groups were not passive victims for they often tried to make the best of a difficult situation. While protesting against the boundary on the one hand, the border groups made the best of their border position by transforming it into an opportunity zone, a zone of "conduit" or transition. This situation was favoured by the fact that those managing the boundary were working in very difficult terrain-thick forests, hilly and sometimes rugged landscapes with dangerous reptiles and insects; these prevented efficiency and increased the opportunity for the border groups. On the whole, this group of opportunists did not outnumber the larger group who saw the boundary as negative and divisive and called for its dismantlement.

THE UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSIONS AND PETITIONERS IN SOUTHERN CAMEROONS.

Two bodies, the Trusteeship Council and the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly (often called the Trusteeship Committee), were directly concerned with the trust territories. On the Trusteeship Council, all administering, authorities were represented, as were permanent members of the Security Council. A number of non-administering states were elected for three-year terms, so that the number of administering and non-administering countries remained equal.¹ The very first session of the Fourth Committee, in 1946, illustrated the tensions and pressures bearing upon the political development of the trust territories. Seven draft agreements were submitted to the General Assembly, including those for both sections of Togoland and the Cameroons.² More than assuring good supervision and the correction of abuses, international supervision became a safeguard for rapid progress towards self-government. The increased scope of international supervision was also made evident by the visiting mission system. In Article 87 of the Charter, the Trusteeship Council was authorized to "make periodic visits". Every three years, four members of the Trusteeship Council were selected to visit West Africa; the first regular mission visited in 1949, the fourth and last in 1958. UN Visiting Missions toured the territories in 1949, 1952, and 1955 and in 1958 to assess how well the British and the French were performing their role of Trusteeship.³ Visiting Missions were intended to gather information (and accordingly could accept petitions), as well as to inquire into

¹ The Fourth Committee included all UN members and was more responsive to changes in the composition of the General Assembly. Since its membership was correspondingly wider than that of the Trusteeship Council, the Fourth Committee tended to press for more rapid implementation of self-government or independence than the Trusteeship Council.

² C. E. Welch, Jr, *Dream of unity. Pan-Africanism and political unification in West Africa*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966, pp.30-31.

³ United Nations Trusteeship Council Official Records here after cited as UNTCOR, on the various Visiting Missions, ICOMM. Annual Reports on the Cameroons under British administration for the

specific problems, in accordance with the particular instructions of the Trusteeship Council. They wrote reports and collected petitions, which they sent to the Trusteeship Council. From these reports the Council made observations and recommendations that contributed to the advancement of the territory from a completely dependent status to self-government. Petitions were formulated, demonstrations and meetings organized, and the inhabitants told of the significance of the Mission's tour.

As direct representatives of the UN, the Visiting Missions were believed to possess great influence over the administering authorities. This UN Trust status of the territory has been seen by Africans as advantageous as the inhabitants of the trust territories were able to petition directly to the Secretary-General of the UN. Such petitions were in the form of telegrams, letters, memoranda or other documents, and they contained requests, complaints and grievances. People could equally present their problems directly to the Missions while in the territory.

According to Welch, the "avalanche of petitions" (the 1955 Visiting Mission to West Africa received about 200,000 communications in French Togoland alone, and another 40,000 in the French Cameroons) received testified to the willingness of the Africans to co-operate with the Missions.⁴ The number of oral petitioners who gave statements in New York also increased. Eleven out of the sixty-six petitions and supplementary petitions to the UN Trusteeship Council presented by the inhabitants of Southern Cameroons, were on the Anglo-French boundary and twelve from French

years 1949, 1952, 1955 and 1958, SOAS Main Library, London. Henry Kam Kah, "The United Nations Visiting Missions and the Southern Cameroons, 1949-1958", BA dissertation, University of Buea, Cameroon, 1996. For more data on the UN Missions in French Cameroon, see various "*Rapports Annuels*" of the respective years, CAOM.

⁴ Welch, *Dream of unity*, pp.32-33.

Cameroon were based on the same issue.⁵ Among those who called for an end to artificial boundaries were pressure groups and political parties like the French Cameroons Welfare Union (FCWU); the Cameroons National Federation (CNF); the Kamerun National Congress (KNC); the Kamerun People's Party (KPP); the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) and the Kamerun United National Congress KUNC.

Some of the petitions called for the unification of the two British Cameroons; meanwhile the bulk wanted the unification of the British and French spheres.⁶ This implied the removal of the boundary. French Cameroonians (Bamileke) living in the British zone held a conference in Kumba in 1949 in which they presented a memorandum to the first Visiting Mission which went to the territory in November of that year. This group was called the Baminyang Improvement Union (BIU), Kumba. The memo called for the removal of the boundary and the unification of the British and French Cameroons. Requests for unification also came that same year from economic and ethnic organisations and the thirteen Southern Cameroonians who were members of the Eastern House of Assembly, Nigeria.⁷

The first Mission to both Southern Cameroons and the French Cameroon was in 1949. According to the Annual Report of the French Government to the UN for

⁵ Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p. 188

⁶ The Cameroons administered under British Mandate (also referred to as the Cameroons under UK administration) was divided into two parts: the British Northern Cameroons and the British Southern Cameroons. Southern Cameroons until 1954 was administered as an integral part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, until the independence of Nigeria as a "quasi-Federal" territory that evolved towards full regional status. Northern Cameroons remained administratively an integral part of the Northern Region of Nigeria, divided between Adamawa, Benue, and Bornu Provinces, until October 1, 1960. On June 1, 1961, Northern Cameroons was formally reintegrated into the Northern Region of Nigeria as the Sardauna Province.

⁷ It should be recalled here that for administrative purposes, British Southern Cameroons was put under the control of the Eastern Region of Nigeria and administered as part of Nigeria. The seat of government was until 1949 in Lagos before it was transferred to Buea in Southern Cameroons. The Eastern Region had an Eastern House of Assembly with Southern Cameroonian representation. The Association; Ejagham Improvement Union; Mbu Improvement Union; Bamenda Improvement Association in Kumba and Grassfield National Union, see Welch, *Dream of unity*, p.162.

that year, the Mission was made up of: Awni Khalidy (Iraq- President), A. Claeys Bouvqert (Belgium), A. Ramos Pedrieza (Mexico) and Benjamin Gerig (USA).⁸ It was to have on-the-spot consultations with the local representatives of the administering authority. On arrival in Southern Cameroons, the Mission received complaints from pressure groups like the CNF and the FCWU, which later became the East Cameroon Welfare Union (ECWU).⁹ Both groups canvassed for the unification of the two Trust Territories of the Cameroons into a single unit. The CNF opposed the administration of Southern Cameroons as a part of Nigeria because in such a system, the interests of Southern Cameroonians were not fully respected. This was because the number of Cameroonian representatives in Nigerian legislative institutions was too small to have any effective impact on the development of the territory. The Mission's reaction to these petitions was that Britain and Southern Cameroonians were advised to carefully examine the desirability and practicability of some administrative, legislative and budgetary autonomy being established in the territory.¹⁰ The Mission also called on the easing of frontier regulations between the British and French Cameroons.

In the French Cameroon, the Mission entered from the North at Mora and proceeded southwards towards Douala passing through Maroua, Garoua, Ngoundere and Yaounde. On the last lap of the tour they went through the border areas of Dschang and Nkongsamba where they met with border people and their

representatives were J. N Foncha, S.T. Muna, V.T. Lainjo, J. T. Ndze, A. N. Ngala, J. C. Kangsen, S. C. Ndi, S. A. George, M. N. Forju, N.N. Mbile, R. N. Charley, E. M. L. Endeley, and P. N. Motombi-Woleta. These economic and ethnic organisations were: the Bakweri Improvement Union; Bakweri Land Committee; Cameroons Development Corporation Workers' Union; Mamfe Improvement Union, Victoria; Bafaw Improvement Union; Bakundu Improvement Union; Balong Tribal Union; Balue Improvement Union; All-Bakossi Improvement League; Bakossi Land Committee; Ngolo-Batanga-Bima-Balondo-Badiko Improvement Union; Mbonge Improvement Union; Isangele Farming

⁸ *Rapport Annuel* du gouvernement Français aux Nations Unies sur l'administration du Cameroun placée sous la tutelle de la France, 1949, P.34, CAOM.

⁹ These and other pressure groups and political parties will be discussed below.

¹⁰ Kah, "The United Nations Visiting Missions", p.19.

representatives. Due to the support of the local populations and the administration, the first UN Visiting Mission in French Cameroon appeared to have worked under good conditions. Members of the Mission had working sessions and free contacts with the various elements of the local population wherever they went. They also received freely, all petitions from the people.¹¹ During this visit, the French administration did much to make sure that the members of the Mission acquired a complete view of the territory, its inhabitants and organisation.

The next Mission arrived in 1952. The Mission was composed of the following members: Messrs H-K. Yang (China), M. H. Dorsinville (Haiti), Roberto E. Quiros (El Salvador), Roy A. Peachey (Australia-Chairman), Robert Scheyven (Belgium) and E. W. Mulcahy (USA).¹² The aims of the Mission were to accept and receive petitions without prejudice to its acting in accordance with the rules of procedure and to investigate on the spot, after consultations with local representatives of the administering authorities concerned:

- to examine in consultation with the administering authorities, the means taken and to be taken in respect of the provision of information about the United Nations to the peoples of the Trust Territories.
- to transmit to the Council as soon as practicable after the completion of its visit a report on each of the territories visited containing its findings

¹¹ *Rapport Annuel du gouvernement Français aux Nations Unies sur le Cameroun*, 1949, p. 34, CAOM. It is reported that most of these violent petitions came from the UPC party members and some of the border groups.

¹² "Dans son rapport à l'ONU, la Mission de visite du Conseil de Tutelle" *La vie Camerounaise*, No. 27, 1956, CAOM. Also see UNTCOR, 13th session (28 January – 25 March 1954), Supplement No. 4, p.1, ICOMM. The Mission was accompanied by seven members of the Secretariat: Mr. J. J. Cebe-Habersky (Principal Secretary); Mr. L. Sternbach, Miss J. Brown-Harrop and Mr. F. T. Liu (Assitant Secretaries); Mr. E. Sameh (Administrative Officer); Mr. G. Margoulies (Interpreter); and Miss P. Lacerte (Stenographer), UNTCOR, 13th session (28 January – 25 March 1954), Supplement No. 4, p. 1, ICOMM.

with such observations, conclusions and recommendations as it might wish to make.¹³

The Mission visited French Cameroon from 14th October to 10th November and Southern Cameroons from 10th November to 23rd November 1952. In Southern Cameroons, this second Mission held sessions at the Native Court Hall in Kumba and also at Victoria. During these sessions, village chiefs, tribal unions, political organisations and individuals had all prepared their petitions, thoughts and grievances. Among the many petitioners were traders, farmers, businessmen, smugglers and other town dwellers. Thomas Abanda says smugglers also put in a petition, for a total relaxation of frontier restrictions but not for its removal.¹⁴ Petitioners hoped that the second Mission would give immediate solutions to their demands.

The United Nations Trusteeship Council Official Records report that the Mission received sixty-eight communications and memoranda most of them relating to local problems and general questions.¹⁵ The Mission agreed to split up into two groups, A and B to cover different sectors of the territory. Group B was to visit the southern section (at the border towns of Buea, Victoria, Kumba and Tiko) while group A would cover the north (parts of Kumbé and most of Mamfe and Bamenda). When the Mission (group A) visited Kumba on 19th November, members attended a meeting with the CNF (this was a pressure group that advocated for the reunification of Cameroon), and heard an address delivered by Dr Emmanuel Mbella Lifafe Endeley, Minister without portfolio and member of the Eastern House of Assembly. It

¹³ UNTCOR, 13th session (28 January – 25 March 1954), Supplement No. 4, p. 1, ICOMM.

¹⁴ Thomas Abanda, "Optimists in the Cameroons", *West Africa*, XXXVI, 1868, (December, 13, 1952): 1160. Sample copies of some of the petitioners and the symbol references of their petitions have been annexed.

¹⁵ UNTCOR, 13th session (28 January – 25 March 1954), Supplement No. 4, p. 2, ICOMM. In the annex is a map showing the routes of the 1952 Visiting Mission in the Trust Territories of the Cameroons.

also attended a meeting organised by the KUNC during which it held oral hearings. Nerus Namtta Mbile set forth the demands of his organisation Honorary Secretary of the CNF) as follows: the reunification of the two Cameroons, self government for the Cameroons under UK administration within five years, abolition of frontier difficulties and intensive general development. Still in Kumba, the CNF representatives requested for: an alleviation of frontier difficulties, a separate regional status for the whole of the Trust Territory, the amendment of the Land and Native Rights Ordinance, a reform of the local government and the establishment of a comprehensive housing scheme particularly in the areas affected by the plantations (largely the border zone).

At Buea, the Mission held oral hearings with the various Bakweri groups, the Cameroons Development Co-operation (CDC) Workers' Union and the Likomba Plantation Workers' Union. It held a meeting with the Southern Cameroons representatives in the Eastern House of Assembly, five of whom were also members of the Central House of Representatives in Lagos, Nigeria. At this meeting, the demand for reunification was presented in very general terms with no concrete proposals for implementing it practically. The Mission noted that as of that time, no political campaign had been waged on the issue of unification. It appeared to the Mission that the question of unification was closely linked in the minds of the representatives with concerns over their minority position in the Nigerian legislative organs and as such the interest of the Trust Territories might be subordinated to those of Nigeria. When it arrived at Victoria, it visited the general hospital and its dentistry section and noted the operation of the nursing scheme. It held meetings with members of the Victoria Federated Council, the Balong Native Authority, the Co-operative Farmers' Union and the Tiko Council. The Mission registered more oral hearings

from the KUNC at Victoria. It visited the Roman Catholic Mission, the St. Francis Training College for girls, the Roman Catholic Girls School and Orphanage, the medical field unit and a research centre. The group (A) that left from Buea went to Sasse where it visited St Joseph's College, the first Roman Catholic Mission secondary boys school, and then went on to visit the New Trade Training Centre at Ombe.

The major concern of the petitioners could be summarised as follows: Unification of French and British Cameroons, removal of frontier restrictions, free trade with their French neighbours, help from the UN agencies, scholarships, self government by 1956, repeal of the Cameroons Land Tenure Ordinance vesting all lands in the Governor, and a Cameroons House of Assembly having nothing to do with the Eastern Region.¹⁶ Advocates of unification told the chairman of the Mission, Peachey that they would like immediate unification with their brothers on the other side of the boundary. The Mission accepted the interpretation of the government that the demand for unification arose because of the fear of subjugation if Southern Cameroonians remained with Nigeria.¹⁷ This analysis of the situation by the British administration suited their own interests. The Mission progressed to the French territory.

When the Mission reached French Cameroon, (September 25th to November 10th) it travelled from the South to the North. Following the 1952 Annual Report of the administration of French Cameroon, the second Visiting Mission received "millions of visitors and hundreds of petitions".¹⁸ The UPC party presented twenty-

¹⁶ Welch, *Dream of unity*, pp164-180. Thomas Abanda, "Optimists in the Cameroons", *West Africa*, XXXVI, 1868, (December, 13, 1952): 1160.

¹⁷ *Report on the Cameroons* for the year 1950, pp.18-19.

¹⁸ *Rapport Annuel du gouvernement Français sur le Cameroun*, 1952, p. 20, CAOM.

seven petitions in favour of reunification to the 1952 Visiting Mission in French Cameroon and the Mission once more accepted the interpretation of the administering authority that the demand for reunification was unimportant and confined to a few malcontents. The Mission erroneously accepted the interpretation of the French administration that Um Nyobe commanded slight support and popularity among the political representatives of the people.¹⁹ The Mission was also made by the administration to understand wrongly that Um Nyobe represented only a small portion of the Cameroonians or public opinion. This was not true for the call for reunification and independence which Um Nyobe and his partisans stood for was not only an affair of the border people but of most Cameroonians as well. What however was still lacking was solidarity and concerted group action towards these goals. Consequently, the 1952 Mission like the previous one informed the Trusteeship Council that the reunification option was not a popular one for it was not an acute problem by then.²⁰ To counter the findings of the Visiting Mission, Um Nyobe requested and received a hearing before the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly where he made remarks that gave to the UPC arguments for reunification an air of authority.²¹ The mission observed however that there was growing interest in political affairs in the territory.²²

It is important here to reflect on issues concerning frontier relations between the two Cameroons. The Mission heard the views of the people living along the

¹⁹ It is likely that the number of visitors received by the Mission in French Cameroon that year has been exaggerated in the report, but however, the above source reports that they did receive very many visits.

²⁰ Welch, *Dream of unity*, p.183.

²¹ Ibid.

²² *Rapport Annuel du gouvernement Français sur le Cameroun*, 1952, p.20, CAOM. Also see UNTCOR, 15TH Session, 25 January – 28 March 1955, p. 7, ICOMM.

frontier and had talks with the officers of the two administering authorities. According to its report, relations between the two sectors in the north were close evidenced by co-operation between the two administrations in connexion with customs problems and, particularly banditry, in the south, the situation was different.²³ The frontier in the south had more significance. The ethnic affiliations and local economic interests of the border zone population constituted a basis for frequent inter-change of goods and movements of people on both sides of the frontier. The attraction of the port of Douala and the Nkongsamba-Douala railroad in the French Cameroons for exports from the UK side of the border, such as the banana production of the Tombel area, was important.²⁴

With regards to movement of persons, the British administration requested no documents at the time from people entering the territory from the French side. This was because these people constituted a sure force of manpower and revenue to the administration. There were by far many more people coming in from the French than from the British side, mostly in quest for jobs in the plantations, which offered better wages and living conditions than in the French zone. The French authorities required a Laissez-passer for people crossing into their territory. The Mission was told that in order to alleviate border difficulties, the number of customs posts had been reduced from twenty-four to eleven on the UK side and from eleven to seven on the French side.²⁵ The French authorities informed the Mission that local agricultural and handicraft products, small livestock on lead, three herds of large animals and manufactured articles regarded as customary gifts, of a value of not more than 15,000 francs per person, could be imported and exported freely, without customs duty. The

²³ UNTCOR, 15TH Session, 25 January – 28 March 1955, p.10, ICOMM.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

report continued that with regard to currency, frontier dwellers may import up to £15 per person into the French zone and may export up to £15 and 20,000 francs CFA per person.²⁶

Further alleviation of frontier formalities and the removal of frontier barriers were requested in general terms in several communications received by the Mission. Other questions raised with the Mission in relation to the frontier were: the abolition of the *Laissez-Passer* between the Cameroons under UK administration and the Cameroons under French administration, the establishment of a Customs Union or the complete removal of customs duties between the two trust territories, and the abolition of inland customs posts and their transfer to coastal ports.²⁷ The Mission assigned Allen who had worked for a long time on delimiting the boundary to investigate the frontier problem in co-operation with the liaison officers of the French Cameroons. The Mission received the cordial hospitality and co-operation both from the administration and from all sections of the population.²⁸

At its 608th meeting, the Trusteeship Council decided to dispatch yet another Visiting Mission to the Trust Territories of the Cameroons under British and French administrations. This third Mission was composed of: Robert Scheyven (Belgium),

²⁶ UNTCOR, 15TH Session, 25 January – 28 March 1955, p.10, ICOMM. It is possible that the issues reported by the administering authorities to the Visiting Mission did not reflect what was actually taking place practically. It might have been an exaggeration of the situation to paint a positive picture of a highly relaxed frontier administration.

²⁷ UNTCOR, 15th Session, 25 January – 28 March 1955, p.10, ICOMM.

²⁸ Ibid. A. C. T. Benson, Acting Governor of Nigeria and the Cameroons under UK administration received the Mission in absence of His Excellency the Governor. After the visit, the Mission expressed gratitude to Brigadier Gibbons, Commissioner of the Cameroons and to officers and members of the administration whom it met notably J. G. C. Allen and D. A. F. Shute who were the chief officers providing liaison with the Mission.

Hsi-kun Yang (China), Max H. Dorsenville (Haiti) and Edward W. Mulcahy (USA) as members.²⁹ The Mission was directed among other tasks:

- to receive petitions without prejudice to its acting in accordance with the rules of procedures of the Council and to investigate on the spot, after consultation with the local representative of the administering authorities concerned, such of the petitions received as, in its opinion, warranted special investigation;
- to examine, in consultation with the administering authorities, the measures taken or to be taken in respect of the provision of information about the United Nations to the peoples of the Trust Territories and;
- to submit to the Council as soon as practicable a report on each of the territories visited containing its findings with such observations, conclusions and recommendations as it might wish to make.³⁰

In October 1955, the third UN Visiting Mission entered French Cameroon from the North at Maroua and Garoua heading for Ngaoundere. One of the complaints the Mission heard when it arrived Ngaoundere was that the UNO should not tolerate the existence of the UPC in French Cameroon any longer. This complaint was submitted by the local population of the Northern part of the territory who saw the UPC as a threat to the presidency of their tribesman, Ahidjo. The Northerners also deplored the use of violence by the UPC partisans. The Mission stayed in the North until November 6 when it proceeded to Yaounde. In Yaounde, members of the

²⁹ UNTCOR, 17th Session, 7 February – 6 April 1956, Supplement No. 3, p.1, ICOMM. The mission was accompanied by six members of the secretariat, namely: Mr. W. F. Cottrell (Principal Secretary), Messrs. T. Shore, R. Wathen (Assistant Secretaries), Mr. G. Margoulies (Interpreter), Mr. E. Samch (Administrative Officer), Miss D. Wyns (Stenographer).

³⁰ UNTCOR, 17th Session, 7 February – 6 April 1956, Supplement No. 3, 1956, pp. 1-2, ICOMM. The map in the annex shows the itinerary of the 1955 Mission.

Mission broke up into two groups which both held meetings with local chiefs, municipal counsellors and representatives of the various legal political parties. The report of the Mission contained a chapter on the killings of May 1955 in which it condemned the authors of the killings and their methods.³¹ The report justified the dissolution of the UPC and its affiliated groups, the *Jeunesse Démocratique Camerounaise* (JDC) and the *Union Démocratique des Femmes Camerounaises* (UDFEC). However the report added that dissolution did not constitute the solutions of Cameroon's political problems.

During this visit to French Cameroon, the Mission received 40.000 petitions from groups and individuals.³² This number, which is by far higher than those of Southern Cameroons, could once more be an exaggeration. The petitions were regrouped into two main classes: one class asked for the independence of French Cameroon and its unification with British Cameroons. Another class expressed the satisfaction of the people with the French administration. Following an Annual Report of the French administration, the Mission expressed the view that none of the petitions of the first class presented a coherent programme to achieve unification.³³ In order to get a popular opinion of the people, the Mission envisaged a future project that would include participants of all political parties represented at the Territorial Assembly and all the sections of the population to meet and discuss the political future of the territory. That forum would also examine ways of improving on the living standards

³¹ *Rapport Annuel du gouvernement Français sur le Cameroun*, 1952, p.20, CAOM. Also see, *Cameroun vie politique (1945-60)* see article entitled "Dans son rapport à l'ONU", *La Vie Camerounaise*, (1952):1, AgeFom 1005/3504, CAOM.

³² *Cameroun vie politique (1945-60)* see article entitled "Dans son rapport à l'ONU", *La Vie Camerounaise*, (1952):1, AgeFom 1005/3504, CAOM. Official records of the Trusteeship Council talk of 60 communications and memoranda, UNTCOR, 17th Session, 7 February – 6 April 1956, Supplement No. 3, 1956 p. 3, ICOMM. These figures could be an exaggeration of the actual numbers but they are indicative of the fact that there were several petitions tabled.

³³ UNTCOR, 17th Session, 7 February – 6 April 1956, Supplement No. 3, 1956 p. 3, ICOMM.

of the North. According to the same French Report, the Mission observed with satisfaction the economic and social progress undertaken by the French administration in Cameroon since their last visit and congratulated the Christian missions on the progress made in the education of the people.³⁴ By 18 November, the Mission left French Cameroon through the Moungo for British Southern Cameroons.³⁵

On 23 November, the border people at Buea welcomed the Mission. There, it met informally with the Executive Council of the Southern Cameroons, consisting of the Commissioner of the Cameroons, the Deputy Commissioner, the Legal Secretary and four unofficial members namely, Endeley, Reverend J. C Kangsen, S. T. Muna and F. A. Sone.³⁶ All of these members spoke as individuals in their private capacity, so that each felt free to express his own personal opinions without committing the Executive Council as such. After this meeting, the Mission was shown the government buildings in Buea, the House of Assembly that was completed in March of that year, and the Court House. In order to cover as much ground as possible, the Mission once more divided into two groups; one group went to Tiko where it visited the Likomba Plantation of Messrs. Elders and Fyffe's, the CDC rubber plantations and the co-operation's school. The second group went to Bota visiting more units of the CDC and then preceded to Victoria where it met the members of Federated Native Authority Council and heard an address by Chief Jesco Manga Williams, who was the Victoria Division Native Authority member in the Southern Cameroons House of

³⁴ Cameroun vie politique (1945-60), AgeFom 1005/3504, CAOM, see article entitled "La visite de mission de l'ONU à Douala et au Moungo, du 9 au 18 Novembre, 1955", *La Vie Camerounaise*, (1955) CAOM. It was in the administration's interest to report the Mission's satisfaction with the French administering authorities.

³⁵ "La visite de mission de l'ONU a Douala et au Moungo, du 9 au 18 Novembre, 1955", *La Vie Camerounaise*, (1955) CAOM. Brayne Baker, the Deputy Commissioner of British Cameroons, the Resident Special Duties, A. B Westmacott and the District Officer, Bamenda, F. Walker, welcomed members of the mission

³⁶ UNTCOR, 17th Session, 7 February – 6 April 1956, Supplement No. 3, 1956 p. 3, ICOMM. It was also met by two members of the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly for Bamenda Division, S. T. Muna and J. N. Foncha and V. Mukete, Federal Minister without Portfolio.

Assembly.³⁷ The Mission divided again as it continued to visit more of the towns along the border. A part of it visited the Government trade Centre at Ombe while the other part went to the Tole tea plantation. On 25 November, the Mission went to Kumba stopping *en route* at Muea for a short visit with representatives of the Bakweri Co-operative Union of Farmers. The Union read an address of welcome to the Mission, which also heard oral communications from the group. In Kumba, representatives of the Division Native Authorities had interviews with members of the Mission after which, other groups also held talks like the Kumba branch of the KNC and the women's section of the same body, the Kamerun United Commoners' Party (KUCP), ex-service men and pensioners. Later on in the day, a part of the Mission attended the first congress of the Co-operative Union of Southern Cameroons while another group visited the Government Agricultural Station at Barombi-Kang.

The Mission rounded up its visit in Southern Cameroons in Buea with a long session of uninterrupted interviews from 9.30am to 2.40pm. These interviews in particular afforded the members of the Mission an excellent opportunity to further acquaint themselves with the problems of the people. By this time when the third Visiting Mission arrived in Southern Cameroons all three political parties (KNC, KPP and KNDP), the Bakweri Land Committee and the CDC Workers' Union were working together for the political advancement of the territory. The KNC, KPP and the KNDP argued that prior to the First World War, Cameroon was a single country governed by Germany. They thus wanted the reunification of the two Trust territories of British and French Cameroons. The UN report for 1955 however says that, people were still uneducated on the reunification issue.³⁸ It continues by saying that some

³⁷ UNTCOR, 17th Session, 7 February – 6 April 1956, Supplement No. 3, 1956 p. 3, ICOMM.

³⁸ The Cameroons under United Kingdom administration: United Nations Report of the Trusteeship Council covering the period from July 23 1955 to August 14, 1956, p. 120. ICOMM.

people were indifferent and interpreted independence and reunification as bringing together members of the same tribe who were separated by artificial boundaries.³⁹ The Mission recommended that no hasty decision should be taken for it could be very damaging. It suggested that, the people should be educated and should meet regularly for this might enhance the feeling of solidarity among them.

At its 888th meeting, on 26 March 1958, the Trusteeship Council decided to dispatch a fourth mission to the Trust Territories of the Cameroons. At its 924th meeting, on 8 July 1958, it approved the nominations of Messrs George Salomon (Haiti), Rikhi Jaipal (India), Gray Thorp (New Zealand) and Benjamin Gerig (USA - Chairman) as members of the Mission.⁴⁰ The Council directed the Mission to investigate and report as fully as possible on the steps taken in the two Trust Territories to address the issues concerned in the petitions received so far.⁴¹ In addition, it requested the Mission to include in its report on the Cameroons under UK administration its views on the methods of consultation, which should be when the time came for the people in the territory to express their wishes concerning their future.⁴²

From New York through the Colonial Office in London, then through Nigeria, the Mission arrived in the Cameroons under UK administration on 29 October 1958. Because of the special functions of the Mission in regard to the future of the Cameroons, it set aside most of its time to hearing the views of the people and their

³⁹ The Cameroons under United Kingdom administration: United Nations Report of the Trusteeship Council covering the period from July 23 1955 to August 14, 1956, p. 121. ICOMM.

⁴⁰ UNCTOR the 23rd Session, 30 January – 20 March 1959, Supplement No. 2, 1959, p. 2, ICOMM. The mission was accompanied by six members of the secretariat: Messrs R. T. Miller (Principal secretary), F. T. Liu, R. W. Wathen (Assistant secretary), J. Delattre (Interpreter), T. Trisciuzzi (Administrative officer), and Miss C. E. Charpentier (Stenographer).

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 3.

⁴² UNCTOR the 23rd Session, 30 January – 20 March 1959, Supplement No. 2, 1959, p. 2, ICOMM.

representatives on the political future of the territory. The Mission did not limit such interviews to those of a formal character scheduled on its programme, but adopted the practice of halting even if briefly, to hear and acknowledge groups of people who had assembled along the roads and in other places in the obvious desire to express their views. Moreover, it had many informal contacts with political leaders and other representative persons.

The Mission also carried out a broad based approach by paying tribute to those many hundreds of men and women from countries far from the Cameroons, especially from the USA, UK and other countries of the Commonwealth of Nations.⁴³ These people the Mission estimated had given their devotion, effort and skill to help the Cameroons people develop the political institutions, economic, social and educational facilities that constituted the foundation of their future self-government. These were the administrators, doctors, teachers, agricultural officers and experts in many other professions and skills who, whether in the service of government, private enterprise or missionary societies, had over the years established orderly administration, begun a transformation of the economy, and laid down the essential medical, educational and other services.⁴⁴

It is important to state here that at the time of this fourth visit, the Mission found that there were political activities going on in Southern Cameroons. In close association with the political activities was the Kamerun Idea based on the concept of a search for a "national identity". Political activities during this time was marked by inter-ethnic rivalries, influence of powerful chiefs and clashes of political personalities. In the border areas the activities of Political Refugees and immigrants

⁴³ UNCTOR the 23rd Session, 30 January – 20 March 1959, Supplement No. 2, 1959, p. 2, ICOMM, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

from the Cameroons under French administration created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. But from all this, two central facts emerged at the time of the Mission's visit: first, that public discussion was dominated by the question of the future of Southern Cameroons; and secondly that public opinion fell into two major categories represented in organised politics by the two main political parties, KNC/KPP and KNDP. On the one side there was the view of self-government within the Nigerian Federation and on the other was unification with the Cameroons under French administration.

After listening to the views of the various sections of the society, the Mission reported that there was strong support in the territory for the unification of Southern Cameroons with Cameroon under French administration.⁴⁵ It further recommended the organisation of plebiscites to decide the political future of Southern Cameroons. This proposal was made because the Mission had recently used the plebiscites route to resolve the issues at stake in southeastern Ghana and was therefore enthusiastic about this methodology. The Trusteeship Council together with the UN accepted this recommendation after careful study. In arriving at this conclusion, in regard to the principal question entrusted to it – that of the determination of the wishes of the people as to their future – it was not evident that the plebiscite route was the best option for the ebb and flow of political influences at the time, ethnic differences, different historical background and communication difficulties played a large part in directing the course of unification.

Besides petitions presented to the UN Visiting Missions, border groups sent independent complaints to the British and French administrations directly. The Balong for example laid a complaint in 1923 before the British administration through

⁴⁵ Below (pp. 263-264) are pictures of members of the Visiting Missions to Cameroon.

their chief, Mandenge Bell. They complained that they as Kamerunians never divided the Moungo River and travelled freely on it; that those inhabiting the French and British spheres were the same people who had homes and farms on both sides of the river.⁴⁶ The Balong begged that the portion of their territory in the French zone be united with that of the British zone under one administration, the British administration. The chief of Misselele, also chief of the Balong in the coastal area appealed to the Resident Buea against using the Moungo River as the Anglo-French boundary line and expressed his wish that the administration should cease applying Nigerian Customs laws to divide groups.⁴⁷ The boundary left seven villages of the Balong in the French sphere and the majority in the British Zone. Chief Mandenge Bell complained bitterly that the divided Balong were being forced to pay taxes twice, for the French and the British governments due to their border position.

From Assessment Reports by British administrators, the Bakossi were reported to have sent in several applications for all their villages and clans separated by the boundary to be reunited under the British administration.⁴⁸ The Bakossi on the French side also complained about French attempts to prevent them from crossing the boundary to continue contacts with their brothers of the other side. Further to the North, the Mbo chiefs in French territory also wanted the boundary to be removed and all their villages united under one government. Whilst on tour in the Mbo country in 1924, the DO of Mamfe Division received applications from several Mbo chiefs from

⁴⁶ Chief Mandenge Bell to Resident Buea, December 23, 1923, Tc/1923/1, NAB. Solutions to these and other complaints made to both will be discussed in a section below.

⁴⁷ Chief Mandenge Bell to Resident Buea, December 23, 1923, Tc/1923/1, NAB.

⁴⁸ Assessment Report on Bakossi, Ninong, Elung Tribes, 1922, by F. B. Carr, Ac 3, NAB.

the French zone requesting that their villages, which had been placed in the British zone, be returned to them.⁴⁹ They gave a strong impression to the DO and his administration that life would return to normal and would be a lot easier for them if the separated territories were returned to them and put under one rule. The Mbo in the French administered zone had earlier requested for the repatriation of their villagers who were crossing the boundary and settling in the British territory.⁵⁰ Actually, the boundary had divided the Mbo chiefdoms into almost two equal parts.⁵¹ on the British side were the Santcho, Njinjam, Singam, Mama, Menkoue, Mbokambo and Ekondo villages; on the French side were the Fonwen, Fonjoungo, Fotabong, Elumba, Tanga, Kamlempe, Nsoa and Finape villages. Like with the Elung clan of the Bakossi, the Anglo-French boundary split the Mangem clan assigning to the French its original site with the clan head and to the British seven out of eight of its constituent villages. It is to be recalled here that when the boundary was demarcated in the case of Mwanwekan, the chief and a few of his subjects were sent to the British zone while the bulk of his subjects and all his fertile lands went to the French side. The boundary also cut through the village of Poala leaving the chief the unfertile lands and giving all their farmlands to the Mbo. In 1939, the village chief of Poala, James Elunge, sent the following complaint to the Resident:

The whole of my land which is mostly cultivated has been despatched to the French-Mboh. I was profoundly surprised at this action (at this action) and when I tried to put the Commissioner through, no permission was allowed to do so.

Now seeing that I have no more land to farm and for no reason should I entrust my land to Mboh French... All fertile soil is given to Mboh and the portion left is only barrel land where no crop has been planted since our

⁴⁹ DO Mamfe to Resident Buea, July 17, 1924, Tb/1924/1, NAB.

⁵⁰ Chef de la Circonscription de Dschang à Monsieur le Commissaire de la République Française, le 12 Novembre, 1923, APA 10006/C, NAY.

⁵¹ Assessment Report on the British section of the Mbo Tribal Area, June 18, 1923, by J.W.C. Rotherford, Af 32, NAB.

forfathers days. I beg the Resident to consider of the case and I venture thanks if the the reply may be urgently (be) sent to us, as my people are now famine from 18th Dec., 1938 when that boundary was set up.⁵²

From this petition, a clear appreciation of some of the grave problems posed by the partition can be understood. In this case for example, a village was cut in two halves leaving the chief with the bulk of his subjects and no farmland on one side while the other half of the land with very few people were put on the other side of the border with all the farmland. There were many other complaints of like nature by border groups that called for the dismantling of the boundary and a reunion of the separated groups. To the coast, the coastal Duala who had been separated from their Bakweri cousins protested. The Duala claimed their English connection with its language; its customs and its business habits, which they deemed, would be considered betrayed if a part of their territory was passed over to the French without their consent. They wanted to be placed with their brothers under British administration.⁵³ Some political parties and pressure groups also vividly expressed the demands for the removal of all frontier restrictions and unification with French Cameroon on both sides of the boundary.

⁵² James Elunge to Senior Resident, Qf/q/1937/5, letter of January 3, 1939NAB. All grammar and spelling errors have been maintained as they appear in the letter. There is a copy of the letter in the annex.

⁵³ John Holt & Company (Liverpool) Limited to Lord Milner, January 25, 1919, CO 649/18, PRO. Also see, despatch No. 39912 of July 8th, 1919, from A. J. Harding to Strachey, CO 649/18, PRO.

*POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE CALL FOR THE REMOVAL OF BOUNDARY
RESTRICTIONS IN THE CAMEROONS: 1948-1958.*

The British Southern Cameroons

The call for union between British and French Cameroons began in Nigeria by Cameroonians living and studying there. The Cameroons Youth League (CYL), founded in Nigeria in 1939 by Peter Monyongo-mo Kale and Emmanuel Lifafe Endeley was the first group that discussed Cameroonian political interests outside the territory. Kale and Endeley helped Nnamdi Azikiwe, Herbert Macaulay and others in 1944 to form the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC).⁵⁴ The CYL represented Cameroonian interests in the NCNC. Nnamdi Azikiwe and the NCNC supported the union between British and French Cameroons.⁵⁵ During a visit to Southern Cameroons in 1947, Azikiwe suggested that an organisation of both territories should be formed. According to Paul Kale, in April 14, 1953, Azikiwe said "...the National Council also recognises and supports the desires and aspirations of the peoples of the Cameroons for unification of the two sections of the territory under the British and the French..."⁵⁶ This meant that the NCNC supported the removal of all frontier restrictions. Another influential party in Southern Nigeria, the Action Group (AG), led by chief Obafemi Awolowo supported the political aspirations of Southern Cameroons. From 1953, the AG worked in alliance with the first Southern Cameroons political party, the Kamerun National Congress (KNC) in the opposition

⁵⁴ The NCNC began like a confederation of trade, tribal unions and other small organisations, which widely debated the ideas of regionalization and local autonomy. It was perhaps inevitable that the Cameroons, with its distinct name and unique status, would be attracted to the idea of regional status.

⁵⁵ Ngoh, *History of Cameroon*, p.198.

⁵⁶ Paul Monyongo-mo Kale, *Political evolution in the Cameroons*, Buea: Government Printers, 1967, p.39.

in Lagos. Foncha justified his decision to leave the KNC in March 1955 to form the KNDP by the Awolowo/Endeley political alliance.⁵⁷

Also, some students from Southern Cameroons studying in Nigeria also called for the dismantling of the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon. According to Eyongetah and Brain, Mr. Sabum, one of the students in Nigeria expressed the view that:

The division of Kamerun was an arbitrary and immoral act designed to suit the imperialists. No one can tell me that the division of Kamerun was in the interest of Kamerun. Putting it mildly, I say it was a mistake; a mistake is not corrected by simply accepting it or arguing that it has gone on for a long time. Time does not make a mistake right.⁵⁸

As early as 1939, the Bakweri Cultural Organisation (BCO) formed by G. J. Mbene in Victoria expanded its membership and sphere of influence to other ethnic groups. It changed its name to the Cameroon Welfare Union (CWU). According to Joseph Ebune it aimed at making Southern Cameroonians aware of their political rights, to serve as the people's mouthpiece before the creation of well-organised groups and to lessen the boundary tensions between French and British Cameroons.⁵⁹ This was the first cultural based group that aimed at reducing boundary restrictions between the two spheres of Cameroon. The French Cameroons Welfare Union (FCWU) closely followed it in August 1948. Formed by R. J .K. Dibonge. Its members were French speaking Cameroonians who found themselves as "strangers" in the British zone and wanted to enjoy the same political rights as their English-speaking counterparts. They did not want to be regarded as strangers in Southern

⁵⁷ Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, p.147.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 190.

⁵⁹ Joseph B. Ebune, *The growth of political parties in Southern Cameroons, 1916-1960*. Yaounde: CEPER, 1990, p.121.

Cameroons considering the fact that Cameroonians had been one people under the Germans before the partition between the British and the French.⁶⁰

Another pressure group that sought to bring the British and French Cameroons together was the Cameroons National Federation (CNF). Formed in May 1949, by Dr. Emmanuel Mbela Lifaffe Endeley, the CNF advocated the reunification of British and French Cameroons. The Federation accepted only tribal unions and other similar organisations as members. The Federation wanted as a temporary measure, the "Adjusting of boundaries to reunite tribal groups".⁶¹ Rather than demand the complete and immediate removal of customs restrictions, it wanted a "relaxation of boundary restrictions that would enable the free passage of agricultural products and local manufactures".⁶² This they hoped would boost the local economy.

When in 1951, French Cameroonians domiciled in the British Cameroons were denied voting rights, the FCWU, their mouthpiece and a strong member of the CNF wanted the Federation to fight for them. The Federation did nothing and as a result, the FCWU withdrew its membership. This strained the relationship between Endeley and some other founding members like Nerius N. Mbile and Dibonge who both withdrew and founded the Kamerun United National Congress (KUNC).⁶³ Victor LeVine says that it was the goal of reunification that brought a split within the ranks of the KNC.⁶⁴ Welch confirms that the strain was due to a conflict of personalities and

⁶⁰ Thomas Abanda, "The parties in the Cameroons", *West Africa*, , XXXVII, 1872 (January 10th 1953 to January 2nd 1954): 11. Disagreement over voting rights in the 1951 elections to the Eastern House of Assembly forced the French Cameroonians living in Southern Cameroons to articulate their political grievances further. The British Government limited the franchise to British subjects and British-protected persons. Persons born in the French Cameroon who comprised nearly 20% of the population of Victoria Division did not qualify unless they went through the naturalization formalities.

⁶¹ Thomas Abanda, "The parties in the Cameroons", *West Africa*, , XXXVII, 1872 (January 10th 1953 to January 2nd 1954): 11.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ebune, *The growth of political parties*, p.135. Also see Abanda, Ibid.

⁶⁴ V. T. Le Vine, *The Cameroons from Mandate to independence* . Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964, p.203.

the issue of voting rights.⁶⁵ Whatever the reasons for the split, the important thing is that it led to the formation of the KUNC, one of the most militant parties arguing for the removal of the boundary.

The reason for using the "K" was as members of the KUNC put it: " we want the Cameroons under French and British administrations to be brought together as in the days of German rule".⁶⁶ For Dibonge and the KUNC, their foremost desire was to see the unification of the British and French Cameroons. The KUNC canvassed for unification and the removal of frontier restrictions. Because the party stood for unification and the dismantling of the border; and also because its leader was a Cameroonian from French Cameroon, separated border groups, traders, farmers and smugglers formed the bulk of the party's membership. The KUNC also called for the teaching of French in schools in British Cameroons and of English in schools in French Cameroon thus re-enforcing the unity between the two spheres.⁶⁷

In 1953, the CNF and the KUNC amalgamated to form the Kamerun National Congress (KNC). Among the political aspirations of the Congress was self-government for a united Cameroon. Endeley was the president while Dibonge was the patron. Mbile broke off that same year, 1953, and joined P.M. Kale to form the Kamerun Peoples' Party (KPP), which did not spell out the reunification goal but did sympathise with it. The KNC and the KPP were the two major political parties in Southern Cameroons at the time. More force was added to the drive towards the removal of the frontier when in 1955 two members of the KNC, John Ngu Foncha and

⁶⁵ Welch, *Dream of unity*, p.175. Ngoh, *History of Cameroon*, pp.207-208.

⁶⁶ Abanda, "The parties in the Cameroons", p. 11.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 11. Also see Welch. *Dream of unity*, p. 178.

Augustin Ngom Jua, broke off from the KNC and formed the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP).

The KNDP took the initiative in British Cameroons after 1955 to reunify with French Cameroon. The party's programmes were in line with those of another party on the French territory, the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (UPC). They both demanded independence and reunification; as a result, the UPC worked actively in Southern Cameroons to achieve their common goals. Several local branches of the UPC were opened in border towns, notably at Misselele, Likomba, Douala, Tiko, Tombel and Kumba. A major difference between the political aspirations of the two parties was that, the KNDP wanted gradual reunification and independence while the UPC opted for immediate independence and non-interference by foreign countries in the internal affairs of Cameroon. When the UPC was banned in East or French Cameroon on July 13, 1955, Nde Ntumazah in Southern Cameroons formed an offshoot called One Kamerun (OK). It was very similar to the UPC in membership, aims and organisation and aimed at continuing the activities of the UPC.

Even though the KNC Government quickly banned the OK party in Southern Cameroon's it later reappeared in strong coalition with the opposition KNDP party and campaigned for subsequent elections.⁶⁸ Endeley's KNC was in power and in coalition with the Kamerun Peoples Party (KPP) while Foncha's KNDP and the OK remained in the opposition. In the 1959 elections the KNDP/OK coalition defeated the KNC/KPP alliance thus Foncha became the new premier replacing Endeley. What was the situation of the political parties in the French Trust Territory?

⁶⁸ Ebune, *The growth of political parties*, p.155. The KNC Government was headed by Endeley and put in place after the party's landslide victory in the 1953 elections in Southern Cameroons.

The French Cameroon

Unlike in the British Southern Cameroons, pressure groups and political parties in French Cameroon appeared to be less interested in boundary restrictions and the reunification question. It is not very clear why this was so but probably the fact that British Southern Cameroons was administered as a part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria made them feel like second-class citizens. This feeling increased their desire to return to the old Kamerun in which there were no boundary restrictions and no administrative subjugations.

Among the early Associations that called for the removal of the boundary and the unification of both territories in the French Cameroon was the Ngondo - the Association of Douala chiefs and notables. According to David Gardinier, the Association had first existed in the 19th century working together with the Court of Equity.⁶⁹ The Ngondo aimed at a Duala hegemony over other groups in Cameroon. Their call for boundary removal and unification was because through unification, they would be reunited to their Bakweri cousins. The Ngondo resurfaced in February 1947 with a strong adherence to the idea of boundary removal and unification. In November 1947, the Bamileke ethnic group also created their own movement, the Kumszé.⁷⁰ They called for the dismantling of the boundary because it separated them from their Bangwa brothers.

The lone political party in the French Cameroon that militated strongly for the cause of reunification was the UPC. Created in 1948 in Douala by Leonard Bouly it

⁶⁹ Gardinier, *Cameroon: United Nations challenge to French policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970, p 62. The Court of Equity was established in Douala by agreement between white and local traders to settle disputes between them. It reported to the British Consul and was abolished in 1885.

⁷⁰ Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroons*, p.45. The Bamileke were a border group to the immediate North of the area under study.

stood as the first indigenous political party in the French Cameroon.⁷¹ It called for immediate independence and the reunification of the two Cameroons. One of the founding members, Reuben Um Nyobe, and some other Cameroonian politicians at the time addressed the Fourth Commission of the UN in 1952 calling for the reunification of the British and French Cameroons. The party became radical and violent in its demands, as a result, in 1955; the UPC was banned in the French territory. The banning of the UPC by the French authorities transformed it from a militant nationalist party to a revolutionary, underground movement. Many UPC members as from this year took flight to the British Cameroons where they created a community of UPC refugees. During the crisis, the British administration tightened its control of the boundary to prevent UPC refugees infiltrating into the British zone but with very little success.

In February 1956, the refugees addressed a petition to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees asking for his support and protection. Meanwhile, due to continuous acts of violence committed by these refugees in Southern Cameroons and pressure from the French administration, they were consequently expelled from the territory in 1957.⁷² It is important to note here that all through the Mandate and Trusteeship periods, both the French and the British administrations continued to administer the boundary in the hope of preserving their respective natural and human resources while some of their subjects, especially the border groups continued to protest against the maintenance of the boundary.

⁷¹ Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p.207. For more on the UPC, see Richard Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroon :The Social origins of the UPC rebellion*. London: Oxford University Press, 1977.

⁷² Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p. 207.

A REJECTION OF THE BOUNDARY BY BORDER GROUPS

From written petitions to oral protests to the UN and expressions through political parties, many Cameroonians, especially border groups expressed their rejection of the boundary by trespassing without a passport for various transactions, by ignoring the boundary and maintaining close relations across it.

Trespassing

In 1939, during the demarcation of the boundary, both Commissioners were struck by the ease with which it was possible for people of either French or British Cameroons to cross the boundary and to take up residence on the other side. This had led to the formation in the vicinity of the boundary of a number of large settlements of immigrants from both territories. Examples of such settlements were, Loum, Mbanga, Mombo, Tombel, and Muyuka all of which had large numbers of Duala and Bamileke immigrants. Administrative control of such settlements was impossible since the first sign of action was the signal for the disappearance of offenders over the boundary. A majority of boundary regulation-breakers or trespassers settled in such settlements for it was easier to cross over from border settlements than from towns inside of the territory. It is important to state here that trespassing was done both by the border people and by agents of the administration as well. A good example to use to illustrate this fact is tax collection.

One of the reasons for the clandestine crossing of the boundary was tax evasion. According to Protocol No. 9, it was found by the Commissioners that certain inhabitants of the border zone at Nyan and Nkut villages had for some years been paying tax annually both to the French and the British administrations.⁷³ Following a report of 1922 by the DO Victoria Division, A. R. Whitman, the Duala

⁷³Anglo-French boundary Commission-Protocols, Victoria Division, 1939, Qf/a1938/6, protocol No. 9 of March 10, 1939, signed R. Dugast and J.G.C.Allen, p.11.

settlers on the right bank of the River Moungo were also made to pay their taxes to both administrations.⁷⁴ The river divided this settlement into two and when those from the British side went to visit their brothers on the French sector:

...they were made to pay, irrespective of whether or not they produced a disc to prove that they have paid tax in British territory. In the British Cameroons it is not the practice to collect tax from a man who has already paid for the current year in the French territory. As French tax collection commences in January, whereas our financial year begins with April. It is clear that in this regard we are at a disadvantage.⁷⁵

French tax officers raided border villages on the British side asking for taxes even from people who showed proof of payment to the British administration. Both the British and the French administrations transmitted several heated correspondences on the position of the Duala living on the British side of the banks of the River Moungo. The Resident, Davidson, in 1920, made it clear that as long as they lived in the British zone, they had to naturally become and remain during their residence, subject to the jurisdiction of the British courts and laws. On this issue, the chief of the *Circonscription de Douala*, Chazelas insisted that the Duala in British zone should be left to pay their taxes to their chiefs who had been left in the French zone and only pay environmental and other small taxes to the British government. On March 17, 1937, French police constables entered the village of Nkongte, on the British side and

⁷⁴ Report of 14/8/1922, from DO Victoria Division to Resident Buea, Mungo right bank and estuary Douala, settlements on, Qf/c/1922/1, pp. 11-12, NAB. Disagreement on the Duala settlements in Victoria Division continued until 1922 when the Acting DO Victoria said in a memorandum that before August 2nd, 1914, the area on the right bank of the River Moungo was Bakweri land. The Duala locals were not allowed to land on this side of the river. But just prior to the First World War, permission was given to the Duala to land and trade at a small beach near Tiko (possibly that which later became known as Duala Beach). In 1918, the cocoa boom commenced and the Duala at Tiko began to cultivate the land of the Bakweri for the production of cocoa, a thing the Bakweri had never done. The result was unending disputes between the two. Meanwhile the Duala had continued to settle on the Bakweri land as squatters but later claimed the land as theirs. By 1922, the Duala started off five settlements: Tiko (40 people), Ebonji (20), Misselele (20), Bopula (15) and Mudeka (10). On all these places they had but squatters rights except in Tiko. The administration observed that the Duala were helping to open the country and thereby atoning for the failure of the Bakweri in this respect. These creek settlements turned out to be places of considerable smuggling and an ideal refuge for men wanted by the French Government and as a result both French tax raiders and local tax evaders kept on trespassing on an almost regular basis.

⁷⁵ Report of 14/8/1922, DO Victoria Division to Resident Buea, NAB.

arrested a number of men and women for non-payment of tax. That notwithstanding, all the arrested men had paid tax to the Kumba Native Administration and were living on Bakossi land. The DO wanted inquiries made as the arrested people were taken to the French side Nkongsamba, where they were locked in cells.⁷⁶ A similar situation occurred in Mwanwekan on January 21st, 1938 when three local tax officers, people from the French side of the village entered the British side and caught two women and one man (the names of those arrested were Asumbwe, Nkumbe Eto and Etuke). The local officers attempted to extort tax money from them. The DO Kumba, Johnson suggested to his French counterpart that the authors of the act be punished so as to stop a recurrence of such raids in future.⁷⁷ The chief at Nkongsamba acknowledged that his officers were wrong to have crossed the border in their duty and gave assurance that a similar act would not happen in future.⁷⁸ Such a situation made the border people to escape tax raids and officers whenever their arrival was signalled. To salvage the situation, both governments agreed that the most satisfactory criterion for determining to which administration an individual should pay was that of domicile:

It was suggested that the officers in charge of each Division on either side of the boundary should communicate to each other at the moment of preparation of nominal rolls of taxable males, the names of the foreigners inscribed, with an indication as to where they were permanently and legitimately established with their families.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ DO Kumba to Chef de Subdivision de Nkongsamba, No. 0104/112 of April 1, 1937, NAB.

⁷⁷ DO Kumba to Monsieur le chef de la Subdivision de Nkongsamba, No. 0104/126 of February 1st, 1938, NAB.

⁷⁸ Chef de la Subdivision de Nkongsamba to DO Kumba, No. 0104/135 of May 6th, 1938, NAB. In this same file, it is reported that in March 1949, some French customs officers crossed the boundary to arrest one boy, Timeforns Kengbwe, alleged to be found in possession of smuggled goods at a village called Waterfall Camp. Having arrived the village late in the evening, the officers spent the night of March 30 to 31st at Mr. Abanda's house in the camp. Meanwhile, the parents of the boy had left during the night to go and lodge a complaint at the police station, Kumba. Before the police could arrive the customs officers had returned to the French zone.

⁷⁹ Anglo-French boundary Commission-Protocols, Victoria Division, 1939, Qf/a1938/6, protocol No. 9 of March 10, 1939, signed R. Dugast and J.G.C.Allen, p.11.

Some of the border people who were smart clandestinely crossed the boundary to the British side especially during seasons of tax assessment or tax raids usually referred to by the local people as *Calé Calé*. Around the coastal creeks, the taxable population usually migrated to Nigeria where they waited until they got news that the raid was over before returning.

Even though the border people were aware of the boundary landmarks, and knew that they needed an official pass before crossing to the other side, some of them kept criss-crossing without a pass. It would appear that the French administration was much more severe on trespassers than the British. French forest guards regularly molested farmers from the British administered area around Tombel who owned farms in the French sphere. According to two letters of complaint from villagers who had farms around Tombel, (Manaseh Alobwede, Petros Kome, Martin Mbongo, Mathias Ntungwe, Cosmas and Joseph Mbongo), they were being molested by French Forest Guards (Markus, Apoloniah, Ewondoh, Cusmand, Rubert, Mboko, Daniel, Mathias and their headman Npessi) who refused to allow them to work in their farms and caused them to pay a total cost of £9, 3 pigs and 3 fowls. These farmers, headed by their chief Manaseh Alobwede, complained that French guards forced them to pay fines within a period of twelve months before they would be allowed to work on their farms.⁸⁰ The DO Kumba in his letter to the Resident said that it was possible that the farms had originally been in British territory but in an adjustment of the boundary, the area had become French administered. This behaviour of the French guards was illegal for the Boundary Commission had given the people the right to cultivate their land on both sides of the boundary:

⁸⁰ D.O. of Kumba to the Anglo-French Boundary Commissioner, Letter No.1.278.24 of May 30,1936, Qf/c 1936/2, Anglo-French Frontier: Kumba Division, pp.2-4, NAB. Fines usually comprised nine pigs and three fowls.

The rights of individual Africans to cultivation, collection of firewood, erection and extension of buildings on land on either side of the Anglo- French frontier, to which they held legitimate title at the time of demarcation of the boundary by cement pillars should remain undisturbed by such demarcation, except in so far as such land will become subject to the laws and regulations of the Government under whose administration they are thereafter situated.⁸¹

The chief of Ndom, Ntoko Fritz Mukete, also laid much emphasis on the brutal treatment of farmers of the British zone who owned farms in the French zone. He said people who lived at Kola and farmed at Nkut were driven away and their cocoa trees cut down. He said that the French government drove them away and gave their farms to someone called Mango/Mangou who caused the arrest and imprisonment of many local farmers.⁸² It was only after the pleading of the chief of Kola, Nyambe, with the head of the French administration at Nkongsamba that the arrested people were released.

Meanwhile trespassers from the French to the British zone were hardly punished. Archival reports say Mangou owned farms in Nkut in the French side but trespassed into the British side and cut down cocoa trees and other plants and began planting banana suckers.⁸³ His destructive acts were confirmed by the DO of Kumba, Goodlife, and estimated at 28,000 cocoa trees. He was told in writing to evacuate the land within the period of six months from February 18, 1939.⁸⁴ Mangou was also asked to pay compensation to the Bakossi farmers whose crops he destroyed. He admitted liability and surrendered the sum of 3000frs in full settlement. The people whose crops he had damaged refused the offer as being inadequate and the French

⁸¹ Anglo-French Boundary Commission. Protocols, various, Cameroons Province, memorandum No. Bc:5/1937/Vol.I/78 of March 16, 1939, Qf/91937/4, NAB.

⁸² Interview with chief Ntoko Fritz Mukete on May 16, 1999 at Ndom.

⁸³ Commission Franco-Anglaise de délimitation, APA 10813, pp.7-8, NAY.

⁸⁴ Anglo-French boundary Commission. Protocols, Qf/91937/4, p.3, NAB.

authorities then tried to get the dispute settled by arbitration. The Boundary Commissioner also observed that the sum of 3,000 frs. was too small for the damage caused. He said the estimated compensation could have been in the neighbourhood of £200 or 35,000frs.⁸⁵ Although Mangou was made to pay for the destruction he caused, farmers of the British administered border zone felt abused. This was because somebody from the French administered zone (Mangou) had crossed the boundary and destroyed their crops, when they were sometimes not allowed by the French guards to go and work on their farms in the French zone. To remedy the situation, the British administration stated that until the end of that farming season (1939), all their subjects who owned farms in the French zone could cross over when ever the need arose to farm and harvest. After that farming season, the farmers from the British zone needed to obtain permission from the local owners.

Land ownership was a major cause of trespassing. Trespassers often laid claims to land on the other side of the boundary. The French administration offered to grant agricultural concessions to all those from the British zone who at the time of demarcation owned plantations of permanent crops, houses or other buildings in territory which was now under the French Mandate. The people of Poala (British Cameroons) who owned farms situated on the French side of the boundary by the time of demarcation, 1937, were entitled to the produce thereof until the end of the current farming season. No one was authorised to interfere with their cultivation or to deprive them of ordinary farming rights. After the harvest, all of the lands were to revert either to the Mbo or the Mwangel according to its position on the frontier. If the Poala people wanted to continue to farm in that area, they needed to obtain the prior permission of the land owners (French subjects), either Mbo or Mwangel , as the case

⁸⁵ Anglo-French Boundary Commissioner to DO Kumba, No.Bc:6/1937/14 of January, 1939, NAB.

may be. The Boundary Commissioner reassured the protection of the trespassers and their crops by saying that: "If before the end of the present farming season any natives under French administration attempts to interfere with the farms in question, you should report either to the District Officer Kumba, or to me, if I am in your neighbourhood." ⁸⁶

These French subjects had started cultivating considerable areas of cocoa and other permanent crops without permission. Some of them resided on their farms on the British side while others kept crossing over daily to cultivate and harvest crops from their farms without passes. Such people usually used footpaths and other roads, which carefully avoided the customs stations. The British administration considered the solution of recognising and registering land held legitimately by the "strangers" so as to be able to eventually identify and evict trespassers. ⁸⁷ It was recommended that a list be prepared by the local landowners, under the supervision of an Administrative Officer, ... showing the names of all "native" foreigners whose title to the land in actual occupation by them was recognised by native custom, and that those plots, the boundaries of which were to be previously confirmed and marked by the Bakossi should be properly surveyed, after which the tenants could be furnished with Certificates of Occupancy, for a period of, say, twenty five years. ⁸⁸

Each plot would be numbered on top of the plan and the number quoted in the Certificate of Occupancy. The administration did not over-look the point however that

⁸⁶ Anglo-French Commissioner to James Elunge, village Head of Nhia-Poala, Despatch No.Bc:6/1937/6 of January 4th, 1938, NAB. The Commissioner hoped that there would be reciprocal proposals for the protection of British subjects in the French zone.

⁸⁷ D O Victoria to Resident, May 22nd, 1939, Memorandum No. Bc5/1937/Vol: II/93, Anglo-French boundary Commission. Protocols, Qf/91937/4, P.6, NAB

⁸⁸ Ibid. This solution had been applied at the Ngol Plantation in the French zone where it worked fairly well.

these trespassers might not wish to apply for a lease or a Certificate of Occupancy when they realised that the expenses of a survey might have to be met by them. The administration also had to face protests from the local Bakossi Traditional Council which had already expressed the desire to formulate rules forbidding the sale or lease of any more of their land to "strangers" and unauthorised planters in the Tombel area. The recommendation was adopted and implemented for certificates of occupancy were issued to trespassers.

In cases of accidental trespass, a Certificate of Occupancy was also issued. This applied in the case of Madame Scheitlin's Plantation situated on the French side of the boundary around Tombel, on the slopes of Mount Kupe. While the two Commissioners had, in principle, little sympathy with the encroachments of European planters whose boundaries were, or, should have been clearly defined, and who had already large areas of fertile land at their disposal, it was clear that the encroachment of Scheitlin was due entirely to an error of demarcation by a cadastral survey. It was then found that a section of her land, approximately five yards by one hundred and fifty laid outside the limits of the plantation and in British territory. This area was planted with coffee bushes which were too mature to be successfully transplanted and, there being no local farms in the neighbourhood, must either be preserved for the use of the owner or destroyed.⁸⁹

She was notified of her trespass and informed that the nature of the action to be taken had to depend on the decision of the Nigerian Government. Since the trespass was clearly not deliberate, it was recommended that she be granted a

⁸⁹ D O Victoria to Resident, May 22nd, 1939, Memorandum No. Bc5/1937/Vol: II/93, Anglo-French boundary Commission, Protocols, Qf91937/4, P.6, NAB. She abandoned the plantation because of terrorist activities that intensified in the area by the late 1960s.

Certificate of Occupancy of the small sector for a period of ten years.⁹⁰ This was the approximate life of the coffee trees concerned with a proviso restraining her from any further plantation or development of the land during the period of tenure. She was liable for the cost of survey of that sector.

A third kind of trespass, besides trespass by persons, farm or plantation lands was trespass by cattle. While on tour at Poala, in May, 1936, the DO Kumba received complaints from a deputation from all the villages around there that herds of cattle from Muangel and Mbo in the French zone were allowed to roam at will across the boundary and had caused continual damage to farms during the past two years.⁹¹ These herds were owned by a French Farming Company at Nkonsamba, La Compagnie Pastorale. Due to the gravity of the complaints, the DO suggested that:

I should be obliged if you (the Resident) will write to the Chef Du Région at Nkonsamba and bring this complaint to his notice. The only remedy appears to be to corral the cattle. The people who came to see me were much aggrieved by the damage done and by the fact that apparently no notice had been taken of previous complaints. Unless some action is taken by the French owners to prevent this in future they may find that the local farmers will take matters into their own hands by killing or impounding the cattle who do damage.⁹²

When the Resident contacted his French counterpart about the destruction, the later replied that he had made it clear to the company owning the herds to make sure that in future the cattle did not stray onto the British side. According to an archival report, the company owning the herds had been granted some patches of land along

⁹⁰ D O Victoria to Resident, May 22nd, 1939, Memorandum No. Bc5/1937/Vol: II/93, Anglo-French boundary Commission. Protocols, Qf/91937/4, P.6, NAB.

⁹¹ Letter No. Bc.6/1937/5 of December 13th, 1938, from the Anglo-French Boundary Commissioner to D O Kumba, similar complaints were made about considerable damage from the ravages of these same herds of cattle, Qf/a(1937)5, NAB

⁹² D O Kumba to Resident, letter No. 1177/22, NAB.

the slopes of Mount Manenguba by the government of French Cameroon.⁹³ The boundaries of that grazing land were not clearly defined on the ground and as a result, the herds were left to graze astray, far across the international boundary into British territory. It took some time for this trespass by cattle to be ended, possibly because of the good pasture that was available on that slope of the Manenguba Mountain. Another cause of frequent trespassing, was that which maintained socio-cultural contacts within separated ethnic groups along the boundary.

The maintenance of close relations between separated groups across the boundary.

From the demarcation of the boundary to independence, border groups resisted the boundary by ignoring it and by being completely indifferent to it. They continued to maintain close relations with their brothers on the other side of the boundary. This feeling of indifference and ignorance has been considered in this research as resistance to the boundary. This was the case of the Bakossi, Balong, Mbo, Bakundu, Mongo and the Duala-Bakweri groups who occupy the Southern portion of the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon. The Mongo for example, ignored the boundary whenever they were organising celebrations on either side of the boundary. Those on the British side attended tribal meetings and other important events taking place on the French side of the boundary. The Duala, Bakweri and the Mongo greatly intermingled and frequently organised wrestling matches locally called *Pala Pala*, and canoe races. Competitive matches were sponsored alternately, and drew participation from both sides of the boundary. These thrilling traditional sports competition used to occur long before the imposition of the boundary; as a result, it was difficult for the administration to stop the people from crossing over to participate in matches or to cheer their competing heroes. Border people chose not to understand that they needed

⁹³ Anglo-French Boundary Commissioner to D O Kumba, No. Bc/1037/5 of December 13th 1938, NAB.

to pay and obtain an official pass before visiting their brothers across the boundary. It was unrealistic and impracticable for a person living on the British side of the Mounjo, and who could see and talk with his relation from across the river to walk for about a day or more to Buea or Kumba to pay for a passport in order to visit his relation from across the river. It was much easier for him to jump into his canoe and paddle across the river in five minutes or less to reach his kinsman.

As with the coastal groups, other border groups further inland like the Balong, Bakossi, Mbo and Balondo also ignored the boundary by maintaining close relations with their kinsmen across the boundary. Since border groups belong to the same ethnic groupings, they operated the same social institutions ranging from birth, marriage, age-set rites and burial ceremonies. For example, the Bakossi of the Mouamenam clan were traditionally required to go to the summit of Mount Manenguba to perform fertility rites with their brothers of the Elung clan of the British side. Numerous Bakossi moved to and from the boundary to attend the traditional Ahon, Mwankum, and Ndiye celebrations. During border market days like the Bello, Tombel, Bangem or Mwambong market days, attendance was drawn from the Bakossi, Mbo, Balong, Balondo and sometimes the distant Duala. Village markets had more than economic importance. They were also the site of socio-cultural activities where messages were sent and delivered and appointments were made. Fanso underscores this point by saying local markets were attended:

Not only to sell or buy a thing, but also most importantly to "hear" news, "see" some relatives, despatch gifts, meet a girl friend or fiancée, pay debts, settle a dispute and pay respect to the elders. The local market was also a place where some villagers organised their thrift of mutual aid societies Traditional market announcements from the chief or the traditional council were also made on the market day.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Fanso, "Trans-Frontier relations", p. 189.

These announcements were usually important and on issues of communal or ethnic concern sometimes needing prompt action.

The difficulty of staying on one side and maintaining normal contact with the group on the other side resulted in many Bakossi abandoning their homes in the French sphere and crossing over to new settlements on the British side. In 1925, between 400 and 500 Bakossi crossed over from villages on the French side to begin new settlements within the main group on the British side.⁹⁵ The Mbo also ignored the boundary maintaining close relationships with their brothers across the boundary. The British administration came to the conclusion in the Mbo case, as in the other border groups, that the migration of people from parts of their chiefdom in the French territory to the parts in the British territory could not be prevented without strong and widespread action on both sides of the boundary.⁹⁶ On ritual occasions like the coronation of a chief, the funeral of a notable, the wedding of important persons, all the Mbo from the villages on both sides of the boundary grouped together for merry-making.

Another important aspect of cultural contact that all the border groups maintained across the boundary was their language. Border groups sometimes identified each other with the administering authority on the respective section of the boundary on which they found themselves. The Duala for example who were on the French side referred to their Bakweri brothers on the British side as "Bato ba Englisi" meaning English people/subjects. The Bakweri in return referred to their Douala brothers as "Wato wa Flenzi" meaning French people/subjects. Despite these descriptions, both groups usually communicated during meetings and other social

⁹⁵ Resident Buea to Secretary Southern Provinces, August 5, 1925, Tb/1925/1, NAB. Fanso, "Trans-Frontier relations", p. 189.

⁹⁶ D O to Senior Resident Buea, July 17, 1924, Tb/1924/1, NAB.

gatherings in the local Douala or Mokwe languages or in Pidgin English. It was deemed more intimate and safe for border groups to communicate in their local languages than in either French or English. Like the coastal Duala and Bakweri, the Balong also maintained their older social, socio-cultural and linguistic intercourse across the boundary. The Balong of Mundek (French zone) often moved over to the British zone to meet their brothers at Mundame and partake in common cultural rituals and celebrations.⁹⁷ A significant aspect of culture contact prevalent among the Balong was inter-group marriages. The chief of Mombo and Moujouka (French Balong) reported several examples of cross marriages with the Balong of Muyuka and Laduma (British Balong).⁹⁸

A further expression of rejection of the boundary by the border groups was the destruction of boundary landmarks. According to Protocol number 7, the British and the French land commissioners agreed that:

In the event of damage, removal or destruction of any pillar or of any other similar mark placed at the instance of the Boundary Commissioners to demarcate the line of the frontier, each government will be equally responsible for the cost of replacement, repair or reconstruction unless it is possible to trace the author of the damage, destruction or removal and to oblige him to bear the cost of rectification, without prejudice to subsequent legal proceedings.⁹⁹

In August 1938, it was reported that British subjects crossed over to the French side at the village of Abang in the Mouamenam clan where they destroyed boundary

⁹⁷ Interview with Clement Pandong, on June 2-4th, 1999, at Limbe. He was the courier officer operating between the Kumba Post Office (British zone) and Mundek (French zone) and he was often invited by his Balong friends on both sides of the boundary to celebrate traditional ceremonies.

⁹⁸ Interviews with chiefs Anoke Gaston of Mouyouka on July 13th, 1999 at Mouyouka and Moukouelle Benjamin of Mombo on July 12th, 1999 at Mombo.

⁹⁹ Anglo-French Boundary Commission. Protocols, Protocol No. 7, of April 22nd, 1938, signed R. Dugast and O. W. Firth, p., NAB.

landmarks and planted their own marks of demarcation.¹⁰⁰ Abang, at the time under chief Etouke had a total population of 143 persons (60 men, 40 women and 43 children) and was two hours walk from the Anglo-French boundary.¹⁰¹ Situated on the higher flanks of Mount Manengouba, Abang was difficult to reach.

When the chief administrative officer on the French side Raynaud, went to Abang to find out what damage had been done there, he was accompanied by the *Chef Supérieur*, Nti Ewane of Mouamenam; *Chef Supérieur*, Nji Edio of Manehas, the immediate neighbouring clan to the South; *Chef Supérieur*, Adam Arab of all the stranger settlers, and the *Chef Supérieur*, Jean Nguissi of all the Bamileke in Manjo.¹⁰² The information they gathered was that, on the third of August at about three o'clock in the afternoon, thirteen locals including two police officers from the British zone arrived at the village of Abang. The subjects of chief Etouke who according to the report pretended that he knew nothing about the arrival of the strangers had previously cleared the path they used.¹⁰³ The fact that the chief of Abang did not report the presence of these people to his paramount chief, Nti Ewane, made the French authorities suspect that Etouke was working in agreement with the British authorities. It was possible that the chief of Abang could have supported the strangers in their actions because he wanted his village to be placed under British administration. It should be recalled here that most cases of escape were from the

¹⁰⁰ Confidential letter number 90/AP of September 1, 1938, from the Commissioner of the French Republic to the Head of the Boundary Commission, AgeFom 932/2970 CAOM. These were alleged British subjects for they were never identified.

¹⁰¹ Report from the Chief of the Mungo Region to the Commissioner of the French Republic dated August 22, 1938, p.1 AgeFom 932/2970 CAOM.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Report from the Chief of the Mungo Region to the Commissioner of the French Republic dated August 22, 1938, p.2 AgeFom 932/2970 CAOM. p.3. The denial was presumably to stir clear of any blame by the French for conniving with the British to be placed under British rule.

French to the British zone where wages, working and living conditions were better than in the French zone.

On August 9, after having built a cement pillar with the help of the villagers, the visitors affixed a chain of 500 meters to it and planted the pillar far into the village of Abang and well away from the original boundary landmark that was there. To make their own boundary clearer, the visitors from British Cameroons ripped the backs off some trees and imprinted serial numbers (L.45 – L.43 L etc...) on them with red paint. At the entrance of the village where the boundary commission had demarcated the boundary with a pillar, the visitors buried the pillar, which they found there. This pillar had the following inscriptions engraved on it B.M.T.V.W. 33 and was in the shape of a square, twenty-five centimetres in dimension. This original pillar was completely destroyed and concealed. When the chief administrator Raynaud arrived at Abang, all the visitors from the British zone had gone away to the Northern village of Mouandong, also under the administration of chief Nti Ewane. Since Mouandong was a four hours walk from Abang, Raynaud, who was certain that the strangers were acting clandestinely, knew they would escape before he could get there. He concluded in his report that the *Chef Supérieur* Nti Ewane should expect the Boundary Commission, which would clearly define the final boundary between the two villages.¹⁰⁴ Chief Nti Ewane put the following questions to the French administrator and his entourage: "How could British subjects enter French villages without announcing their arrival"? "Why do they plant boundary landmarks which clearly shows that they want to take our villages and make them British

¹⁰⁴ Anglo-French Boundary Commission. Protocols. Protocol No. 7, of April 22nd, 1938, signed by R. Dugast and O. W. Firth, Qf/91937/4 p.2, NAB.

possessions"?¹⁰⁵ He continued by declaring the loyalty of the local people to the French rather than to the British administration. Chief Nti Ewane said, however, that the British subjects that he questioned on the matter told him that they were members of the boundary commission. Reynaud who found it difficult to provide answers to chief Nti's questions asked all those present to keep calm and thanked them for their loyalty to the French administration and their pride to remain Frenchmen.

Reynaud's report was transmitted to the Commissioner of the French Republic through the Chief of the Mungo Region who suggested that perhaps that was an attempt by "their neighbours" (possibly the British) to claim land inside the French territory.¹⁰⁶ The Commissioner wrote to the French boundary Commissioner, Rene Dugast, to verify and report if the actions reported were justified.¹⁰⁷ Since the British authorities could not identify the authors of the actions, it was left with the boundary commission to demarcate the actual boundary in their next campaign that was to start by October 1939. This mission could not be carried out due to the outbreak of the Second World War.

Another example of the destruction of a boundary pillar occurred at the village of Mouangwekan/Mwanwekan to the North of the village of Mouandong. The boundary line cut the village into two and the village chief Ngounte was placed on the English zone with some of his subjects. It was therefore necessary that those who were left in the French zone choose their own chief. They did so and the two chiefs began competing with each other as the new chief regarded himself as an equal to his former chief. This rivalry spread to the elders of both sides of the village and also to

¹⁰⁵ Anglo-French Boundary Commission. Protocols. Protocol No. 7, of April 22nd, 1938, signed by R. Dugast and O. W. Firth, Qf/91937/4 p.2, NAB.

¹⁰⁶ Chief of the Mungo Region to the Commissioner of the French Republic, No. 80 C of August 23rd, 1938, AgeFom 932/2970 CAOM.

¹⁰⁷ Commissioner of the French Republic to the Head of the Boundary Commission, confidential letter No. 90/AP of September 1st, 1938, AgeFom 932/2970 CAOM.

family members. Unidentified villagers seriously damaged the boundary pillar that was placed at the centre of the village.¹⁰⁸ On interviewing the chiefs on both sides of the village it was very clear that this bitter feeling and competition still exist even today between them.¹⁰⁹ The former choirmaster and catechist of the first Catholic church of the village recounted the brutal destruction of their church house when villagers from the French side attended a church service and realised that the priest was from the British zone.¹¹⁰ The priest who came from Bangem, a nearby village on the English speaking side could not convince the people to change their mind. The counsellor, also called a "quarter head", of the English speaking side said early efforts at opening a primary school for the children did not bear fruit because each side wanted the school to be in their educational system.¹¹¹ While at work around the Kumba-Loum boundary area, the Boundary Commissioner reported the

¹⁰⁸ The pillar is shown in the picture (p. 265) below. I was unable to see what number was engraved on the pillar. However, following the serial number from the summit of Mount Manenguba to the village of Mwanwekan, it is possible that the pillar bore the number 87.

¹⁰⁹ The chief on the English speaking side who was interviewed with his elders was Nicholas Ngape, the same interview was carried out on the French speaking side with chief Daniel Mbome, on April 14, 1999 at Mwanwekan. It was difficult to convince both of them to accept to pose for the photograph (p. 266) below.

¹¹⁰ Picture (p. 267) below shows the remains of the destroyed structure that served as the church and school house. Interview with Ignatius Elume, April 14 and 15, 1999 at Mwanwekan.

¹¹¹ Interview with Ignatius Elume, April 14th, 1999 at Mwanwekan. Today, Mwanwekan has five quarters namely Mbilla, the majority of the people here are English speaking, Ekossum (French speaking), Mwakumbang (French speaking), Mwebekong (French speaking), and Nkongte (English speaking). The village has remained divided. The first thing any visitor sees as he enters the village is the destroyed pillar which today is used by children to crack palm kernels.

destruction of a survey control point at Tombel.¹¹² The DO Kumba sent a police constable to arrest the situation and bring the offenders (destroyers of the survey beacon) to Kumba but they had escaped. The same file reports the poor behaviour of the chief of Tombel towards the French surveyor, Captain Gardet during his work in that locality in May 1938. The chief refused to give the French geodesian officer any information about Mount Kupe. The DO Kumba advised Gardet to withdraw from the British side of the boundary because he, the DO, could not provide Gardet with the necessary liaison to enable him continue his operations at Tombel.¹¹³ While border people ignored the boundary, destroyed boundary landmarks and made border demarcation and administration difficult, others saw the boundary as a zone of numerous opportunities.

THE ANGLO-FRENCH BOUNDARY WAS AN OPPORTUNITY ZONE TO BORDER GROUPS

The Anglo-French boundary was not solely an object of division. The boundary also provided opportunities to border groups. Border people made the best of their border position for while some of them were protesting and resisting the boundary; others who were smart used the border zone as an opportunity zone, a zone of transition. Paul Nugent and Anthony Asiwaju have underscored the double paradoxes that characterise African colonial boundaries.¹¹⁴ The first is the paradox between the hard lines drawn on the map and the reality on the ground, which is the invisible frontier. The second paradox is that between frontiers, which are supposed to

¹¹² Anglo-French Boundary Commissioner to D O Kumba, No. Bc:6/1937/14 of January 22nd, 1939, NAB.

¹¹³ From Captain Gardet to D O Kumba, letter of April 29, 1938, also see reply by D O Kumba, V. K Johnson of May 6th, 1938, NAB.

¹¹⁴ Paul Nugent and Anthony Asiwaju, *African boundaries. Barriers, conduits and opportunities*. London & New York: Frances Pinter, 1996, p.1.

be zones of division and demarcation and the reality, which is that, they tend also to be zones of interaction and contact.¹¹⁵ It is this second paradox that is of interest. According to Wilson and Hastings, border zones can be threshold areas inhabited by bandits and others wishing to escape the control of the state.¹¹⁶ Most border towns in Cameroon were cosmopolitan and were sometimes of recent growth thus offering many advantages for exploitation by border groups.

Tombel was a good example of such a town. The growth of Tombel was entirely due to uncontrolled immigration and the town was populated almost exclusively by "native" strangers. From an administrative point of view, Tombel was regarded by officials on either side of the boundary as "a centre of the smuggling industry, a repository for stolen goods and a welcome refuge for tax evaders and fugitives from French justice".¹¹⁷ This was so because all the main paths from the town of Tombel into the French territory carefully avoided the customs stations. As a result, experienced smugglers usually found little difficulty in evading the periodical police visits, which patrolled the boundary. From an administrative point of view, the formation of settlements like Tombel was to be deplored.

In order to reduce the smuggling and petty theft which prevailed in and around Tombel, the British administration recommended that a stricter control of passports be made at the border with a penalty applicable to all those who entered British territory without the requisite passport. The British administration operated a strict system of control on the boundary around Tombel with some modification in the interests of the border groups so as to allow the people free passage to and fro over the boundary at

¹¹⁵ Nugent and Asiwaju, *African boundaries*, p. 2.

¹¹⁶ M. Wilson and D. Hastings, *Border identities. Nation and state at international frontiers* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 83.

¹¹⁷ Anglo-French Boundary Commissioner to the Resident, No. Bc:5/1937/Vol. II/55, of March 21st 1939, NAB.

least for a period of time. The French authorities refused to allow the entrance into French territory of any persons without a passport or a *Laissez-Passer*.¹¹⁸ While both administrations attempted to reduce the rate of smuggling in border towns like Tombel, they took into consideration border people with property astride the boundary.

Persons in borderlands who were in legitimate possession of property on both sides of the boundary were given special consideration regarding the length of their official passes to cross the boundary. In 1939, the Acting Resident, L. Sealy-King in an attempt to reduce the difficulties encountered by border people with property on both sides of the boundary, increased the duration of their passes from six weeks to one year. This the Resident explained was because:

it would , I consider, be unreasonable to expect owners of property on both sides of the frontier to have their passes renewed at such frequent.... Incidentally the holders of such passes would be much inconvenienced at having to have their passes renewed at such frequent intervals, as many of them would have to travel from 2-3 days journey on foot to get even as far as Kumba and if for any reason they fail to get their passes renewed they are liable to a fine of £50 or to imprisonment for 6 months.¹¹⁹

To make matters easier for both the administration and the administered, the Resident suggested that it would be necessary to appoint the D O, Kumba, as an Assistant Immigration Officer (AIO). In the whole of the Cameroons Province there was only one AIO who also acted as the Collector of Customs, Victoria, answerable to the Principal Immigration Officer (PIO), Lagos. Such measures, it was presumed, would render immigration work in the Province workable.¹²⁰ Due to their border position,

¹¹⁸ DO Kumba to Resident, No. 2331/133 of APRIL 24TH 1939, NAB.

¹¹⁹ Anglo-French boundary commission. Register of boundary pillars, see letter No. EP 362/854 of January 5, 1939, pp. 1-2, Qf/a/1939/1a NAB.

¹²⁰ From the start of British occupation, the Resident was also appointed the AIO, but this was cancelled in 1937. Henceforth, it was the Superintendent of Police for the Cameroons who was appointed the AIO, by Gazette No. 882. The Resident later on suggested that all the D Os of the Divisions be appointed AIO.

borderland people had the special advantage of obtaining permits for a longer period than those in the interior of the territory on either side of the boundary.

Another important advantage that border people sometimes had and exploited to their advantage was the official use of both currencies. By 1935, tax collectors and taxpayers along the Northern borderland of the Anglo-French boundary, on the French side encountered several difficulties.¹²¹ The border peoples of the Adamawa/Adamaoua region found it very difficult to acquire French currency. This was because their closeness to the boundary made it easier for them to interact with their brothers on the Nigerian side than with those on the Cameroonian side. They frequented border markets where they sold mainly cattle and their regular customers were Nigerians who paid in British currency. Border people on the Cameroonian side who also went to these border markets could hardly afford to pay for the major trade commodity, cattle. It is important here to say that trade and other contacts had been going on between the people and they had been frequenting the same markets long before the imposition of the boundary. The point I am making here is that the problem was not one of currency conversion but that of unavailability of the currency of the authority under which the people were placed (the French currency).

When the people tried to pay their taxes to French tax collectors in British currency, the collectors refused to accept payment. The collectors reported the difficulty to the French administration. The French administration resolved that trade should be allowed to continue between the border groups and also that the border people could pay their tax in British currency, the only currency which they had at

¹²¹ Monsieur Periquet to the French Minister of colonies, letter No. 422T of May 3rd, 1935, AgeFom 928/2906, CAOM.

their disposal.¹²² To that effect, both the French Ministers of Finance and the Colonies wrote a report to the President of the French Republic. This was because of the French monetary regime that had been put in place since December 31, 1925 stipulating that only French currency should be used in French colonies. Border people therefore enjoyed the exception to this rule as they were given the right to the use of the currencies of both France and Britain. The President of the French Republic eventually signed a decree (copy annexed) to remedy the situation by permitting border people to pay their taxes in British currency. Border people later used this advantage to trade in both currencies across the boundary. To the South of the boundary, there were people who sold British pounds at exorbitant prices especially as by the 1930s, the sterling value was rated higher than the French franc. The French authorities complained that the black market in currency was causing the depreciation of their currency and inflation in French Cameroon. Special patrols were carried out along the boundary to arrest and stop all illegal currency traders and smugglers.

Smuggling was an important activity that shows the permeable nature of the boundary. Smugglers for the most part were border people. Non-border settlers were attracted to the borderlands by the lucrative business in contraband goods.¹²³ Smuggling along the Anglo-French border was intense and organised. A discussion with a few of the smugglers revealed that border groups organised smuggling

¹²² Monsieur Periquet to the French Minister of colonies, letter No. 422T of May 3, 1935, AgeFom 928/2906, CAOM. It is reported that this position was taken because a derogation of like nature had been done in AOF, by Decree of 25/10/1934 and thus could be also done in AEF.

¹²³ Paul Nugent talks of border chiefs who were involved in organised smugglers associations on the British side of the Gold Coast. Paul Nugent "The Comptroller of customs Vs Togbe Sesinu: Ex-slaves, smugglers and the state on the Togoland frontier 1920-1939", paper presented at the African History Seminar, SOAS, October, 18, 2000.

expeditions during the night across hidden paths in the forests.¹²⁴ Informants in the creeks and along the River Mounjo recounted how smugglers used to cross with contraband goods in canoes and usually at night.¹²⁵ On the approach of the Customs Preventive Service (CPS), they dumped the goods consisting mostly of crates of Beaufort beer, cartons of cigarettes and bales of used clothes into the river and escaped. Usually, when the CPS men had gone, the smugglers went back and tried to retrieve their goods from the bottom of the river. Other villagers usually tailed the smugglers to see where the CPS would surprise them. As the smugglers dumped their goods and ran away chased by the Preventive Service, the people dived into the river and took as much as they could carry of the smuggled goods and escaped. This made the smuggling network all the more complicated for the CPS who eventually decided to work in collaboration with villagers and their chiefs in an effort to identify smugglers either individually or by groups and families. It was not uncommon that sometimes, the chiefs they went to were the organisers of smuggling expeditions or/and retailers of smuggled goods. Border groups never regarded smuggling as unlawful and illegal. Some of the reasons advanced for smuggling by border people were: "It was a challenge to the authority and an exciting adventure; because it was profitable; because it was manly and equal to a great hunt; because smugglers became rich in money and property."¹²⁶ They considered taxation and other exactions wrong and so according to them; they felt free to earn the money for them the way

¹²⁴ Interview with John Nnode and two others who preferred to remain anonymous, on May 15, 1999 at Bangem.

¹²⁵ Interview with Chief Ebirabo, on May 5, 1999 at Mokuta Creek.

¹²⁶ Fanso, "Trans-frontier relations", p.333. Even though our informants refused to disclose the names of chiefs involved in smuggling, they did acknowledge however that chiefs were involved in the illegal trade.

government did not like, through smuggling.¹²⁷ Smugglers saw the boundary as a trade, and cultural barrier and thus felt it right to break patrol and customs regulations by trespassing whenever they felt was necessary to do so without official passes.

Sometimes, the CPS men ran into open confrontations with smugglers. There was the example recounted of an open attack that took place around the fifties between a group of smugglers and customs officers near the customs post at Ebonemin-Ninong.¹²⁸ The reporter said that he and other friends were smuggling Beaufort beer, salt, clothes stockfish and tobacco from the French into the English zone when French customs officers on patrol spotted them.¹²⁹ They hid their goods in the forest and lured the officers into thick undergrowth where there was an open confrontation that left people on both sides with wounds. There were two customs and two guards against a group of eight smugglers. Before complaints from the officers reached the authorities at Melong, the smugglers were in safe hiding. Fruitless efforts were made by the French administration to arrest them.

On the section of the boundary that was on sea, precisely in the creeks, there were reports of harassment by French sub-ordinate officials on British subjects fishing in the Moungo.¹³⁰ It is to be recalled that Nigerians who remained for the most part, loyal to the British rather than French authorities, dominantly populate the creeks.¹³¹

¹²⁷ Fanso, "Trans-frontier relations", p.333.

¹²⁸ Interview with a former smuggler, John Nnode and others, on May 15, 1999 at Bangem.

¹²⁹ Interview with John Nnode Ngwese on May 16, 1999 at Bangem-Ninong. The informant could not give a precise date when the incident occurred but appeared to have a clear memory of the incident. Similar accounts were recounted by other informants who were involved in the smuggling business at the time.

¹³⁰ Interview with chief Ebirabo (Nigerian) of Mokuta on May 6, 1999, at Mokuta Creek. Sometimes patrol guards took away their female captives, Anglo-French frontier Victoria Division, 1924, Qf/e 1921/1 NAB.

¹³¹ Ibid.

According to the chief of one of the creeks, when they went out fishing at the mouth of the River Mounjo they were followed by French patrol officers sometimes far out to sea.¹³² It was difficult to tell where the median line, which formed the boundary, was, as a result, they often crossed over to the French side sometimes unknowingly. They usually had several hidden water routes in the creeks, which they used in times of emergency to escape back into the British waters. Smugglers caught had their goods seized and were forced to pay more than the required amount as duty on each item. Reports on the capture of two groups of smugglers in Bimbia waters, near Victoria, during 1928-1929 resulted in the seizure of goods valued at a total of £1,218. Customs and Preventive men sometimes stormed border markets and seized all suspected contraband goods they could find there. Such goods could be easily detected for they bore the official customs stamps of the side of the territory from where they were smuggled. Traders of contraband goods sold "under the counter" - a process by which the buyer and the seller haggled on the price of an item before the item was exposed. Usually, the goods were not displayed on the shelves like other goods for fear of customs seizure or stampede. Smugglers who were caught and could not pay the required fines in Native Courts were imprisoned for a given period of time. If for example anyone was caught trespassing without a pass, the fine was £50 or six months imprisonment.¹³³ Native Court files report several cases with charges

¹³² Provincial Office Buea to DO Victoria Division, unsigned letter No.2331/55, of April 29, 1938, Anglo-French Boundary Commission. General. Cameroons Province, Qf/a1938/5 NAB. The heavy Nigerian population in the creeks is still the situation today. They do everything to evade control by tax officers and Gendarmes who ask them to present their resident permits.

¹³³ Anglo-French boundary commission register of boundary pillars, letter No. EP 362/854 of January 5, 1939, p. 2, Qf/a1939/1a, NAB.

of smuggling, unlawful assembly and evading payment of customs duty.¹³⁴ Due to the length of the boundary, it was difficult for the CPS men and the customs officials to efficiently police the boundary and contain smuggling.

Boundary officers were working on the difficult terrain of thick forests, hilly and rugged landscapes that prevented efficiency. The boundary was crossed at several points by footpaths. In certain areas, the border was unclear. George Atem speaks of a case in 1938 when preventive police officers, in pursuit of smugglers crossed, without knowing, from the British sector into the French territory near Bangola.¹³⁵ The constables were immediately arrested and disarmed by their French counterparts and sent to the authorities at Foumban from where they were later handed over to the British Cameroonian authorities. The CPS had limited resources at its disposal, and these needed to be strung out along some very difficult terrain.

On the British side of the boundary for example, the number of CPS men rose from 67 in 1927 to 199 in 1930 and 138 by 1939. There were only three European officers working with the CPS men on the entire length of the boundary.¹³⁶ Of the 138, 92 were assigned to the section of the boundary from Santa down to the sea; this means that there were less than that number of men put to patrol the section under study which was approximately 135 miles long. This was practically unworkable for control to be effective. On the sea section, they had to go through dense mangrove swamps sometimes wading through mud and water in marshlands infested with dangerous insects and reptiles. In the inter war years the CPS men had difficulties in

¹³⁴ For files on Native Courts - NC Bakossi (mf/b); NC Ninong (mf/l); NC Upper Balong (mf/m); NC Balong(mh/b); NC Bimbia (mh/c); NC Tiko (mh/e); NC Victoria(mh/f); N C Buea (no/c). The bulk of the files cover from 1917 to 1940.

¹³⁵ George Atem, "Cameroon-Nigeria relations 1884-1961: A study in political, economic and social interactions between two neighbouring states". PhD thesis, University of Calabar, Nigeria, 1984, p.363.

¹³⁶ Fanso, "Trans-frontier relations", p. 363.

copied with the problem of detecting and arresting the large sailing canoes used by the smugglers. Consequently, by the close of 1930, motor-launches were placed at the disposal of the Assistant Commissioner of the Preventive Services, Victoria. This was to facilitate movements by patrol along the coast and on the River Mounjo.¹³⁷ The use of these motor-launches and the creation of water guards led to large seizures of contraband goods along the coast and in the creeks; but smuggling continued to flourish in borderlands. Meanwhile calls for the dismantling of the boundary remained some of the major reasons for the search for the reunification of both territories. This will form the focus of the next chapter.

¹³⁷ *Cameroons Report from 1929 to 1931*, cited in Fanso, "Trans-frontier relations", p. 332.

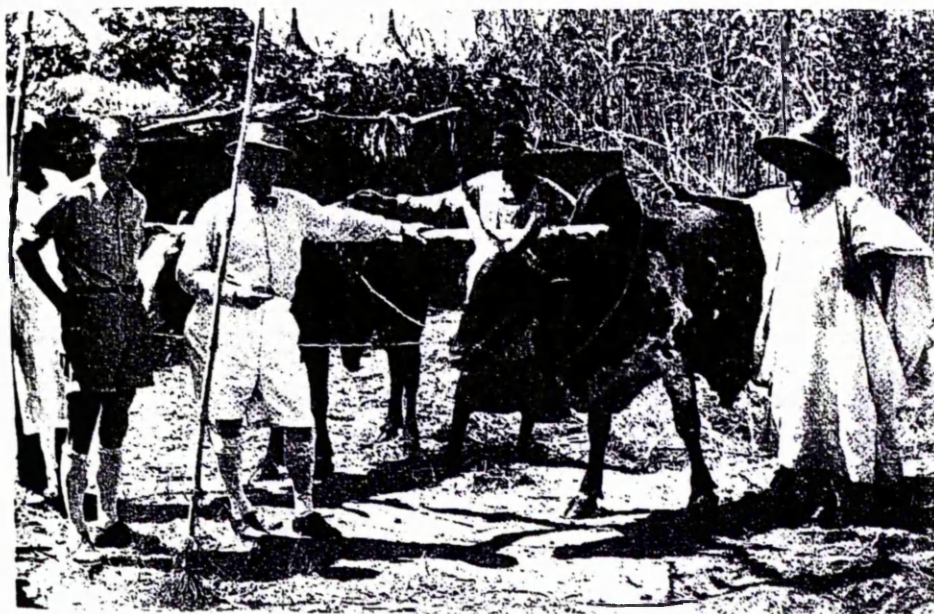
THE 1955 UN VISITING MISSION RECEIVING PETITIONS FROM THE
PEOPLE OF KUMBO, SOUTHERN CAMEROONS, IN THE COURTYARD OF
THE FON



Source: Report on the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration by Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the General Assembly of the United Nations. London: HMSO, 1961.



MEMBERS OF THE VISITING MISSION INSPECTING MIXED FARMERS
PLOUGHING AREAS IN SOUTHERN CAMEROONS



Source: Report on the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration by Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the General Assembly of the United Nations. London: HMSO, 1961.

THE STUMP OF A DESTROYED BOUNDARY PILLAR AT MWANWEKAN



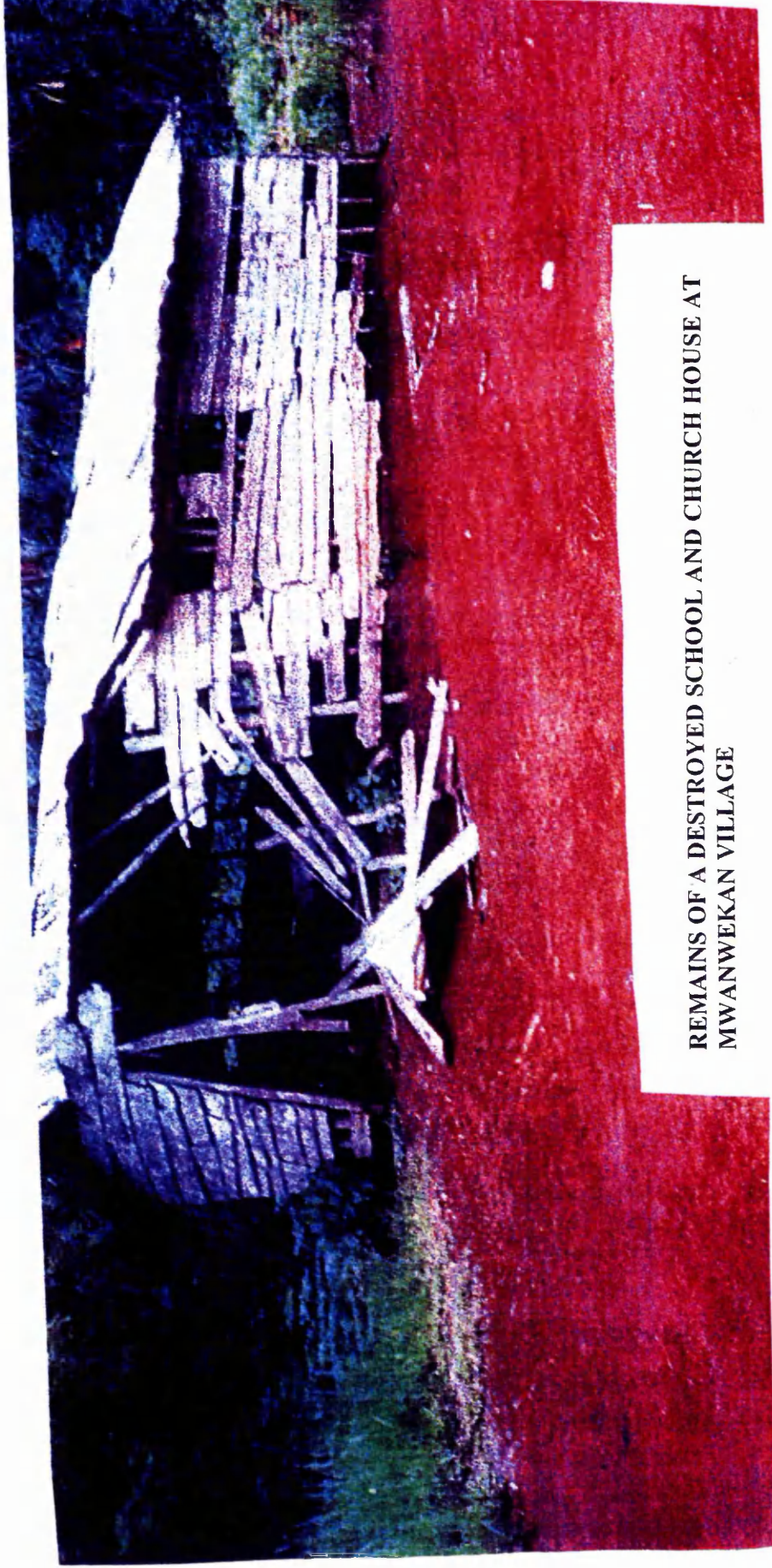
CHIEFS OF MWANWEKAN VILLAGE



JOHN NDODE NGWESE
Informant and guide

NGAPE NICHOLAS
CHIEF OF FRENCH SPEAKING SECTION OF MWANWEKAN VILLAGE

MBOME DANIEL
CHIEF OF ENGLISH SPEAKING SECTION OF MWANWEKAN VILLAGE



REMAINS OF A DESTROYED SCHOOL AND CHURCH HOUSE AT
MWANWEKAN VILLAGE

CHAPTER SIX

THE ANGLO-FRENCH BOUNDARY ISSUE AND THE REUNIFICATION DRIVE IN CAMEROON, 1950-1961

Research on the Anglo-French boundary issue in Cameroon can be better appreciated when highlighted by the demand for the reunification of the territory. The perceived inconvenience of the boundary remained a major reason behind the campaign for reunification. This chapter aims primarily at exploring the efforts made by border people, and then the various administering authorities (British, French, Cameroonian) and the United Nations in the quest for the reunification of Southern Cameroons and French Cameroon. The chapter will draw heavily from secondary sources. These are mostly comparative studies on the reunification and independence of both Cameroons.¹ References would also be made to some UN Trusteeship Reports on Cameroon.

Interest in reunification or the desire to return to the old Kamerun was strongest in Southern Cameroons and the adjacent French territories. The British and the French who partitioned the territory were keen to maintain and police the boundary to protect their investment and resources on their respective spheres. The strictness of border administration contributed to the increased demand for

¹ The selection of secondary sources exploited in this chapter is from works of Cameroonian political historians like Victor Julius Ngoh, Martin Njeuma, Ndiva Kofele-Kale, Nicodemus Awasom, Chem-Langhee, Emmanuel Chiabi and Paul Kale for the most part. Works of non-Cameroonians on the related issues have been also exploited like those of Willard Johnson, Edwin Ardener, Claude Welch, Saadia Touval, David Gardinier, Ayodele Langley, George Padmore, Richard Joseph, Odette Guitard and Colin Legum. I was not able to examine primary materials on the reunification and Independence issues especially in Cameroon and in France because most of the files are still not made accessible to the public yet. In Cameroon for example, many files have not yet been being codified at the National Archives, Yaounde and most of them have been damaged by poor conservation. In the PRO, files on the independence of Cameroon have remote relevance to the boundary under study. They discuss for the most part the end of Trusteeship in the territory and the achievement of independence.

reunification, a demand, which according to Martin Njeuma, was overshadowed by the demand for independence.² Reunification was advanced as a solution to irksome frontier restrictions. These restrictions prevented separated border groups from continuing their long nurtured relations. It became burdensome for Cameroonians, especially the divided people, to continue to interact politically, economically and socio-culturally. It was for this reason that the Anglo-French boundary presented a significant target for the resistance movements.

By far, the strongest challenge to the existence of the boundary was the desire of the border groups to return under a single colonial administration, preferably the British. Belonging to this single administrative pre-1916 unit was what the border people understood as their "old national unity". The ideology that served as the basis for Cameroon reunification is often referred to as the "Kamerun Idea".³ Although the claim that there was a "national identity" in Kamerun could be challenged, it is also true that there was a Kamerun ideology that embodied the aspirations of the Cameroonians for a recreation of their nation within the framework of the pre-1916 German Protectorate of Kamerun. That is why it is important to make reference to the period of German occupation when discussing the Anglo-French boundary and the reunification drive in Cameroon. People from separated border groups of the South and Northwest, West and Littoral provinces were more involved in the protests against the boundary and the call for the reunification of both Cameroons than people from the interior of the territory. They were local chiefs, some influential individuals, prominent leaders of political parties and other socio-cultural associations that

² Martin Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism in the making of Cameroon's independence". In *paideuma*, 41(1995):27-37.

³ Chem-Langhee and Martin Njeuma, "The Pan-Kamerun movement, 1949-1961". In Ndiva Kofele-Kale, *An African experiment in nation building. The bilingual Cameroon Republic since reunification*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980, pp.25-64.

condemned the imposition of the boundary and struggled for the reunification of Cameroon.

BORDER PEOPLE PROVIDED ACTIVE MILITANCY TO THE REUNIFICATION DRIVE

This section will highlight the idea that border groups actively demanded the dismantling of the boundary and the reunification of both Cameroons. The militancy cuts across what can today be geographically grouped as the South and Northwest, West and Littoral provinces. Even though our scope of study covers only the Southwest and Littoral provinces, border people of the other two provinces, which were also divided by the boundary, shared the quest for reunification with the same enthusiasm as their immediate Southern neighbours.

Before discussing the border people and the reunification struggle, it is important to say here that it is not the major concern of this section to examine the degree of commitment to the reunification issue between the British and French administered subjects or the long term ripples of reunification in post-colonial Cameroon. The history of reunification has been told from many perspectives.⁴ The reunification ideology originated from French Cameroon after the Second World War and spread to Southern Cameroon. When Britain and France accepted the principle of transfer of power to Cameroonians they opened the way for several local leaders to emerge and distinguish themselves. In our discussion, we shall begin by exploring the efforts made by local chiefs and some influential persons along the border before

⁴ Edwin Ardener, "The nature of the reunification of Cameroon". In Arthur Hazlewood, *African integration and disintegration: case studies in economic and political union*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967; Willard R. Johnson, *The Cameroon federation: political integration in a fragmentary society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970; Ndiva Kofele-Kale, *An African experiment in nation building: the bilingual Cameroon Republic since reunification*. Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 1980; M. Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", 1995; Nicodemus F. Awasom. "The reunification question in Cameroon history: was the bride an enthusiastic or a reluctant one?" *Africa Today*, 47,2(1999):1-16.

examining the works of political leaders, all of whose contributions resulted in the dismantling of the boundary.⁵

An important element in Southern Cameroons history is the role and influence of traditional rulers on political and public affairs. This is especially true of the grasslands chiefs in the northern half of Southern Cameroons. With support from some of their people, some southern border chiefs worked for the reunification of Cameroon in the hope of reuniting their subjects from across the boundary. Chief *Mukete* of Kumba, for example, hosted a meeting in his palace in May 1949, sponsored by Endeley. This meeting regrouped leaders of political parties from both West and East Cameroon who all agreed to work hand-in-hand to achieve independence, after which reunification would follow as a matter of course. Most of the participants argued that since socially and economically, British Cameroon had suffered a high degree of neglect, any premature unification would have the effect of making Southern Cameroons "a protectorate" of French Cameroon.⁶ Another example of a border chief who worked for the reunification cause was the chief of the Mbo of Mbouroukou. During the UPC incidents in the Mounjo, the chief of the Mbo, chief *Pandong* of Mbouroukou village held a UPC party meeting at his chieftdom in December 1949. This he declared was to show his support for what the party stood for, the reunification of Southern and French Cameroons.⁷

The Bakossi like their Mbo brothers supported the reunification cause and hosted UPC meetings around Kumba, Ebonji and Tombel especially when the party was banned in French Cameroon. That was why a majority of the Bakossi

⁵ Biographies of the major political leaders have been put in the Annex.

⁶ Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, p.129.

⁷ *Rapports d'inspection* sur les incidents de Nkongsamba, 1949-1950, 1 AC 37/2/1949, NAY. For more on the involvement of border chiefs and their subjects in supporting the UPC and the reunification cause, see 1 AC/299/1951, Letter No. M85 S/PS2/GM/OL of October 6, 1951, NAY.

headed by people like Thomas Ebong Ngalame, Eugene Ebako Ngome and Lazarus Ngahame campaigned for and voted for reunification with French Cameroon at the plebiscites. The results of the plebiscites, which were organised by the UN in February 1961 in Southern Cameroons were in favour of reunification with French Cameroon.⁸ Meanwhile, on the French side of the border, the efforts of the local people to dismantle the boundary were sometimes sponsored by the colonial administration.

During the interwar years, the French sponsored a political movement, the *Jeunesse Camerounaise Française* (JEUCAFRA), in response to Hitler's bid to recover Germany's colonial possessions. Information on JEUCAFRA is important here because that was the first movement in East Cameroon that provided the forum for Cameroonians under French administration to call for the dismantling of the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon. Actually, JEUCAFRA was an offshoot of *Jeunesse Camerounaise* (JC). The JC was the first organisation to provide Africans in the French-ruled territories with a vehicle through which to express themselves on social and public affairs. Because French policy did not permit Africans to form political organisations, the JC, established in 1933, was largely concerned with the cultural and social improvement of African societies. All political interests were pursued clandestinely.

The formation of JEUCAFRA was largely the work of the French High Commissioner, Richard Brunot, in French Cameroon.⁹ The movement was composed of three groups with conflicting ideas. The first group was the French colonial authority, which wanted the movement to assist the administration in its efforts to

⁸ The plebiscites will be discussed later on in this chapter.

⁹ Ngoh, *Cameroon, 1884-1985*, p.123. At the back of this pro-France political build-up in Cameroon was a son of the border. Paul Soppo Priso and the French Government engineered the transformation of the JC to the JEUCAFRA.

prevent the return of French Cameroon to Germany. The second group was made up of French business interests in Cameroon, which supported the movement because they wanted to take Cameroon out of the control of the League of Nations.¹⁰ They wanted French Cameroon to be firmly and entirely under the control of France like other French colonies in Africa. Finally, the third group, which was made up of the educated elite, saw the movement both as an instrument for voicing their anti-German sentiments and as a forum for expressing their political, economic and social grievances against the French colonial administration. These conflicting tendencies within JEUCAFRA made it difficult for the movement to survive after 1945 when the war ended the German threat.¹¹

Once the German threat was ended, some local leaders along the border committed themselves to the political advancement of French Cameroon in general and to the reunification cause in particular. It is important to say here that in French Cameroon, radical nationalism was ranged against the French and force was freely used by the administration. Reunification was seen by the French administration as a revolutionary idea and only those they saw as radicals adhered to it. In 1947, a group of border Duala headed by Paul Soppo Priso formed a political party, the *Rassemblement Camerounais* (RACAM), and made reunification the cornerstone of this new party. In so doing, they hoped to locate the battlefield for the political advancement of French Cameroon abroad, at the United Nations.¹² There was a strong colonial lobby in the UN to challenge French assimilationist policies and frustrate the

¹⁰ Examples of French business units in Cameroon in the 40s were: Société Commerciale et Agricole de la Lokundje; Compagnie Française du Continent Africain among others.

¹¹ The extreme seriousness with which the French administration viewed the German presence in French Cameroon contrasted with the relatively less attention that the British colonial authorities paid to the Germans. Pro-German post-war organisations were tolerated more in the British than in the French zone. See Ngoh, *Cameroon, 1884-1985*, pp.124-125.

¹² Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", p.28.

integration of French Cameroon into the French Union.¹³ RACAM hoped that when the boundary would be dismantled, reunification and independence would follow. This would reduce British and French political domination of the territory. It was reckoned that the two powers would compete with each other for a new hegemony in a reunited Cameroon, and that the Cameroonians would be able to dictate their own terms of co-operation.¹⁴ RACAM was considered by other Cameroonians fighting for reunification as too moderate and as a result, other more radical French Cameroonians from border groups (notably those from the Bamileke and Bamoun ethnic groups) took up the banner in April 1948 with reunification high on their agenda.

Radical nationalists like, Reuben Um Nyobe, Ernest Ouandie, Felix-Roland Moumie, Albert Kingue, and Albert Ndogmo, largely from border groups, formed the UPC political party with immediate reunification and independence as the twin policies on its agenda. The UPC found most of its support among border groups notably the Bamileke and the Duala. Even though the Bassa were not directly separated by the boundary, their close socio-cultural and kinship relationships with the Duala and their ideas on the importance of reunification made them militate for the cause of the UPC. Leaders of these border groups who militated for reunification through the UPC platform used the division of their groups by the boundary and the relationship with their kin from across the boundary to support their plan for reunification. Evidence for the use of these factors lies in the fact that most of the members of the UPC were from border groups and as such the major concern of the

¹³ Awasom, "The reunification question", p. 3.

¹⁴ Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", p.2. It is important to say here that while Cameroon was working towards reunification and independence there was a possibility of examining the ways in which she could also benefit from the resources that could be reaped from Britain and France.

party was to dismantle the boundary and reunite with their brothers across the boundary.

Um Nyobe, (the Secretary General of the party) for example, had appeared before the UN in December, 1952 and declared that the division of the Cameroons was artificial and arbitrary benefiting no one but the French and the British governments.¹⁵ He argued that because the groups across the boundary had common traditions and interests, reunification would bring economic benefits for Cameroon through resources from both the French Union and the Commonwealth. The chance of getting advantages from both organisations would be enhanced by reunification. With this argument, the party won over border traditional organisations like the *Ngondo* and the *Kumzé*.¹⁶

When French Cameroon achieved independence Moumie, for example, stated that he would negotiate with the administration only if French troops were removed from Cameroon, an amnesty granted to political prisoners and elections supervised by outside observers.¹⁷ When these requests were not granted, the result was widespread violence along the boundary especially in the Moungo and Bamileke areas. News of the reunification struggles that were going on in French Cameroon soon reached British Southern Cameroons. The first adherents of the movement were principally French Cameroonians who were spread throughout the principal border towns in British Southern Cameroon, precisely in the Buea, Tiko, Victoria and

¹⁵ Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, p.147. Also see Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985*, p.143.

¹⁶ It is to be recalled here that the *Ngondo* and the *Kumzé* were ethnic based organisations - the *Ngondo* for the Duala and the *Kumzé* for the Bamileke. Both groups affiliated with the UPC from the creation of the party.

¹⁷ The founder of the *Kumzé* was Mathias Djoumessi, an important chief of the Bamileke and the first national president of the UPC. Djoumessi worked in close collaboration with his counterpart of the *Ngondo*, Chief Betote Akwa, to achieve reunification through the UPC platform. Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, p.149.

Kumba Districts. Some had taken up residence in Southern Cameroons during the German period as plantation workers, but the bulk were *émigrés* who had escaped the harshness and oppressiveness of the French colonial system.

A significant part of border population was formed by these *émigrés* who rallied around one of their prominent leaders, Robert Jabea Kum Dibonge, and formed the pressure group called, the French Cameroon Welfare Union (FCWU). The FCWU was a voluntary association organised on a regional basis with the objective of advancing the social, political and economic conditions of French Cameroonians living in the British territory.¹⁸ Members also informed themselves about the political and social conditions back home on the French side of the boundary. The FCWU was one of the several groups that petitioned the first UN Visiting Mission to unify the British and French territories.¹⁹ In August 1951, the FCWU leadership decided and combined forces with other border politicians like Nerus Mbile, Emmanuel Endeley, Ernest Ouandie and Abel Kingue in a meeting held in Kumba (Southern Cameroons) to give birth to the Kamerun United National Congress (KUNC). We know from the previous chapter that the KUNC was the first and the most militant party to work for the reunification of Cameroon.

Working in close collaboration with the KUNC in the promotion of the idea of reunification were some people from the Western and Northwest Provinces who were attracted by the business opportunities of the border area and had crossed the boundary and settled on the British side of the border.²⁰ This group of people exploited the dynamic commercial traffic across the boundary, a cardinal

¹⁸ V. B. Amazee, "The role of French Cameroonians in the reunification of Cameroon 1916-1961", *Transafrican Journal of History*, 23,(1994):199-234.

¹⁹ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p.122. Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 177.

²⁰ Prominent among those was Joseph Ngu. Joe Ngu as he was popularly known, was born in the Bamenda Division but resided in the border town of Kumba from where he could use the boundary as a

aspect of which was the importance of relatives and support systems on both sides of the boundary. Some of these "strangers" used their wealth and influence to sustain reunification meetings and to facilitate a steady stream of petitions to the UN on the necessity of reunification.²¹ Besides efforts made by chiefs, some prominent individuals, business men and border political leadership on the French side of the border, Southern Cameroon politicians who were committed to the reunification cause saw it as a means to end the administration of their territory as an integral part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. It is important here to explore the differences and evolution of political platforms between two leading political leaders (Endeley and Foncha) because they influenced the results of the 1959 elections that brought a change of political leadership in the territory and the dismantling of the border.

Endeley initially saw reunification as a useful and vital means to achieve an autonomous status for Southern Cameroon. Through the CNF, he called for separation from Nigeria, the unification of both British Northern and Southern Cameroons and their reunification with French Cameroon. During the constitutional conference that was held in Ibadan in 1950, Endeley is said to have raised the issue of reunification and this was the first time it was discussed anywhere outside the territory proper besides the UN.²² Yet as political opportunism increased in Southern Cameroons, he became insincere in his call for reunification.

Before 1956, Endeley was committed to reunification, he pressed for the elimination or the relaxation of naturalisation requirements for French Cameroonians residing in Southern Cameroons. This was in order to have their votes.

conduit for his business transactions between Nigeria and Cameroon. Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", p.3.

²¹ It is reported that connections and support provided by Ngu and Dibonge within the FCWU strengthened trans-frontier ties, Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", p.3.

²² B. Chemlanghee and M. Njeuma, "The Pan-Kamerun Movement, 1949-1961", Ndiva Kofele-Kale. *An African experiment in nation building*, p. 36.

By 1957, when he got the votes, he opposed reunification and pressured Parliament to disfranchise them. Meanwhile, the pro-reunification forces led by Foncha and the KNDP, pressed for their enfranchisement at the time, but later, during the plebiscites campaign in 1961, the pro-Nigerian forces led by Endeley and the pro-reunification forces of the KNDP, switched positions again.²³

Endeley later on began pressing for workers' rights, representation in the Nigerian legislative organs and the reform of the Land and Native Rights Ordinance rather than a reduction of frontier difficulties in the Cameroons. This change of commitment to the reunification cause put Endeley at loggerheads with French Cameroonian activists in Southern Cameroons some of whom decided to break away from the CNF to form two very militant pro-unification parties, the KUNC the KNDP.

Foncha's KNDP decided to work with the leaders of the UPC who were in radical pursuit of the reunification idea in French Cameroon. In November 1955, the KNDP and UPC met in Bamenda and formed a Reunification Committee in which Moumie was elected President, and Foncha, Secretary. The radical anti-colonial stance of the UPC in British Cameroons added more weight to a pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops in the French Cameroons, which on Easter Sunday 1955, warned the faithful of the dangers of communism and the UPC.²⁴ In 1956, an enlarged reunification committee was formed including Foncha and Nde Ntumazah (KNDP leaders) from the British Southern Cameroons, and UPC leaders in exile from French Cameroon like Moumie, Kinge, and Ouandie. According to

²³ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, pp. 120-21. At the time of the plebiscites, the KNDP thought there were more Nigerian migrants (anti-reunificationists) in the territory than French Cameroonians, and that their cause (reunification) would be advanced by having both groups removed from the voting rolls.

²⁴ Awasom, "The reunification question", p.7.

Awasom, this union between Foncha, a devout Catholic school head teacher turned politician, and the radical UPC turned out to be difficult to maintain and was eventually bound to collapse.²⁵ The Catholic Church was uncomfortable with the UPC because of its communist orientation and its radical nationalism, and Foncha was accused of associating with violent communists who could eventually destroy the church. Moreover, the revolutionary language and violent methods of the UPC made Foncha and his party men to relent in their joint struggle for reunification with the UPC partisans. The KNDP wanted a conservative approach.

When Foncha's KNDP defeated Endeley's KNC in the January 1959 elections, the results were seen as a triumph for reunification. Njeuma says that the elections were a test for the popularity of "Foncha's brand of reunification".²⁶ Foncha, who in 1959 became the Premier of West Cameroon, stated that the KNDP would prefer a Federal System of government in the event of reunification, a loose Federation between the two components. He however added that the issue was still to be negotiated with the authorities of French Cameroon. The Commissioner for British Southern Cameroons, J.O. Field, advised Foncha at this point to meet with Ahidjo, who at the time had become the President of French Cameroon, as a team and discuss the terms of reunification. Ngoh and Chem-langhe report that Foncha ignored the advice and decided to negotiate with Ahidjo alone.²⁷ Njeuma emphasises this point by

²⁵ Ibid. Chemlanghee and Ngoh also elaborate on the uneasy union between both leaders, B. Chemlanghee, "The road to the unitary state of Cameroon, 1959-1972", *Annals of the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences*, the Social Science Series, 1 and 2 (January-July 1990):9. Ngoh. *Cameroon 1884-1985*, p.11.

²⁶ Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", p.2. Meanwhile, in French Cameroon, the government passed from Andre-Marie Mbida to Ahmadou Ahidjo without solving the problem of widespread violence and a strong French involvement in the country's affairs.

²⁷ Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", *Paideuma*, p.34. This has been considered by some authors as one of the major causes of the marginalisation of the West Cameroonians. B. Chem Langhee, "Anglophone-Francophone divide and political disintegration in Cameroon. A psychistorical perspective", P. N Nkwi and F.B Nyamnjoh, *Regional balance and national integration in Cameroon*, Yaounde: Icasrt, 1997, p.91. Piet Konings and F. B. Nyamnjoh, "The Anglophone problem in Cameroon". In *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 35,2(1997): pp. 207-229.

saying that Foncha, as Premier, went ahead single-handed without first seeking general consensus in his (KNDP) party, nor with West Cameroonians to negotiate reunification with Ahidjo.²⁸ By so doing, Foncha drifted irretrievably into the hands of Ahidjo and his allies, the French government. The French administration was happy with Foncha's plans for reunification with French Cameroon. This was because in the event of reunification, French Cameroonians would constitute the majority in the reunified Cameroon, thus French influence, it was assumed, would be predominant.

By reunification Foncha meant a loose federation of states, precisely of the West and East Cameroon states on equal terms. Foncha's formula also bore the seeds of destruction for British policy in West Cameroon. This was because the formula was based on the principle that negotiations for a federal constitution would be undertaken by the ruling parties of West and East Cameroon who would work out the details without consulting either the British or the French. This was probably why the British attempted to thwart the reunification movements as shall be observed below. However Foncha's dream for a loose federation suffered steady erosion after independence.

THE 1959 ELECTIONS AND THE CHANGE OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN SOUTHERN CAMEROONS

The January general elections of 1959 in Southern Cameroons were prepared at the London Constitutional Conferences of May-June 1957 and September-October 1958 with representation from all major political parties in the territory. They were, the KNC represented by Endeley, V. E. Mukete, Fon Galega II of Bali and J.T. Ndze; the KPP represented by P.M. Kale and N. N. Mbile while the

²⁸ Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", *Paideuma*, p.34.

KNDP was represented by Foncha and A. N. Jua. On the question of constitutional arrangements, one of the conclusions drawn was that the Leader of Government Business in Southern Cameroons would be called the Premier.²⁹ During the two previous conferences, the differences between the KNDP then in the opposition and the KNC/KPP alliance were made clear. The latter supported the idea of continued association (as a separate region) with Nigeria. The KNC/KPP delegates declared that they wanted rapid constitutional progress only in order to prepare themselves to take their place in an independent Nigeria. Their reason was the greater financial and economic benefits available to Southern Cameroons as a region within a Great Federal Nigeria. Also, the "integrationists" as they were called wanted to avoid the continuation of political unrest in French Cameroon.

On the other hand, the "reunificationists" or KNDP favoured ultimate reunification after having seceded from the Nigerian Federation. For the KNDP, secession was to be followed by a short period of British administration, which would lead to independence. During its campaign, the KNDP insisted that reunification would be achieved only after independence and was to be a matter of a roundtable discussion between the governments of both Cameroons. The political leadership in Southern Cameroons was under great pressure to define reunification in concrete terms. This led to tension between the government (KNC/KPP) and the opposition (KNDP/OK).³⁰

When the results of the 1959 elections were made known, the KNDP won the elections; they won 14 seats as against 12 secured by the KNC/KPP

²⁹ Ngoh, *History of Cameroon*, p. 213.

³⁰ It should be recalled here that the OK party was an offshoot of the UPC, which was formed in Southern Cameroons after the UPC was banned in French Cameroon. The OK formed a coalition with the KNDP because both of them were campaigning on the same platform.

Alliance. The KNDP captured 75,326 of the votes (which appeared, however, to include 2,021 cast for two candidates of the OK party) while the KNC/KPP obtained 51,384 of the votes and 10,509 for independent candidates.³¹ The KNC/KPP failure was largely the result of over confidence. This is clearly seen in the votes they scored in Victoria South East for an example. They were confident that they would carry the votes there since it was an allegedly KNC/KPP area. Instead of uniting their forces for better results, they split the votes between KNC (Dipoko) and KPP (Nambile), while Mbua Monono stood for the KNDP. The result was that Dipoko had 1182, Nambile had 813 and Mbua Monono captured the most, 1293 votes. In Victoria North West, the KNC/KPP scored very highly there because the KPP candidate, Kale stepped down for the KNC candidate. Endeley thus became the lone candidate there, enabling the alliance to score 3086 votes against 841 for KNDP.³² Foncha was invited to form a government and on 30 January he was appointed Premier of Southern Cameroons.

At this point in time, Endeley and his government were becoming unpopular and strongly opposed by the chiefs and populations of the Grassfields, an important area that had been captured by Foncha and the KNDP. Endeley, who favoured association with Nigeria, was out of power and Foncha became the Premier of Southern Cameroons. These election results brought to power not only a party planning to separate from Nigeria, but one which championed the cause of reunification with French Cameroon.³³ After his failure in the January 1959

³¹ Ngoh, Cameroon 1884-1985, pp. 211-212. Also see Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 203. Also see UNTCR, May 1960, 26th Session, pp. 36-7, see annex for the election speeches made by principal political party leaders.

³² UNTCR, May 1960, 26th Session, p. 37. The 4th Visiting Mission observed that personal likes and dislikes towards candidates and issues of a purely local character had a bearing on the polling.

³³ This however, was not the first time that elections in Southern Cameroons had been contested on issues of separation or continuous association with Nigeria. In an earlier election in 1953, the issue contested was whether Southern Cameroons should separate from Eastern Nigeria and constitute itself a region or whether it should continue as a province in Eastern Nigeria. At the time, Endeley's party

elections, Endeley looked back with satisfaction on what he had achieved prior to the elections and in a speech to the UN on February 23, 1959, he asked what advantages Southern Cameroons would get by associating with a long-estranged French administered territory and concluded that: "It will be unwise to abandon a secure and floating vessel which offers us sure landing to allow ourselves to drift in an open life-boat because we hope to be picked up by a new and better vessel which we have not even seen on the horizon."³⁴ At the time, it was probably too early to tell if the "floating vessel" was as safe and secure as Endeley made it to look. The Fon of Bafut like Foncha did envisage French Cameroon as "fire", because of the civil war that raged there, and Nigeria as "water" in which Southern Cameroonians could be drowned, but Foncha judged that the violence in French Cameroon would be short lived and that reunification would still be possible.³⁵ While all of this was going on, it is necessary to know what the Yaounde authorities thought about reunification.

THE FRENCH CAMEROON AUTHORITIES' MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT REUNIFICATION

In French Cameroon, the government had changed hands from Premier Andre-Marie Mbida an arch anti-reunificationist, to Ahmadou Ahidjo, a moderate politician, in February 1958.³⁶ Mbida hated the UPC and energetically kicked against reunification and independence at a time when almost all political groups had already espoused these goals as realizable. He was forced to resign on February 17, 1958 after a year in office, when criticism mounted over his handling of the UPC and his long-range policies. In a speech before his resignation, in January

had won the election on the question of separatism. His party pressed for the territory to be given the same position as any other Nigerian region.

³⁴ Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, p. 145.

³⁵ Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 207.

³⁶ Daniel Abwa, *Andre-Marie Mbida premier Premier Ministre Camerounais (1917-1980)*. Paris: l'Harmattan, 1993, p. 124..

1958, he spoke of the possibility of considering independence within a decade, and completely left aside the possibility of reunification. As a result of his remarks, most of the cabinet resigned. Welch says three motions of censure were filed and following hurried discussions with Paris a new High Commissioner was recalled.³⁷ The new High Commissioner, Jean-Paul Ramadier, in an interview with Mbida on February 4, 1958, made it clear that one of his major objectives in Cameroon was to either make the PM to submit to his orders or leave office.³⁸ Mbida was then forced to step down. Ahmadou Ahidjo as leader of the largest parliamentary group, *le Groupe d'Union Camerounaise*, was called upon to form a government.

Ahidjo endorsed reunification and independence and indicated that if reunification was the wish of Southern Cameroons he could not object to it. He was not over-enthusiastic about reunification, and thus played down its structural implication. He was more concerned with the political situation in French Cameroon than with reunification. According to Njeuma, the one thing Ahidjo did that made all things possible was to insulate reunification from party politics in French Cameroon politics. This was achieved by getting the East Cameroon Assembly of Deputies to approve a motion in September 1958 accepting reunification with Southern Cameroons whenever the latter was ready.³⁹ Well aware of the factors causing Mbida's downfall and the dangers of a north (Moslem)-south (Christian) split, the new leader adopted the cardinal points of the UPC, independence and reunification were the basic policies of his new government. In his investiture speech, he claimed

³⁷ Welch, *Dream of unity*, p.210. Georges Chaffard. *Les carnets secrets de la colonisation*. Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1965, pp. 295-329.

³⁸ Abwa, *Andre-Marie Mbida*, pp.124-133. Ramadier said his predecessor, Pierre Messmer was exclusively an administrator but he did not want to continue with that for he was going to do more of politics than administration. Mbida quickly realised that his forces against those of Ramadier would be hopeless.

³⁹ Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", p.3.

that reunification was the ardent wish of all Cameroonians *-le rêve ardent de tous les Camerounais*. A few months later, he told the Legislative Assembly that immediate steps should be taken to bring about reunification. He said:

reunification has remained the principal preoccupation of French Cameroonians and they have the immediate intention to open dialog with their neighbours on reunification. The reconstitution (reconstitution) of Cameroon which was arbitrarily divided by treaties in which Cameroonians did not participate is a problem that needed an urgent solution, even before the proclamation of independence.⁴⁰

Ahidjo exchanged visits with Foncha several times between the months of July and December 1960, in preparation for the plebiscites.

The French Cameroon authorities also endorsed reunification because it was a strategy aimed at weakening the UPC revolutionists who were in active terrorist warfare against them. It was possible that Ahidjo in endorsing reunification aimed at depriving the UPC of their ideological ammunition, at rendering them empty, and making their political tactics irrelevant. Some of the problems contemplated by the Yaounde authorities on reunification with Southern Cameroons were that in case of reunification, it would need much financial and manpower investment to develop Southern Cameroons economically.

French Cameroon authorities also had mixed feelings on reunification with Southern Cameroons, because, when compared with Nigeria and the French Cameroon, the backwardness of development in Southern Cameroons was striking.⁴¹ This was as a result of the nature of British administration of the territory as

⁴⁰ *Communication de M. Ahmadou Ahidjo, Premier Ministre, Chef du Gouvernement Camerounais, le 18 octobre 1958 à l'Assemblée Legislative du Cameroun, Yaounde: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1959, p. 21, NAY.* Of importance is also his speech of investiture delivered at the same Assembly on February 18, 1958, in the same file, p.8, NAY.

⁴¹ French Consul Lagos to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, No. 60/AL. Togo-Cameroun, Tutelle Britannique, Juillet 1946-Décembre 1952, K21-5. Also see Telegram No. 124 of March 15, 1950, in the same file, AMAE. Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon.*, pp.133-220. The author analyses in three chapters (7, 8 and 9) the backwardness and powerlessness of Southern Cameroons as a result of

an adjunct to the Eastern Region of Nigeria. Between the wars for example, the development of Southern Cameroons remained substantially that left by the Germans. By 1945, the entire Cameroons Province was staffed by an average of 6.7 administrative officers - about one British official for each 100.000 inhabitants.⁴² A fifteen days' walk was necessary to visit some villages in Bamenda. In fact administrators never visited some remote villages. Communications with Nigeria, the administrative HQs were slow and tortuous. Letters written in Southern Cameroons reached Enugu, the chief administrative HQ after about three months. The first road (seasonal), linking the forest zone with the edge of the Grassfields (the towns of Kumba and Mamfe) was not completed until 1947. It was apparent that in the case of reunification, Southern Cameroons would be an economic burden to the Yaounde authorities, which would need much financial and manpower investment to uplift the former's economy.⁴³

They also contemplated the language and cultural barriers that prevailed between the two territories and on the trouble created by the terrorists in the Mounjo and Bamileke areas which had resulted in most of them taking refuge in Southern Cameroons. Southern Cameroonians spoke English and had an English culture as against French Cameroonians who spoke French and had a French culture. There would be the trouble of harmonising the two cultures. There was also a

its administration as an integral part of Nigeria, in the domains of education, economy and urbanisation.

⁴² Welch, *Dream of unity*, pp.156-7. From the start of British administration until 1949, Southern Cameroons had existed as a separate Nigerian province. As from 1949, it was temporarily divided into two provinces, the Bamenda and Cameroons Provinces. These were later abolished by the new constitution of 1954. Between 1949 and 1954, Bamenda Division was made a province and Kumba, Mamfe and Victoria were administered together as Cameroons Province. They were all later transformed into Divisions.

⁴³ Bulletin mensuel de l'information politique par l'Ambassade de France au Cameroun, Mai 1-31, 1960, V,5, Serie AL 1953-1959, Sous Serie Cameroun, AMAE. Due to the deplorable situation of the territory by the mid 50s, it was a custom then for some highly trained Nigerian civil servants to resign their appointments when they were transferred to the Cameroons, Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, pp.133-4.

problem of harmonising the administrative systems of both territories. With a population of 400,000 Bamileke, the Yaounde authorities would have the difficulty of trying to strike a balance between the South and the North of the territory. If the 400,000 Bamileke of French Cameroons united with their brothers of Southern Cameroons, they could number over 900,000 resulting in a severe ethnic imbalance of the population in the entire country.⁴⁴ The Yaounde authorities also explored the differences in currency and the constitutional problems that could ensue from reunification. Despite these and other worries, Yaounde continued the forward move towards reunification. Reunification was not just an issue of Foncha and Ahidjo and their governments, it was of particular interest to the British government as well.

HOW BRITAIN ATTEMPTED TO DOWNPLAY THE REUNIFICATION DRIVE IN SOUTHERN CAMEROONS

When in the late 1940s, the reunification movement was gaining momentum in Cameroon, the British and the French colonial administrations increased their monitoring of the political developments. When the French Minister for Overseas announced to the Minister of Foreign Affairs that there were reunificationist movements going on in French Cameroon, an emergency meeting was held in the cabinet of Governor Delteil with the intention of curbing the movements.⁴⁵ On the British side of the boundary, the administration viewed the movements with the same alarming sensation. Although the British administration thought in 1949 that reunification was not an active issue in Southern Cameroons, they were also aware that at the time, the CNF had began talking about reunification. In fact the Federation presented petitions to the first UN Visiting Mission, which raised the frontier

⁴⁴ Bulletin mensuel de l'information politique par l'Ambassade de France au Cameroun, Mai 1-31, 1960, V,5, Série AL 1953-1959, Sous Série Cameroun, AMAE.

⁴⁵ French Overseas Minister to Minister of Foreign Affairs, No. 1794 of March 6th, 1952, AMAE.

problem. When the CNF was presenting the memorandum, which suggested reunification to the Mission, reunification was used as a convenient pretext on which to attack administrative shortcomings. Reunification to the CNF, was used as a threat, as a method of calling attention to the neglected condition of the territory and to win a measure of autonomy from Nigeria.⁴⁶ According to Chiabi, the argument of the colonial administrators was that the grievances of Cameroonians rested upon the inconveniences of frontier control rather than upon any concrete proposals for unification.⁴⁷ Because of this assertion in 1949, the Commissioner of Cameroon, E. J. Gibbons, concluded that the idea of reunification in Southern Cameroons was not an actively pressing issue. Over and over, the British colonial administration stressed the passivity of the reunification movement. Gibbons this time supported by French representatives from French Cameroon - Laurentie and Watier - again expressed his view in 1950.⁴⁸

Gibbons in 1951 warned that the ideology of the reunification movement in Southern Cameroons was going to be a source of embarrassment to the colonial administration and, therefore had to be contained. Gibbons suggested a course of action for the British government to curb the movement's increasing momentum, he proposed that:

I would observe at the outset that this movement is, in my opinion, now likely to attract international attention and it seems necessary to adopt deliberate measures, with the concurrence of

⁴⁶ Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 159.

⁴⁷ Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p.111. To make their case, proponents of reunification quickly capitalised upon the boundary, which prevented people of the same ethnic group from easy communication. On this issue, Ardener says there was no great division of peoples along the Anglo-French boundary (Edwin Ardener. "The nature of the reunification of Cameroon". In Arthur Hazelwood, ed. *African integration and disintegration*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967, p.293. B. Chem-Langhee and M. Njeuma take the opposite stand, "The Pan-Kamerun movement", in N. Kofele-Kale, *An African experiment*, pp25-64. The boundary effectively divided ethnic groups who expressed the desire to be reunited. It was convenient for the colonial administration to think that the boundary neither divided ethnic groups nor caused any serious local handicap.

⁴⁸ Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p.111.

the Majesty's Government to limit so far as possible the inconvenience and disturbance that may be expected to result.⁴⁹

Gibbons matched his words with action and with his superior, the Acting Governor in Lagos, they proposed and adopted a course of action to check the reunification movement in Southern Cameroons.

The three immediate measures that were adopted were: frontier control, a review of the situation of French Cameroonians in Southern Cameroons and attempts to improve upon the economic development in the territory. The British administration relaxed frontier controls and limited it to the imposition of customs dues on goods of European origin and currency when moved in commercial quantities only. This relaxation of frontier controls was based on the understanding that Cameroonians capitalised on the frontier issue more because of the inconveniences that they engendered than on any real need to create reunification between the two Cameroons. For this reason the administration was ready to give in to the demands of nationalists and border groups. That was why Gibbons further proposed the extension of the relaxation of control to the passage of basic commodities like African foodstuffs.

On the situation of French Cameroonians in British Cameroon, the British colonial administration from the start did not issue any comprehensive policy defining their status and role. The issue however became of great importance as the settlers began to claim citizenship, voting and other benefits from the government. More precisely their complaints centred on three areas: disqualification from voting in elections, discrimination in the award of scholarships and

⁴⁹ E. J. Gibbons to Secretary to the Government, Nigerian Secretariat No. S.149/5 of October 8th, 1951, Vb/b1951/1, NAB.

discrimination in employment.⁵⁰ In the bid of undercutting the reunification movement, Gibbons attempted to appease the French Cameroonians' demands. He proposed that both governments should reconsider the conditions of service of French Cameroonians. To relieve the discontent on scholarship issues he suggested to the authorities of the CDC that awards notices be altered to include French Cameroonians, especially those born in the territory.⁵¹ The Commissioner also proposed that French as well as English be taught in secondary schools where its introduction was more feasible than in primary schools. In their efforts to pacify the "settlers" from French Cameroon, the British administration was ready to give out scholarships to them. What the administration did not want was to grant to them their request of inclusion in Southern Cameroons politics. One of the reasons for this refusal could have been that if the French Cameroonians in Southern Cameroons were allowed to partake in local politics, political and governmental decisions in the British sphere could have been conditioned by events in French Cameroon. That would have made it difficult for the British administration to control. On the other hand it appeared simpler and cheaper to let them return to French Cameroon if they wanted to but then the administration would have been losing manpower and tax payers as well.

The third measure adopted to forestall the reunification movement in Southern Cameroon was an examination of the economic conditions of the territory. From 1916 to 1951, British Cameroons had suffered serious economic neglect. As a measure to forestall movement towards the union of both Cameroons, Gibbons proposed to develop trade and communications networks along the British

⁵⁰ The problem of integrating French Cameroonians into the institutions of Southern Cameroons was one of the major causes (besides the frontier problem) of the formation of the French Cameroons Welfare Union (FCWU) by Dibonge.

⁵¹ It is recalled here that the Cameroons Development Corporation (CDC) is a giant agro-industrial organisation that emerged from the sale of ex-enemy property, precisely the old German owned plantations in 1947.

frontier areas. In order to intensify and encourage production in British frontier zones, he awarded a grant to build a seasonal road to transport cocoa from the border town of Nyasoso to the coastal ports of Victoria and Tiko. He further proposed that cocoa processing plants be established in the Bakossi border area, a major cocoa producing zone. The area was also one which abounded in forest reserves, thus Gibbons employed Costain Ltd., to construct a road from Tombel to the Mounjo River from where logs were to be floated down to the coast for shipment. More importantly, the British government hastened the provision of communication between Southern Cameroons and Eastern Nigeria by hoping to link Kumba-Mamfe-Ikom-Calabar by road.⁵² Road projects and other policies adopted in the 1950s by the colonial administration in Southern Cameroons hoped to appease Cameroonians and to discourage them from the reunification movement.

When in 1952 D. A. Schute was made the colonial administrator in charge of British Cameroons, one of his objectives was to curtail the influence of the KUNC, a nationalist party that demanded immediate reunification. The KUNC alarmed colonial officials especially as one of its activists was Dibonge who had earlier been refused political participation in the politics of the territory by Gibbons on the grounds that he was a "stranger" or a settler.⁵³ Schute considered that the party aimed at disrupting the terms of the Trusteeship Arrangements and to work in opposition to the colonial administration. As a result, he suggested that the KUNC be denied the official recognition for which they applied. The colonial administrator tried to persuade members of the KUNC to seek a friendly relationship with the administration.

⁵² Chiabi, *"The making of modern Cameroon"*, p.117.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 121.

British attempts to downplay the reunification movements in Southern Cameroons have been noted by Njeuma, who says once the results of the 1959 elections were made known, the British authorities decided to act fast to kill reunification and refused to sanction the results.⁵⁴ Foncha, they claimed, had won the elections on parochial and vague promises to the electorate. Since the British authorities realised that they could not hold another general election immediately, they welcomed the UN decision to organise plebiscites in British Cameroons. The plebiscite options were limited to independence either by joining French Cameroon or by maintaining their connection with Nigeria. Throughout 1959 British officials increased pressure on Foncha to abandon reunification. They organised several meetings in Southern Cameroons, Nigeria, Britain and the UN for that purpose. The Nigerian government was urged to arrange frequent meetings between representatives of British Northern and Southern Cameroons. This hopefully would have made the people of British Cameroons (British Northern and Southern Cameroons) to develop a sense of unity and common feeling as British subjects as opposed to French Cameroonians.⁵⁵ Due to close association with personalities advocating for integration with Nigeria like Endeley and Mbile, British officials minimised Foncha and failed to take cognisance of the increasing popularity of the KNDP after the 1959 elections and Endeley's waning fortunes among the leading politicians. When the KNDP won and Foncha became the Premier, he felt confident to negotiate reunification and he did so without soliciting British advice.

⁵⁴ Njeuma, "Reunification and political opportunism", p.3

⁵⁵ Ngoh, *History of Cameroon*, p.219.

*BRITISH INSPIRED CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL CRISIS IN NIGERIA
ADDED MORE STEAM TO THE REUNIFICATION DRIVE IN SOUTHERN
CAMEROONS*

The British decision to administer Southern Cameroons as an integral part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria worked to the economic, educational, political and social disadvantage of the territory. There was the near absence of political advancement in the form of political institutions. The Nigerian-educated members of the elite of Southern Cameroons like Endeley, Kale, Mbile, Foncha and S. A. George strongly criticised the situation after 1945.⁵⁶ Prior to 1943, Southern Cameroonians were politically powerless regarding the participation in their country's affairs. In 1944, Southern Cameroons politics became bound up with those of Nigeria through the formation of the NCNC. Political developments that took place in Nigeria indirectly helped in fostering the spirit of national consciousness among Southern Cameroonians resulting in the quest for and the achievement of the reunification of the territory.

On January 1, 1947, Sir Arthur Richards, Governor of Nigeria, put into effect his new constitution called the Richards Constitution.⁵⁷ This new constitution aimed at furthering unity in Nigeria by including the North in the central Legislature and at the same time created Regional Councils for the North, East and West. These regions had Houses of Assembly, which performed advisory roles and

⁵⁶ The War Experience and their exposure to Nigerian activists and politicians like Azikiwe and Awolowo kindled nationalism and political consciousness in Southern Cameroonians in Nigeria. They were in Nigeria either as students, businessmen, petty traders, journalists or employees in many firms.

⁵⁷ We shall not give a detailed analysis of the constitution as it concerned Nigeria but shall examine how it affected the Southern Cameroons. Sir Arthur Richards had submitted the constitutional proposals to the Nigerian Legislative Council since March 1945. For a detailed analysis of constitutional developments in Southern Cameroons, Ngoh, *Constitutional developments in Southern Cameroons, 1946-1961*. Yaounde: CEPER, 1990.

were intended to serve as a link between the Native Authorities and the Legislative Council in Lagos.⁵⁸ Before the Richards Constitution, Chief Manga Williams of Victoria represented Southern Cameroons in the Legislative Council but with the new constitution, he lost his seat. Although the Richards Constitution allowed for two representatives from Southern Cameroons, Chief Manga Williams and Vincent Samdala, who adopted the title of Fon Galega II of Bali, in the Eastern Regional House of Assembly, this could not compensate for the loss of their seats in the Legislative Council at Lagos. The Legislative Council at Lagos had more political weighting than the Regional Houses.

The constitution made the Chief Commissioner of Eastern Nigeria the president of the Eastern House of Assembly in which Southern Cameroons had two representatives as against thirty from Eastern Nigeria.⁵⁹ Despite the poor representation of Southern Cameroons in the Nigerian Legislature, it would appear that the British did not consider disassociating the territory from Nigeria. On the contrary, until their final days in British Cameroons, the British preferred and argued for the maintenance of Southern Cameroons as part of Nigeria. It was therefore left to Cameroonians to protest both the indirect administration and the legislative misrepresentation. They were assisted in their protest by the NCNC. The NCNC which was the most vocal political party against the Richard's Constitution decided to take its criticism of the constitution to the people through tours in Nigeria, the Cameroons and London. It was for this reason that the NCNC delegation led by Nnamdi Azikiwe, visited Southern Cameroons in its campaign against the

⁵⁸ In 1942, the Legislative Council, Lagos, was the first Nigerian institution which provided for Southern Cameroonian participation in Nigerian political activities, through two representatives, Chief Manga Williams and Fon Galega II of Bali. This was followed by the Richards Constitution in 1947.

⁵⁹ Besides the president, there were thirteen other official members and fifteen to eighteen unofficial members from the provinces.

constitution, after a nation-wide tour in Nigeria in 1946.⁶⁰ Kale was the head of the Cameroonian members of the NCNC delegation, and he was determined to point out the problems facing Southern Cameroons especially that of no representation in the Nigerian Legislative Council.

After the tours, the NCNC delegation received £13,000 to finance its trip to London to present its case against the constitution to the Secretary of State for the colonies, the Right Honourable Arthur Creech Jones. In June 1947, a seven-man NCNC delegation left for London to discuss the revision of the constitution. The delegation was received by Creech Jones in London in August, 1947. All grievances and proposals were tabled to Creech Jones in the form of memoranda. Paul Kale presented Southern Cameroons grievances in what was called the *Kale Memorandum*.⁶¹ Among other points, the memorandum stressed the fact that the division of Kamerun between France and Britain had divided families and made them strangers to one another.

Unfortunately, Arthur Creech Jones's reaction to the delegation's demands was merely to urge them to return home and give the Richards Constitution a trial. On their return, a conference was held in Ibadan, from January 9 to 28, 1950, to review the constitution.⁶² Southern Cameroons sent a two-man delegation to Ibadan. The delegation pressed for a separate region for its territory, as Endeley, one of the two representatives, stressed that the territory was disadvantaged by being administered as part of Nigeria. The conference rejected the request for a separate region. It was however agreed that the territory should be represented by

⁶⁰ Ngoh, *Constitutional developments*, p.68.

⁶¹ Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, pp.126-7

⁶² Report by Her Majesty's Government to the General assembly of the UN on the administration of the Cameroons under UK Trusteeship for the year 1950. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950, p.38. SOAS Library.

thirteen elected members in the Nigerian Legislature - the House of Representatives in Lagos and the Eastern House of Assembly in Enugu. Meanwhile, as dissatisfaction over the Richards Constitution prevailed, the British Government sent someone to succeed Sir Arthur as the Governor of Nigeria.

Sir John Macpherson, Governor of Nigeria replaced the Richards Constitution by the Macpherson Constitution of 1951 which took effect as from January 1952. Under the new constitution, Southern Cameroons was divided into six political districts (Kumba, Mamfe, Victoria, Bamenda, Nkambe and Wum) and each district was allowed two seats except Bamenda which was accorded three seats because it was largest. In the Eastern House of Assembly Southern Cameroons was to have thirteen members in a House of approximately eighty members and one senior regional official. Six of the thirteen elected members were to be appointed to sit in the House of Representatives in Lagos. Elections, which were held to select the thirteen members, revealed the following results:

POLITICAL DISTRICTS	NAMES OF ELECTED MEMBERS
Bamenda	J.N. Foncha, S.T. Muna and V.T. Lainjo
Nkambe	J.T. Ndze and A.J. Ngala
Wum	J.C. Kangsen and S.C. Ndi
Mamfe	S. A. George and M.N. Forju
Kumba	N.N. Mbile and R.N. Charley
Victoria	E.M.L. Endeley and P. N. Motombi-Woleta ⁶³

Southern Cameroons was represented at Lagos by: Endeley, Muna, Ndze, Kangsen, George, and Mbile. Endeley was subsequently appointed Minister of Labour in the Council of Ministers in Lagos while Muna was appointed Minister of Works in the Eastern Regional Executive in Enugu.⁶⁴ The Macpherson Constitution not only increased the representation of Cameroonians in the Nigerian legislature at the

⁶³ P.M. Kale, *Political evolution in the Cameroons*. Buea: Government Printers, 1976, p.7. Report on the Cameroons under UK Trusteeship for the year 1954, p. 13, SOAS Library.

⁶⁴ Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985*, p. 190; and Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p.49

Regional and Federal levels, but it also introduced representation by educated people of the territory. Thirteen educated men were introduced as the two NA rulers, Manga Williams and Galega II were dropped. Chiabi says Endeley declared at the time that, they were ready to work hand in hand with Nigerians though they were aware that the fusion of Cameroon and Nigeria was a mere marriage of convenience.⁶⁵ He added that the new representatives had at least recognised the subaltern position of Cameroon vis-a-vis Nigeria. The feeling of being in the weaker position in their dealings with Nigeria made Southern Cameroonians to think that union with French Cameroon was a better political option for the development of their territory.

The Macpherson Constitution collapsed in 1953, when the Eastern Regional House of Assembly was thrown into crisis. The Eastern House was controlled by the NCNC. The Vice-President of the party, Eyo-Ita, was the leader of the government of the Eastern Region. According to Ngoh, the crisis resulted from the reluctance of Eyo-Ita to carry out radical constitutional changes and to reshuffle the cabinet of the Eastern Region at the request of Nnamdi Azikiwe, the National President of the NCNC.⁶⁶ The rift in party and the government leadership led to the collapse and resignation of the government, legislative paralysis and eventually the dissolution of the Eastern House on May 6th, 1953.⁶⁷

All the Eastern Regional Council ministers were dismissed.⁶⁸

Southern Cameroonian representatives had demanded that Muna be re-instated in the Executive Council but their demand was rejected. The dismissal of Muna, the only

⁶⁵ Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p.50.

⁶⁶ Ngoh, *History of Cameroon*, p. 197.

⁶⁷ *Report on the Cameroons under UK Trusteeship for the year 1955*, SOAS Library. Ngoh, *Constitutional developments*, p. 97.

⁶⁸ Welch, *Dream of unity*, pp. 184-8. Ngoh, *Constitutional developments*, p. 97. This dismissal took the form of resignation in protest against the January 28, 1953 ministerial shuffling. The shuffle caused a split in parliament and a prolonged administrative crisis in the Eastern Region. This stalemate led to the resignation of the ministers in accordance with the directives of the NCNC Committee.

Southern Cameroonian in the Eastern Executive Council, caused a great deal of frustration among Southern Cameroonians of the House. This split was a turning point in the political history of Southern Cameroons for it brought the question of the status of Cameroon to the forefront of politics. Southern Cameroonians had to review their status within a politically divided Nigerian institution. Endeley, the leader of the Southern Cameroons bloc in the Eastern House, came to the conclusion that separation was the only response to such political embarrassment. Nine out of the thirteen delegates from Southern Cameroons decided to steer clear of Nigerian politics and opt for a policy of benevolent neutrality. This meant that Southern Cameroons representatives notably Endeley, Ndze, Kangsen, Muna, Lainjo, Foncha, Forju, Ngala and George formed a bloc which opted out of Nigerian politics, by boycotting the session of the Eastern House of Assembly. Foncha explained that Southern Cameroons had adopted a neutral stance:

not because support of the NCNC had not been beneficial but because... the Southern Cameroons should begin to manage its own affairs without undue outside (Nigerian) influence. It (the neutrality) gives Cameroonians a wider field to exploit the opinions of the Northern Peoples' Congress and the Action Group as well as the NCNC for the benefit of the Cameroons national move for separation with all its parts appended to Nigeria.⁶⁹

Foncha was right in his judgement of the situation and he was supported by Azikiwe and Awolowo. Delegates who opposed neutrality were, Mbile, Ndi, Motomby-Woleta and Charley. They wanted to maintain Southern Cameroons' connection with Nigeria, and permanent ties with the NCNC. This polarisation of Southern Cameroons politicians into two blocs on the basis of involvement or neutrality made it clearer and

⁶⁹ Ndifonah mo Nyamndi, "Cameroon-Nigeria relations (1958-1978)". Postgraduate thesis, School of International Relations, Cameroon (IRIC), 1979, p.30. Like the NCNC, the NPC, and the AG were political parties in Nigeria.

clearer that at some point in the future Cameroonians would have to choose between integration with Nigeria and reunification with French Cameroon. Meanwhile when the members of the benevolent neutrality bloc returned home, they initiated a conference in Mamfe, Southern Cameroons.⁷⁰ At the conference, it was agreed that a petition be sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Oliver Lyttelton demanding that Southern Cameroons be accorded a separate and autonomous legislature. Lyttelton called for a conference in London to revise the Macpherson Constitution and replace it with his own, the Lyttelton Constitution. The representatives of Southern Cameroons were Endeley, George, Kangsen and Mbile. It turned out that at the Lancaster House Conference, London, Cameroonians were not unanimous in their call for a separate region. While Endeley, Kangsen and George pressed for Southern Cameroons to become a separate region with a legislature and executive, and with suitable representation in the Central Nigerian legislature and Council of Ministers, Mbile, who attended the conference as a member of the NCNC, argued that, before regional status was created for Southern Cameroons, it was necessary to set up a commission of inquiry which would see whether the majority favoured separate status. Mbile also requested that the commission should inquire into the financial viability of the region if it were to obtain separate status. This situation presented the Secretary of State with two options; the first option proposed by Endeley, the official representative of the people of Southern Cameroons, chosen at the Mamfe Conference; and the other option by Mbile, representative of a party that at the time had lost its popularity in Southern Cameroons due to the Eastern Regional crisis.⁷¹

⁷⁰ This conference will be discussed below.

⁷¹ Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, pp53-54.

The British colonial administration attempted to hinder all efforts made by Cameroonians to sever links with Nigeria. Lyttelton decided to adopt a compromise solution. He set up a commission of inquiry under the supervision of the Governor of Nigeria, who worked in consultation with Southern Cameroons' delegates.⁷² The commission was also to produce a plan of governmental and public service structure which would be suitable for Cameroon if a separate region were established. To appease Endeley, Lyttelton agreed to create a separate region for Southern Cameroons should the electorate in the territory approve of it in a general election that was planned for 1953. In other words, if Endeley won the 1953 elections, the victory would represent a mandate for Southern Cameroons separate status.

When the election results were announced, Endeley's KNC won an outstanding victory and on October 1, 1954, Southern Cameroons was granted a quasi-regional status and its own House of Assembly. By this new status, Southern Cameroons became what was called a "quasi-Federal" territory and enjoyed many of the prerogatives of regional status. Some of these prerogatives were:

- The Governor-General was part of the legislature in as much as Bills were sent to him for assent,
- The Governor-General could give directions to the Southern Cameroons government as to the discharge of its executive authority,
- The Public Service in Southern Cameroons was part of the Federal Public Service,
- The leader of the government was not called Premier but rather Leader of Government Business,
- Her Majesty's representative was not called a Lieutenant-Governor but a Commissioner and while Lieutenant-Governors could approve laws passed by

⁷² Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, pp53-54. Welch, *Dream of unity*, pp.186-7. The report on the economic viability of Southern Cameroons was executed by a fiscal commissioner, Sir Louis Chick, who concluded that Southern Cameroons could support the additional expenses if accorded separate status, Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 187.

their parliaments, the laws of the quasi-federal Territory had to be approved by the Governor-General, and finally,

- The unofficial members of the legislature were called "Executive Council Members" instead of Ministers.⁷³

Endeley was appointed Leader of Government Business. The Executive Council created comprised the Commissioner of the Cameroons as President; three ex-officio members of the House of Assembly who were the deputy Commissioners of the Cameroons; the legal Secretary and the Financial and Development Secretary. Finally, there were four unofficial members who were selected from the twenty-one unofficial members of the House of Assembly.

The Assembly provided forums for more Cameroonians to participate in the political affairs of their territory. The Southern Cameroons House of Assembly which met for the first time on October 26, 1954, was empowered to make laws for the territory, raise revenue and deliberate annual budgets.⁷⁴ The British Commissioner for the Cameroons, Brigadier E. J. Gibbons, was made the President of the House of Assembly. The President was succeeded two years later by J. O. Field. The Ex-Officio members were J. Brayne-Baker, Deputy Commissioner of the Cameroons (J. S. Dudding succeeded Brayne-Baker in 1956); C. A. Burton, Legal Secretary; J. Murray, Financial and Development Secretary.⁷⁵ The Unofficial members were E. M. L. Endeley, J. C. Kangsen, S. T. Muna and F. A. Sone.⁷⁶ The House also had six Native Authority members (Chief S. Asungna Foto, Chief Mformi,

⁷³ Neville Rubin, *Cameroon. An African Federation*. London: Pall Mall Press, 1971, p.72. Chem-Langhee, "The Kamerun Plebiscites 1959-1961: perceptions and strategies". Ph D dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1976, p.60. Ngoh, *Constitutional developments*, p.123. Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, p.137.

⁷⁴ This date was later commemorated as the Southern Cameroons National Day. Eyongetah and Brain, p.136. Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p.55.

⁷⁵ Report on the Cameroons under UK Trusteeship for the year 1955, p.28, SOAS Library.

⁷⁶ Mr. Sone was appointed temporary unofficial member of the Council on August 11th, 1955 due to

Chief Manga Williams, Mr. A. N. Jua, Mr. M. T. Monju and Mr. H. N. Mulango) and two special members (Mr. W. E. W. Carter - Manager of Barclays Bank -, and Mrs. D. E. Idowu). The preponderance of colonial administrators at the helm of the House of Assembly reduced the function of Cameroonians to what Chiabi calls "Rubber Stamping".⁷⁷ It is reported that even though he almost always did so, the President was not bound to take the advice of the Executive Council.⁷⁸ Although this new situation looked like a great improvement, it however meant that legislation in Southern Cameroons still required the consent of the Governor-General of Nigeria. There was no Public Service Commission in the territory, and Cameroonians who wanted to enter the civil service in Southern Cameroon had to be recruited by the Public Service in Lagos.⁷⁹ The impact of this administrative dependency on Nigeria added more fuel to the reunification drive and the desire to secede grew stronger and stronger.

The establishment of a semi-autonomous House of Assembly in Southern Cameroons in 1954 with no representation by the "settlers" from French Cameroon, reveals the efforts made by the British administration to keep Cameroonians of the two Trust territories apart. The exclusion of Dibonge, for example, from representation in the newly created House made him to relax his radical stance on the reunification issue and further engaged in the dissolution of the most zealous pro-reunificationist party, the KUNC in favour of the less zealous KNC. The extent of success or failure by the British authorities to downplay the reunification drive in Cameroon cannot easily be measured, but Cameroonians

incapacity through illness of S. A. George, but by September 1st, 1956, Sone was made a full member.

⁷⁷ Chiabi, *The making of modern Cameroon*, p.55. Ngoh, *Constitutional developments*, p.124-5.

⁷⁸ Report on the Cameroons under UK Trusteeship for the year 1955, p. 28.

⁷⁹ Report on the Cameroons under UK Trusteeship for the year 1953, p.25.

themselves made the work of the colonial government easier for they could not come to an agreement on the issue of reunification and the independence of their territory. As a result, the UN decided to organise plebiscites to resolve the political status of British Cameroons.

THE UNITED NATIONS PLEBISCITES

Before discussing the plebiscites in British Cameroons, it is important to provide an analysis of the All-party conference that was held in Mamfe from August 10 to 11, 1959, to prepare for the plebiscites.⁸⁰ The major parties present were the KNDP, KNC, KPP and the OK and the major preoccupations of the conference were the plebiscite options and the qualification for voting. Foncha and the KNDP who had been preaching reunification decided to change their position at the Mamfe conference. This was probably because of the fear that if reunification were put to the people, the UPC activities in French Cameroon would scare people from voting for integration. Foncha wanted the alternatives to be that Southern Cameroons should remain as an integral part of Nigeria or separate from it and work out its own independence after a further period of trusteeship. In the other camp, Endeley and his KNC/KPP alliance understood Foncha's fears. He thus argued that the plebiscite alternatives should be either continued association with Nigeria or reunification with French Cameroon.

Before the Mamfe conference was held, there had been two new parties formed in Southern Cameroons namely, the Kamerun United Party (KUP)

⁸⁰ Plebiscites were held in British Northern Cameroons, which was governed as part of Northern Nigeria, and it resulted in the choice of integration with Nigeria. The results were not surprising neither to the organisers nor to the colonial administration for British Northern Cameroonians had always expressed the wish to remain in Nigeria. For more on British Northern Cameroons, see, B. Chemlanhgee, "The Kamerun plebiscites 1959-1961: perceptions and strategies". Also see, by same author "The British and the Northern Kamerun problem 1919-1961", *Abbia*, 38-39-40 (May 1982): 322-324. Welch, *Dream of unity*, p.220.

formed by Kale; and the Cameroon Commoners' Congress (CCC) formed by Chief Stephen E. Nyenty of Mamfe. Although the CCC did not command strong support, its members stood for independence of Southern Cameroons as a separate entity, at least for an interim period before deciding on which other option to choose. This seemed to be the new trend of thought amongst the chiefs, for by September/October 1959 traditional rulers were getting frustrated with the integration idea and began calling for reunification. The chief of Bafut, Fon Achirimbi II, remarked that he supported secession without reunification. Some secession protagonists by the close of 1959, inwardly hoped that Southern Cameroons would secede from Nigeria to acquire the right to be independent as a separate entity.

Meanwhile, Kale had abandoned integration and the KNC/KPP and through the KUP formed in 1959, he advocated for secession and independence for Southern Cameroons. According to the KUP, the plebiscite looked like an imposition and gave the "impression of lack of faith and trust in the people of the Trust Territory of Southern Cameroons":

...must Cameroonians be compelled or forced after 30 years of German rule and 45 years of British tutelage to accept or should they be free to choose the form of government under which they would like to live? The plebiscite is compelling or forcing emancipated Cameroonians politically or otherwise to accept... living under the Government of Cameroon Republic or the Federation of Nigeria. For that reason we denounce the plebiscite in all its entirety.⁸¹

In a letter dated September 20, 1960, Kale warned the UN Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjöld that the KUP would boycott the elections or mutilate ballot papers if a third alternative, secession, was not included in the plebiscite options. Another newly-formed party that held this opinion at the Mamfe conference was the

⁸¹Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985*, p.218. It was becoming clearer and clearer that Cameroonians were pressing for a third option, that of secession.

Cameroons Indigenes Party (CIP) formed by Jesco Manga Williams. Chem-Langhee writes that the CIP pressed for secession.⁸² The threats and pressures of the secessionists, however, struck no responsive cord at the UN. There were other groups represented in the conference like the National Union of Kamerun Students (N.U.K.S) and the Kamerun Society (K.S). These were groups of educated young Cameroonians mainly based in Nigeria, who maintained that reunification was not necessarily an alternative. Since the terms of reunification were not yet spelt out, they wanted to remain in association with Nigeria.⁸³ Besides the above political parties, all the Native Authorities of the Territory were represented at the conference. Because of the deadlock concerning what questions to be presented at the plebiscite, the chairman of the Mamfe conference, Sir Sydney Phillipson, the Acting Commissioner of the Southern Cameroons, said that the UN would take up the issue again at a session to be attended by the major political parties. Concerning the qualification for voting, only persons born in Southern Cameroons were to be allowed to vote in the plebiscite. All ideas of Southern Cameroons becoming an independent state were squashed by Sir Sydney Phillipson's report to the government at the end of 1959. In his report, Sir Sydney Phillipson said that the Trust Territory at the time did not have enough financial strength to survive as a completely independent state and recommended a further period of trusteeship.⁸⁴ The Southern Cameroons Government in reply to Sir Sydney Phillipson's report said he based his assumption on the fact that the territory

⁸² Chemlanghee, "The road to the unitary state", p.10.

⁸³ Ibid. Rubin, *An African Federation*, pp.104-5.

⁸⁴ The Sydney Phillipson's Report on the financial, economic and administrative consequences of separation from Nigeria has been analysed by Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p. 106; Rubin, *Cameroon. An African Federation*, p.80-2; Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of Cameroon*, p.154, Ngoh, *Constitutional developments*, pp. 167-8. Other economic reports followed like the Kenneth E. Berril Report submitted on August 25th, 1960, and the KJELL Anderson Report of February 1961. For details on these reports, see Ngoh, *Constitutional developments*, pp. 167-9.

would remain separate for a longer time than contemplated. Foncha and the KNDP who wanted to use the report to advance the call for secession felt disappointed, as a result, its circulation was severely restricted.⁸⁵ The ostensible reason for its suppression was because Foncha felt that admitting the extent of the territory's dependence would undermine the expectations he had built up in his followers of a considerable autonomous state in a Cameroon Federation, or that it might scare off the leadership of French Cameroon.⁸⁶

In the face of the political differences that prevailed among leading Southern Cameroonian politicians during the Mamfe plebiscite conference, the major political leaders returned to the UN to defend their political positions. The UN ignored the resolution of the Mamfe conference, which had been for integration and secession and imposed on Cameroonian politicians the choice of either integration or reunification as a way of obtaining independence. Britain supported this stance for it allowed for the possibility of Southern Cameroons joining the Federation of Nigeria. However, the UN had decided that there should be a plebiscite in Southern Cameroons.

The plebiscite question was contained in the UN General Assembly Resolution 1352 XIV, of October, 1959, which read:

- 1) Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria? OR
- 2) Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroon?

⁸⁵ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, p.107.

⁸⁶ Despite the extensive efforts of Foncha and the KNDP at self-reassurance, it took little research to reveal the financial difficulties the territory had experienced throughout the post-war period. The leadership of French Cameroon was not blind to the situation.

The plebiscite date was fixed for February 11, 1961 and Hubert Childs was appointed the Plebiscite Administrator in Southern Cameroons.⁸⁷ Awasom says that once the UN made the alternatives known, there was great discontent in Southern Cameroons for there was growing opposition to reunification and integration in favour of secession and independence.⁸⁸ It is recalled here that just before the plebiscite, Southern Cameroons politicians showed that they wanted secession and independence for the trust territory and no longer reunification and integration.

Foncha was realising also that some of his party members with important positions were also being unfaithful in their commitment to the reunification struggle. As campaign strategy, both the party in government and the opposition offered bribes in cash and promises for political favours. This became more important when on March 11, 1960, a KNDP member of parliament from Wum West, J. M. Boja crossed the carpet to the KNC/KPP alliance. He did so because of pressure from his constituency who rejected the new KNDP platform.⁸⁹ With Boja's defection, the House of Assembly was evenly split: KNDP 13 seats and KNC/KPP 13 seats. Then the "Frambo Affair" turned up which showed the shaky and menacing climate that reigned among the KNDP partisans, causing Foncha to drift away from the reunification platform.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Report on the Cameroons under UK Trusteeship for the year 1959, pp. xii and 99, SOAS Library.

⁸⁸ Awasom, "The reunification question", p. 10. Foncha and the KNDP were making the reunification option to appear less important than integration just because they feared that if it came up as a strong option, it might loose due to the violence going on there. For more on the polarization see Rubin, *Cameroon. An African Federation*, pp. 104-6. Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, pp. 153-8.

⁸⁹ Ngoh, "Dr Foncha's political career 1953-1999: A historical analysis". Talk given at the University of Buea, Cameroon, on April 10th, 1999.

⁹⁰ Frambo was a KNDP parliamentarian in Mamfe whose constituency opposed the new option of Foncha and asked Frambo to resign and join the KNC/KPP alliance. Frambo sent out feelers suggesting that he would do so if he was given money to repay a loan he had taken to buy his Land Rover. He was given the money £2000 and he signed his resignation letter from the KNDP, but later on changed his mind. He reported to the police that he was forced to sign the letter. However, in court, he was asked to pay back the money.

Southern Cameroonian politicians in trying to reach an agreement ended up in only shifting their positions without greatly clarifying the issue. As a result, a London Conference was organised by the UN in November 1960. Fields attended the conference which was chaired by the British Secretary of State for Colonies, Ian Macleod, in the presence of Southern Cameroons politicians like Endeley, Foncha, Motomby-Woleta, Kangsen, S. E. Ncha, Fon Galega II of Bali and Chief Oben of Mamfe.⁹¹ The only noteworthy outcome of the conference was the confusion it created in the minds of Southern Cameroonians but that notwithstanding, the UN maintained the proposed date for the plebiscite to hold and the plebiscite options. The conduct of the plebiscite, according to the Plebiscite Administrator, was efficient and done in accordance with the legislation passed for the purpose.⁹² During registration, polling and counting periods, a large number of officials, mostly Southern Cameroonians had been recruited and given special training by the Plebiscite Supervisory Staff. The British Commissioner of Southern Cameroons also hailed the orderly conduct of the operation. Turnout was estimated at 90% and there was polling in all twenty-six plebiscite districts in the territory. The results of the plebiscite in British Southern Cameroons were as follows:

RESULTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS PLEBISCITE IN BRITISH CAMEROONS, FEBRUARY 1961

AREA	FOR CAMEROON REPUBLIC	FOR NIGERIA	TOTAL VOTES	MARGINS
SOUTHERN CAMEROONS	233,571	97,741	331,312	135,830
NORTHERN CAMEROONS	97,659	146,296	243,955	48,637 ⁹³

⁹¹ Ngoh, *Constitutional developments*, p.195.

⁹² Ndifontah, "Cameroon-Nigeria relations", p.67.

⁹³ Report of the United Nations Commissioner for the supervision of the plebiscites in the Southern and Northern parts of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration, April 3, 1961, p. 140, ICOMM. V. T. *LeVine*, *The Cameroon Federal Republic*. Ithaca, New York; Cornell University Press, 1972, p.16. Welch, *Dream of unity*, pp. 234-235. The section of Northern Cameroons that voted for union with Nigeria has until today remained a province of Northern Nigeria.

Following the detail results, nineteen of the plebiscite districts voted for reunification with French Cameroon and only seven for integration with Nigeria. Out of the six administrative divisions, two (Nkambe and Kumba) voted for Nigeria, and the remaining four (Victoria Mamfe, Bamenda and Wum) voted for French Cameroon. In the forest areas, notably in Mamfe which is closest to Nigeria, there were more votes for reunification with French Cameroon than for integration. Additionally in Victoria, which is the closest coastal town to Nigeria, the same results were registered. The outstanding victory for reunification and failure of those for integration in these places could be explained by the poor relationship between Cameroonians and the Nigerian immigrants, notably the Igbo and the Yoruba and the Cameroonians. After the Second World War, the influx of Igbo immigrants into Southern Cameroons increased. They came as plantation workers, traders and affluent dealers. They entered the civil service and together with the Yoruba they occupied important posts in the government departments as teachers, postmasters, clerks, nurses, drivers and mechanics. They owned many shops and market stalls, and peddled goods in country districts. Ngoh gives estimates on the percentage of these immigrants in Southern Cameroons as follows:

In 1958, Nigerians comprised roughly 30 per cent of the plantation workforce in the territory. In 1961, about 12 per cent of the civil servants in the territory and nearly 25 per cent of the civil service positions of the Federal Nigerian government in Southern Cameroons were held by Nigerians. In addition, 85 per cent of the commercial establishments in Southern Cameroons were controlled by Nigerians, particularly Ibos. The predominance of Nigerians, especially Ibos, in Southern Cameroons naturally created a strong dislike for the Ibos. Southern Cameroons was mockingly called a "colony within a colony" because of this strong presence of Nigerians.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Ngoh, *History of Cameroon*, pp. 188-9.

With the approach of reunification and independence, there was increasing local resentment against the Nigerian immigrants. According to Victor Amaazee, amongst the Nigerian immigrants, the Igbo seemed self-centred, obsessed with wealth and lacking in respect for traditional customs and authority.⁹⁵ David Gardinier says the Igbo antagonised the local population by either building or renting houses, which they later sublet and they settled on the land of the Bakweri and aggravated the Bakweri land problem.⁹⁶ There were accusations made that the Igbo “stole church bells in order to make counterfeit coins; they introduced corruption into the public offices; they assaulted women and made them sterile; they deliberately mistreated local patients in hospitals; they sold poisoned food; they desired to control and dominate Cameroonians at all cost”.⁹⁷ Although unproven, these and other accusations built up resentment of the Igbo by the local people.

The British administration warned the local Native Authorities against any kind of discriminatory practices, verbal or physical attacks at Nigerian immigrants especially the Igbo.⁹⁸ It was possible that some of the accusations were as

⁹⁵ Victor Bong Amaazee, “The ‘Igbo scare’ in the British Cameroons, c. 1945-61”, *Journal of African History*, 31(1990):282. There was an increasing number of Efik (Ibibio) immigrants as well.

⁹⁶ David Gardinier, “The British in the Cameroons, 1919-1939”. In P. Gifford and R. Louis, *Britain and Germany in Africa*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, p. 554. The Bakweri land problem came about as a result of the expropriation of native land by the German government and the concentration of the local people into reserves. Under the leadership of Endeley, a Bakweri Land Committee was formed in June 1946. The committee had as its objective to reclaim the expropriated Bakweri land. The settlement of Nigerians on their land was considered by the Bakweri as a threat to the security of their land.

⁹⁷ Amaazee, “The Igbo scare”, p. 287. The Bakweri Native Authority for example outlined rules to control relations between local Bakweri and Igbo and demanded their expulsion by the government.

⁹⁸ Ibid. Amaazee reports that according to one British official, the Igbo lacked respect for local institutions and through their proud speeches and ways they aroused a feeling of inferiority among Cameroonians. The administration also believed that anti-Igbo sentiment was organised and encouraged by two local politicians; chief Manga Williams and Dr. Endeley. The administration fought hard during the first half of 1948 to halt the discrimination but without marked success.

a result of a feeling of frustration by the local people who were jealous of Igbo influx and successes in all sectors of the society. Le Vine says the "aggressive and commercially adept Ibo" were resented by many indigenous Cameroonians because of their increasing domination of the commercial sector.⁹⁹ A measure of the importance of this fact is that the threat of Igbo domination was skilfully utilised by Premier Foncha and the KNDP as an argument for reunification with French Cameroon during the plebiscite. Foncha wittingly made the electorate to believe that when they voted for integration, they were going to meet mostly the Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria, thus they would be increasingly dominated. The KNDP made it clear that any persons or party that deviated from the anti-Igbo stance were bound to lose votes. However, the use of the Igbo-scare by the KNDP was not the sole factor that led to their victory in the plebiscite.

Victory for reunification in Bamenda for example was attributed to the vigorous campaign undertaken by the party there. The propaganda machinery was heavily financed by Francophone Bamileke and Douala (border) groups also interested in reunification. Between 1959 and 1960, Soppo Priso donated the money with which Foncha bought presses for the first printed newspaper in the Southern Cameroons, *The Kamerun Times*, the KNDP organ.¹⁰⁰ Foncha also met the more progressive Duala notables who patronised the reunification efforts. One of the notables, Douala Yondo, who spoke English and French, organised fundraising campaigns during the plebiscite period for the KNDP. Yondo also served as Foncha's principal contact with immigrant or itinerant British Cameroonians, as well as Eastern sympathisers.

⁹⁹ LeVine, *The Cameroon Federal Republic*, pp.46-7.

¹⁰⁰ Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation*, pp. 132-3. Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 230. The paper later became *The Cameroons Times*.

KNDP campaigns registered heavy defeat in two significant areas; in Nkambe and in Kumba. Nkambe was a plebiscite district contiguous to Nigeria and a good percentage of the people argued that they wanted to be with their brothers in Northern Cameroons.¹⁰¹ Further to the south west, along the border, parts of the ethnic groups in the Mamfe plebiscite district, notably the Ejagham (Ekoi or Ekwe), had been divided by the Anglo-French boundary. A part of the group was cut off and placed under British administration. When they were offered the opportunity through the plebiscite to choose between two options, they voted for union with Nigeria so that they could remain with their kin and kith on the Nigerian side of the boundary. In Kumba, massive victory for the integration option was because of the influence of politicians like Mbile, Vice-President of the Cameroon People's National Convention (CPNC).¹⁰²

The victory for reunification has sometimes been described as a mixed victory, a victory achieved through unpopular political intrigues.¹⁰³ The KNDP in their campaign wrongly rephrased the two alternatives deliberately to mean whether the people liked Endeley, (campaigning for integration) the Bakweri man or Foncha, (campaigning for reunification) the Bamenda man. In certain areas, voters were asked whether they wished to stay in the Cameroons or to sell their country to the Igbo who could dethrone their chiefs and carry away all their land and property. In the grasslands, the KNDP used the alternatives of the Bakweri man as against the Bamenda man to win votes, since Foncha was from the grasslands. In the coastal

¹⁰¹ A great section of this border plebiscite district had earlier voted for integration with Nigeria.

¹⁰² Following their defeat in the 1959 elections, and in respect of their common ideology about integration of the territory in Nigeria, the KNC and the KPP held a joint convention of the two parties at Mamfe on July 1st, 1960, where they formed a merger – the CPNC – and drafted the constitution of the new party. Endeley was President, while Mbile was Vice-President.

¹⁰³ Edwin Ardener, "Crisis of confidence in the Cameroons", *West Africa*, August 12th, 1961, pp.878-9. Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 231.

forest region, he used the Igbo scare to reach his objective.¹⁰⁴ The KNDP also skilfully manipulated the electorate into believing that reunification meant "home rule". It would seem that some people voted without knowing the implications. Others voted thinking reunification meant membership in the Commonwealth while some thought if after ten years, the union with French Cameroon proved unworkable, they could simply walk out of it.¹⁰⁵ Victory for the KNDP meant victory for reunification with French Cameroon and a mandatory dismantling of the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon. How were the plebiscite results received in both territories?

The effects of the plebiscite results

The results of the plebiscite in Southern Cameroons were received with joy in French Cameroon, and Foncha became the hero of the hour.¹⁰⁶ In contrast, French Cameroon took the results in the Northern Cameroons with ill grace. It claimed at the UN that Great Britain and Nigeria had exerted undue pressure on the Northern electorate to the extent, for example, of bringing in 700 armed Nigerian policemen to coerce the voters into voting for Nigeria.¹⁰⁷ The Ahidjo government pursued its complaint to the UN. On April 21st, 1961, the General Assembly rejected the Cameroonian allegations and voted to ratify the Northern plebiscites by calling for the end of Trusteeship and the inclusion of Northern Cameroons territory into

¹⁰⁴ Rubin, *Cameroon. An African Federation*, pp. 105-109.

¹⁰⁵ Ngoh, "Dr. Foncha's political career", Buea, April 10th, 1999.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 27. Also see Rubin, *Cameroon. An African Federation*, p. 109. The importance of the complaint according to LeVine, however, was more over losing Northern Cameroons than over the conduct of the plebiscite. This was because French Cameroon hoped to use Northern Cameroons as a strong card in the bargaining with Foncha over the status of Southern Cameroons in the new Federation. Without the North, the Ahidjo Government realised that Foncha's hand would be strengthened and that his demands for maximum local autonomy for his part of the Federation would be difficult to deny, LeVine, *The Cameroon Federal Republic*, p. 28.

Northern Nigeria.¹⁰⁸ Unsatisfied by the decision of the UN, the Ahidjo government took its case to the International Court of Justice, which rendered its verdict two years later, December 2nd, 1963, contending that the General Assembly had already settled the issue.¹⁰⁹

In Nigeria, the results were hotly debated in the House of Representatives in Lagos. During the debate, Chief Denis Osadebey of NCNC proposed that all Nigerian civil servants and traders in the Southern Cameroons should be recalled home and that all Cameroonian civil servants in Nigeria should be expelled.¹¹⁰ To some other Nigerians like Chief Kola Balogun on the Government benches, Nigeria had to begin an all-out battle to retain Southern Cameroons so as to “preserve the territorial integrity of Nigeria” but his suggestion was opposed by the Foreign Minister, Jaja Wachuku who instead called on Britain to refund all the money that Nigeria had spent on the territory.¹¹¹ The Nigerian press (particularly the *West African Pilot*, associated with Azikiwe and the Igbos) was hostile to the results and called on the Federal Government to “do her duty to the people of Nigeria and the innocent masses of the Southern Cameroons” and take back their lost brothers and sisters. Despite all of these complaints from Nigerians, the plebiscite results were maintained.

In Southern Cameroons, after the plebiscite results were made public, the number of Nigerian workers in the CDC dropped considerably (in 1958, Nigerian workers in the corporation constituted 32% but this proportion fell to 7% in 1963). A similar situation occurred in another large-scale oil-producing unit,

¹⁰⁸ Welch, *Dream of unity*, pp.242-3. LeVine, *The Cameroon Federal Republic*, p.28.

¹⁰⁹ Rubin, *Cameroon. An African Federation*, p.109. Welch, *Dream of unity*, pp.242-3.

¹¹⁰ Ndifontah, “Cameroon-Nigeria relations”, p. 68.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

PAMOL, where many Nigerian workers were repatriated. This created job opportunities for Cameroonians who had previously not been able to get employment.

In the administration, Federal services in the territory continued to be carried out by the Nigerian Government until alternative plans were made whereby those services became the direct responsibility of the West Cameroon Government. A West Cameroon Public Service Commission was established which speeded the recruitment of West Cameroonians into civil service jobs. Additionally, a judge of the West Cameroon High Court, resident in the territory was nominated. In the social domain, the plebiscite unleashed a series of population movements across the frontiers. With the ratification of the results of the plebiscite, it was incumbent for the border people to choose and stick to one nationality, either Nigerian or Cameroonian. Along the southern portion of the Anglo-French boundary, there was jubilation among border groups. The reunification of the Balong for example brought great relief among the Balong people of Mukonje who could once again visit and interact with their brothers of Mundek without having to procure an official pass.¹¹²

Independence (French Cameroon-January 1, 1960; Nigeria-October 1, 1960) and the plebiscite (February 11, 1961) were important steps in a long process of decolonisation that had begun with the rise of nationalism in Southern Cameroons decades before. Many reasons had been advanced to justify separation: poor administration and neglect of the territory by Britain, the fear of domination by Nigerians, and the desire to revive the old Kamerun. For Southern Cameroons, reunification was to be achieved with the date of the termination of trusteeship. On April 24, 1961, the General Assembly approved October 1, as the date for the

¹¹² From an interview with Chief Moukouelle, the Balong chief of Mombo, on April 15, 1999 at Mombo, reunification led to increased inter-village and clan relationships. He said that more frequently than before, young people organised inter-village competitions across the boundary.

termination of trusteeship for Southern Cameroons through federation with the Republic of Cameroon or French Cameroon. On Reunification Day, Ahidjo formally welcomed Southern Cameroonians in Yaounde in a emotional speech that began thus: "After over forty years of separation, we form again today one family, one nation, one state".¹¹³

With independence and reunification, the immediate goals for both territories were reached but there were still problems to be solved. One of the major problems was the integration of the two territories into one coherent political and administrative entity in which there would be equal opportunities for all, a Cameroon in which former British and French subjects would evolve as the same people, Cameroonians. For such integration to be feasible, it was necessary for the people especially border people to "dismantle" the boundary in their minds. It would appear that even reunification could not enable the people to think beyond the boundary. With reunification, the status of the boundary changed from an international to an intra-state boundary, yet border control was not relaxed. Federal guards and Gendarmes continued to police the boundary checking the movements of persons and goods cross the boundary. Specific areas of control have remained; the Tiko/Douala, Mbanga, Loum/Tombel, Manjo, Nkongsamba and Melong areas. Meanwhile, outside the national territory, African politicians had been holding a series of conferences on issues concerning independence and unity in Africa. One of the discussions at these conferences was the question of the Anglo-French boundary and Cameroon reunification.

¹¹³ Ndifontah, "Cameroon-Nigeria relations", p. 68.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

The First World War brought considerable suffering to colonized peoples, caused enormous social and economic dislocation and inspired increased resistance to imperial institutions. Germany lost its African possessions to the Allies. Britain and France survived the war as the world's two largest overseas colonial powers. According to Michael Callahan, during the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the atmosphere was dominated by competing pressures of revenge, anxiety, optimism, and intense skepticism.¹ There was no question of restituting the German lost colonies as the colonies were placed under the supervision of a newly created League of Nations. The lost colonies were given to Britain and France as Mandates within a framework of international accountability rather than as colonies under national sovereignty.

Cameroon was given to Britain and France as a class "B" mandate. It was on these terms that both powers obtained confirmation of their partition of the Cameroons in 1922. Whereas the British merged the administration of their sectors with that of Nigeria, the French considered their own sector for administrative purposes as an Oversea Department of *France Outre-mer*. Administratively, France did not bring Cameroon into French Equatorial Africa (AEF). Once in place, the Mandate system represented the changing character of postwar European imperialism in Africa.² Despite flaws, Mandates contributed to an evolution in the culture of

¹ Callahan, M. *Mandates and empire. The League of Nations and Africa, 1914-1931*. Brighton & Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 1999, p.2.

² *Ibid.*, p.188. The author says Britain and France shared some common responses to the mandates system but they reacted differently. While British colonial officials considered mandates as expressions

colonialism that affected not only the vast diplomatic and colonial bureaucracies of both Britain and France, but Europeans and Africans within all the mandated territories as well. The Mandate system cemented the joint occupation of the territory and its partition.

Recent treatments on boundaries argue that colonial boundaries were not entirely arbitrarily drawn. Nugent says that African colonial boundaries are not entirely artificial because they did reflect pre-existing ethnic and political divisions.³ Anene holds the view that while some boundaries were artificial or drawn using crude astronomical and geometrical lines, there were instances where the colonial boundary makers attempted to follow precolonial divisions.⁴ Nugent and Asiwaju push this idea further by saying that even where the boundary was artificially drawn, vested interests were forged by the border people who saw the boundary as a conduit or a zone of opportunities.⁵ In his case study on Hausaland, William Miles observes that contrary to expectations, the Anglo-French demarcation of Hausalands did take local political divisions into account but because African and European practices of geopolitical division were different, the colonial boundaries assumed new functions and rectified previously dynamic spatial relations.⁶

In Cameroon, the pre-colonial concept of boundary was not divisive, it was fluid and permeable. This concept is different from the Western concept of a geometric boundary, which separates the intervening lands and people into distinct

of the very best intentions of British imperialism in Africa, their French counterparts considered mandates as danger to the intentions of French imperialism in Africa.

³ Nugent, P. *Smugglers, secessionists and loyal citizens*, . 63, this view is also shared by D. J. Thom. *The Nigeria-Niger boundary, 1890-1906. A study of ethnic frontiers and a colonial boundary*, Athens: Ohio University Centre for International Studies, 1975.

⁴ Anene, *The international boundaries of Nigeria*, passim.

⁵ Nugent and Asiwaju, *African boundaries*, pp.60-61.

⁶ William Miles, *Hausaland divided: colonialism and independence in Nigeria and Niger*, Ithaca; London; Cornell University Press, 1994.

entities under different political sovereignties. This alien concept of a boundary was matched with the expectation of "political loyalty" or national consciousness.

The provisional partition of Kamerun paid scant attention to the interests and rights of border people. This became all the more glaring when the "Picot line" drawn as the provisional boundary cut across ethnic groups, farmlands, plantations, fishing and hunting grounds of border peoples among whom were the Bakweri, Duala, Balong, Balondo, Bakossi, Mongo and the Mbo. These groups are found around the coast, in the Mounjo Valley and on the slopes of Mounts Kupe, Fako, Nlonako and Manenguba. These groups had shared a common culture and similar historical experiences. They shared traditions of origin, possessed the same socio-political institutions, adhered to the same religious beliefs and had been exposed to a remarkably similar degree of contact with the outside world. The Anglo-French partition of this group was distressful as each fraction was placed in an area of jurisdiction of two distinct and new socio-economic and political systems far removed from the original cultural whole. Asiwaju, in citing the Somalian example, confirms that partitioned groups were without exception distressed by their division into separate political entities.⁷

After the partition, the British and the French installed their administrations on their respective spheres of the territory. Differences in European colonial administrative heritage tended to pull the border peoples apart. Asiwaju and Miles have considered the divergence of administrative practices, especially of chieftaincy, on either side of the boundary line.⁸ Unlike the British, who consciously attempted to adapt their method of

⁷ Asiwaju, *Partitioned Africans*, pp. 3-4. Miles, *Hausaland divided*, p.62, he says here that most partitioned groups especially the Hausas have accepted the reality of political separation and they may not wish to have it otherwise.

⁸ A. I. Asiwaju, *West African transformations. Comparative impacts of French and British colonialism*. Nigeria: Malthouse Press Limited, 2001, passim.. Miles, *Hausaland divided*, chapter 5.

governance to indigenous rule and custom, the French made no distinctions among the areas under their sovereignty so far as colonising policy was concerned. The British with their preoccupation with chiefly legitimacy, the French displayed relatively little compunction in dismissing chiefs whom they disliked.

As each colonial administration aimed at safeguarding her human and natural resources on border zones, the administrative policies of border areas were hardened. This explains the imposition of the use of passports and the existence of British and French custom posts on their respective sides of the boundary. The situation frustrated the traditional rights of border peoples and provided the focal issue that fuelled the pleas for the future reunion of the British and French spheres of Cameroon.

It was difficult for both governments to maintain an admittedly far from effective control along the entire boundary. Various alternative schemes for increasing the strength and efficiency of the existing customs preventive service were considered, but the result was a replacement of the customs men by the police and an increase in the number of control posts. The *Laissez-Passer* was initially instituted by the French government ostensibly for health reasons but was later adopted by the British government. The *Laissez-Passer* was made compulsory for journeys both on land and on sea.

The demand for labour in the old German plantations caused many people to move across the boundary from the French to the British zone. This population fluidity across the boundary was a constant worry to the French administration which kept losing manpower and tax payers. In his case study of the Ivory Coast and Upper Volta (present Burkina Faso), Asiwaju highlights that the stresses and strains in the French colonial administration were fundamental motives for a large proportion of people to move

across the boundary.⁹ In Cameroon, French subjects running away from the repressive French colonial regime, crossed over to the British side where working and living conditions were better.

Anglo-French collaboration over Cameroon took off from the outbreak of hostilities, through the war and well after. They jointly attacked and ousted the Germans from the territory, which they decided to partition after long negotiations. Anglo-French co-operation was more noticeable in the domain of issues on boundary demarcation and administration. British and French local administrators met regularly and drew up protocols following preliminary and preparatory investigations to be followed up later by specialists of both governments. In the light of continuous collaboration, British and French administrators on both sides of the boundary exchanged official visits. In London and in Paris, discussions were undertaken between representatives of both governments for the development of co-operation between the two countries in their colonies.

Both administrations increasingly realised that the border zone was a difficult zone to administer. Some of the reasons for this difficulty were the fact that it was a zone of immigration, a zone with a very recent population, and a zone of violence. The difficulties and turbulence (UPC violence) of the border zone under study was more of a problem to the French than the British administration. However because of mutual understanding and assistance, both administrations worked together to ensure a proper control of the boundary and give meaningful solutions to the border problems. What was Africans' response to the imposition of the boundary?

Their reactions varied, from organised and group reactions to unorganised and spontaneous actions. After 1945, people put their complaints to the UN visiting

⁹ Asiawaju, *West African transformations*, pp. 82-90.

missions orally and also through the writing of petitions. Political parties were formed which included in their programme the ambition to dismantle the boundary and achieve independence and unification for Cameroon. There were also cases of open rejection of the boundary as some border groups destroyed boundary landmarks. Others ignored the boundary by maintaining close socio-cultural relations across the boundary criss-crossing without official passes.

An important push factor for Southern Cameroonians to reject the boundary and call for reunification was the British neglect of the territory. We have seen that Southern Cameroons was administered as an integral part of the Eastern region of Nigeria and this worked to the economic, educational, political and social disadvantage of Southern Cameroonians. Some inhabitants wanted the territory to be a separate political entity in its own right, others wanted it to be a separate region within Nigeria while still others wanted it to be reunited with French Cameroon. Ngoh says that the British neglect of the territory was a contributory factor to the desire of the Southern Cameroonians to seek unity with their French administered counterparts.¹⁰

The appeal for reunification was also driven home by what the reunificationists called the *Kamerun Idea*. This idea carried with it the notion of recreating the territory as a nation with its pre 1916 boundaries. The idea was given substance by the fact that the Anglo-French partition of the territory in 1916 led to the dismemberment of ethnic groups, villages, farmlands and even families.¹¹ The need to reunite these groups and re-create the German Cameroon, gave birth to the *Kamerun Idea*. The validity of this idea has been disagreed by some scholars who dismiss it as a

¹⁰ Ngoh, V. J, *Southern Cameroons, 1922-1961: a constitutional history*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000, p. 22.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 37.

myth for according to them, German rule in Cameroon did not promote nationalism. In this study, I have viewed the German rule as a preparatory phase that formed the basis on which Cameroonians shared some kind of political oneness as subjects under the same colonial administration. When they later compared German Cameroon and the Mandates under British and French rule, some people preferred to be put back to the pre-1916 colonial administration. Ngoh talks of three important German legacies (memory, idea and hope) which were a catalyst for reunification and the subsequent dismantling of the boundary.¹²

I have said that even though victims of division, border groups were not passive victims for they often tried to make the best of a difficult situation. While protesting against the boundary on the one hand, border groups made the best of their border position by transforming it into an opportunity zone, a zone of "conduit" or transition. This situation was favoured by the fact that those managing the boundary were working in very difficult terrain-thick forests, hilly and sometimes rugged landscapes with dangerous reptiles and insects; these prevented efficiency and increased the opportunity for the border groups.

Border people provided a strong struggle for the reunification of British and French Cameroons in the hope to reunite with their families from across the boundary. Meanwhile, with post World War Two political developments the territory was on its way to independence. Meanwhile, more complaints by the border people for reunification and efforts by both administrations to adjust the boundary ended up in the long run, with the plebiscite in 1961 which saw the reunification of the two Trust Territories and the dismantling of the physical boundary between both spheres. After

¹² Ngoh, V. J, *Southern Cameroons, 1922-1961*. p. 37.

reunification, the boundary ceased to be an international boundary, it became a state boundary, yet it remained a highly policed state in the territory.

This research has revealed that colonial boundaries in Cameroon like elsewhere in Africa are arbitrary and resulted from conflicting interests of European powers with no consideration for the colonised. British and French administration of borderland people in Cameroon was largely in the interest of the administration. At the stage of surveying and demarcation, the borderland peoples were indifferent for the most part while some were co-operative and were recruited as guides and labourers to set up a boundary that they later rejected vehemently.

The divisive effects of this boundary on border groups have been the same throughout the entire length of the boundary; variations did occur however along areas where the border had strategic or economic importance as around the coast and in the Mounjo region. Such were the areas that suffered very strict border control and policing and as a result the divided peoples in those areas were more traumatised than others in the less strategic zones. The Anglo-French inter-Camerouns boundary was therefore a barrier to increased co-operation among the border peoples.

Meanwhile, the Anglo-French boundary problem and the reunification of the Cameroons soon became issues of discussion at Pan-African conferences. Nkrumah's belief in political union was based on his view on borders. He argued that within a politically united Africa, boundaries could be redrawn to take better account of social and economic factors. West Africans began planning the first break-through conference for addressing issues concerning them and the first conference was the National Congress of British West Africa, (NCBWA). This was an important stage in the development of modern African nationalism. Dissatisfaction with the final partitions of Togo and Kamerun was an important element in the programme of the

NCBWA. The Kamerun question was becoming of Pan-African importance as the NCBWA condemned specifically the partitioning of Togoland between the English and the French Governments and the handing over of the Cameroons to the French Government without consulting or regarding the wishes of the people in the matter.¹³ In addition to its claim that the local population should have a voice in the shaping of borders, the Congress also resolved that boundaries ought to conform to ethnic divisions. The conference laid stress on the principle that peoples and territories should not be disposed of arbitrarily and that ethnic groups ought not to be divided by international boundaries.

Africans allied with Asian peoples in a series of conferences that took place across Africa and Asia from 1957 to 1960.¹⁴ Some of the resolutions of the conferences called on all the Asian and African countries to help the people of the Cameroons in their struggle for reunification and independence. There was an explicit call for the reunification of the Cameroons. These conferences created a perfect opportunity for exiled politicians from both Cameroons to express the views of their parties on reunification and French colonialism. Odette Guitard says that the most passionate discussions were from the FLN (Algeria) and the UPC (French Cameroon) delegates who talked at length about French colonialism.¹⁵ Moumie called himself the head of state of French Cameroon in exile and gave a press conference in which he proclaimed himself the *Porte parole* or mouthpiece of all Cameroonians. As time progressed evolving political events in Africa redefined a new context of unity. We

¹³ *West Africa* (May 20th, 1961): 555. Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 13.

¹⁴ George McTurnan Kahin, *The Asian-African conference. Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1956, for more on these conferences, also read Odette Guitard, *Bandoung et le réveil des peuples colonisés*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969, pp64-78 and Touval, *The boundary politics*, p.52.

¹⁵ Guitard, *Bandoung et le réveil des peuples colonisés*, Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 1969, pp.64-78.

have seen that by January 1, 1960, French Cameroon was independent while Southern Cameroons was preparing for the forthcoming UN plebiscite. In Southern Cameroons, even the most militant political party for reunification, the KNDP, had dropped the reunification option in its plebiscite campaign in favour of secession and independence. In French Cameroon, the UPC party that clamoured for reunification had been exiled from all parts of the territory.

The Cameroons question was no longer a major issue of discussion at later conferences for the very notion of unity was beginning to be disrupted as each African state pressed for territorial claims. There was the need to revise African boundaries. How such revisions could be carried out had yet to be worked out; but the delay in finding an appropriate and workable solution resulted in many border disputes and warfare in Africa.¹⁶ Even where the colonial boundary has been dismantled as in the case of the Anglo-French boundary and other boundaries in East Africa, the ghost of the boundary has remained.

Pan-African meetings progressively sidestepped the problem of redrawing frontiers. As more non-self-governing territories were granted independence, the problem of boundaries took on different dimensions from those of the colonial period. From the revival of Pan-Africanism to the post second World War period, and the rise of African nationalism, issues on pan-Africanism began fading away into different forms. While some forms called into question the legitimacy of any colonial border, for the Cameroonians, the issue was rather a choice between the 1914 (Kamerun) or the 1919 (British and French Cameroons) boundaries. Many Cameroonians come to envisage pre 1914 Kamerun as a valid political space, rather than an ephemeral

¹⁶ A. J. Day, *Border and territorial disputes*. Harlow: Longman, 1987 and C. G. Widstrand. *African boundary problems*. Uppsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1969.

colonial imposition which had been unjustly divided in 1919 and which had as such to be restored.

Since independence, leaders of most African states have realised that a large-scale redrawing of frontiers (through possibly justified on economic, ethnic, geographic, or other grounds) could open a Pandora's box of difficulties.¹⁷ Accordingly, African heads of states have tended to accept the status quo, which, if not perfect, is less contentious than most adjustments.

¹⁷ Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 21.

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APA Affaires Politiques et Administratives (1945-47)
Rapports de Tournées, Rapports Annuels, Délimitation Frontière Franco-Britannique de 1916 à 1939.
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VT Mouvements à travers la frontière et les relations Franco-Britanniques

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II. LIST OF INFORMANTS

Anoke Gaston

(1937)¹ Chief of Mouyouka village.

Interviewed on 13 July 1999 at Mouyouka.

Akangkwenne

(1938) Regent chief of kupe 3. Interviewed, 13 and 17 May 1999 at Kupe 3 village.

Ako Egbe Ben

(1960) Lieutenant and Chief of Marine Marchand, Tiko. Dates Interviewed, 29, 30 and 31 May 1999 at Tiko.

Akoue Bonaventure

(1950) Chief of Mouamenam village. Interviewed, from 2-5 August 1999 at Likomba- Tiko.

Akwe Nzume Blasius

(1921) Has written unpublished manuscripts on Bakossi history.

One of our major informants and guide.

Interviewed frequently during my research in Cameroon at Likomba-Tiko. Died 28 August 2003.

Ebirabo

(1940) Of Nigerian Nationality (Ogoni) and chief of Mokuta.

Interviewed with a group of elders on, 26-30 April 1999 at Mokuta.

Ekolle Michael

(1935) Quarter Head of the English speaking section of the Mouangwekan village. Interviewed on, 14 and 15 April 1999 at Mouangwekan.

Elume Ignatius

(1956) Choir master of the defunct English choir.

Interviewed on, 14 April 1999 at Mouangwekan.

Enoge Frederick

Chief of Abang village. Interviewed on 17 May 1999 at Abang.

¹ The bracketed dates indicate the dates of birth of the various informants.

Enongene Germain

(c1916) One of the early pupils who attended the French vernacular school.

Has a retentive memory. Interviewed at the border village of Mouamenam on 30 April 1999. Died 25 June 2001.

Fanso V. G.

(1946) Professor of History and has published extensively on

border studies. Interviewed in Yaounde, Cameroon on 8 July 1999.

Mbape Pandong

(1939) Chief of Mbouroukou village. Interviewed on 19 May 1999 at Mbouroukou

Mbome Daniel

(1935) Chief of the French section of Mouangwekan village. Interviewed on 14 and 15 April 1999 at Mouangwekan village.

Mayong Emmanuel

(1934) A stranger from Ndop village (North West Province) who has lived in Mombo since 1959. Interviewed on 18 April 1999 at Mombo very close to the Waterfall village.

Moukete Moukete Gustav

(1940) Notable of Mouyouka village. Interviewed on 19 May 1999.

Moukwelle Moukwelle Benjamin

(1943) Chief and Mayor of Mombo village.

Interviewed on 20 April and 12 July 1999 at Mombo.

Mukete Abel

(1945) Notable and counsellor of Mombo. Interviewed on 20 April 1999 at Mombo.

Ndode Ngwese John

(1928) Retired businessman. Interviewed on 14 and 15 May 1999 at Bengem. Died 12 September 2002.

Ngama Francis

(1940) Ebonji village. Interviewed on, 18 May 1999 at Ebonji.

Ngape Nicholas
(1930) Chief of the English speaking section of
Mwangwekan village. Interviewed on 14 May 1999 at Mwangwekan.

Njeuma Martin
(1940) Professor of History, scholar of border studies. Interviewed in Cameroon,
Buea, on 2 August 1999.

Njoume Andre
(1919) Chief of Moumekeng village. Interviewed on 17 May 1999. Died in 2001.

Nsong Regina
(1942) Midwife with a long time working experience at border villages.
Was of immense assistance to me as a guide and informant throughout my research in
Cameroon. Interviewed on several occasions from June to August, 1999.

Ntoko Fritz Mukete
(1922) Chief of Ndom Bakossi village. Interviewed on 16 May 1999
at Ndom.

Pandong Nzumbe Clement
(1938) Former transborder courier officer. Interviewed 2-4 June
1999 at Likomba. Died in 2002.

Peter Yearwood
(c1938) Has written on the Anglo-French boundary in Cameroon. Supplied data on
the post-war Anglo-French negotiations. Interviewed in London (10 April 1999) and
in Reading (15 and 16 October 2000).

I also collected valuable data from some of my major guides namely:

John Epoke, Manfred Meloko of Bombe Bakundu village

Ekwo Oscar (Prince) of Mundame Beach

Muna Eka, Mbiang Sop Christopher of Mundek Beach

Ekane Gordon, Ekinde Shadrack, Epie Becklings of Tombel Town

Ewane Mandenge, Nseke Eko of Moungo and Mudeka villages

Chibuzor (Nigerian Fisherman) of Misselele, Ngombe and Mokuta Creeks

Acha Ndeh Foncha of Mabetta and Bimbina fishing towns.

III. THESES, DISSERTATIONS AND SEMINAR PAPERS

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- Gwanfobe, M. "An economic history of the British Cameroons, 1916-1960: A study in the economic evolution of the British Cameroons". Postgraduate thesis (D.E.S), University of Yaounde, 1975.
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- Kouam, L. "La dynamique historique des frontières du Cameroun: 1884-1961". Postgraduate diploma (Maîtrise) thesis, University of Yaounde, 1979

- Kouosseu, J. "Populations autochtones-populations allogènes et administration coloniale dans le Mounjo sous administration française 1916-1960". Postgraduate diploma (Maîtrise) thesis, University of Yaounde, 1988/1989.
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- Mbella, M. H. "The evolution of the Residency in the Cameroons Province 1916-1949". Postgraduate (Maîtrise) thesis, University of Yaounde, 1981.
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(c) *OTHER UNPUBLISHED WORKS*¹

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Yearwood, P. "Maps lines and the making of modern Africa; the Northern Nigeria-Cameroons boundary 1885-1919". Unpublished article, 55pp.

¹ These unpublished works have provided important data for this research but unfortunately at the time of my research, they were not in any publicly accessible holding that is why they have been placed in a separate class. They were in the keeping of the authors.

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ANNEX

DELIMITATION DES ZONES FRANCAISE ET ANGLAISE
AU CAMEROUN

(D'après le Télégramme du 1er Mars du Sous-Secrétaire
d'Etat Anglais aux Colonies).

Doivent être administrés par nous:

19. La zone entre la Nigéria et une ligne partant du fond de la crique de BIRBIA immédiatement à l'Est de l'«On» de TIKO et se développant d'abord N.N.E. jusqu'à la limite du District de VICTORIA, puis de là le long de la limite du district exactement jusqu'au Sud de FANGWANG, de là vers le N.E. jusqu'à la Rivière NUN, BARTU étant juste à l'intérieur de la sphère anglaise, puis le long de la limite entre les Districts de BAMENDA et BAMUN jusqu'à sa rencontre avec la limite du District de BANJO, de là dans une direction générale N.E. jusqu'aux Montagnes de DUBE en passant juste à l'Est d'UWA et WOKUDE et à l'Ouest de DARUN et GANDUA. Au delà des montagnes de DUBE, la ligne se développe jusqu'à 5 milles de DODO, puis à peu près parallèlement à et à une distance d'environ 5 milles XXXXXXXXXXKONTSCHAX Est de la route DODO - KONTSCHAX - URO-BALI jusqu'à exactement l'Est de URO-BALI, ensuite au N.O. vers la frontière de la NIGERIA jusqu'à un point exactement au Sud de YOLA.

20. Le BORNOU Allemand dont la limite est très approximativement indiquée par une ligne courbe passant par ISSAGA, UAGISA, GAU, KUMBEL, KUTELANA et ensuite va au N.O. jusqu'à WULGO.

Voir la carte du War Office NE.2793 pour toutes les localités ci-dessus. (Carte Moisel au 2.000.000ème).

L'accord ci-dessus est sujet aux réserves suivantes:

1. Il aura un caractère temporaire comme c'est le cas pour les autres Colonies Allemandes occupées par les Alliés.
2. Les forces militaires et navales de Sa Majesté auront à tout moment pendant toute la durée de la guerre la faculté d'employer le port de DUALA.
3. DUALA ne doit pas être cédée à une troisième puissance avant le règlement final sans donner le droit de préemption au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté.
4.
5. Les droits des personnes ou entreprises privées établis au Cameroun seront respectés dans chacune des sphères pourvu qu'ils soient antérieurs à l'occupation des Territoires en question par les Forces Alliées.
6. Les lignes indiquées ci-haut peuvent être légèrement modifiées de manière à éviter de couper des villages, des terrains de tribus, des plantations, etc. En particulier la portion la plus rapprochée de la mer sera tracée de manière à ne pas couper l'accès de l'eau aux plantations, etc situées sur les pentes du Mont Cameroun.

signé : DONAR LAW.

1. That portion of the Cameroons which has been occupied by the Allied Forces under my command has hitherto been administered by me as the representative of both the French and the British Nations, whose troops have participated in its conquest.
2. Following on the complete conquest of the whole of the Cameroons, the Allied Governments have agreed to substitute for this arrangement a territorial division into distinct French and British Spheres of Administration.
3. The dividing line, so far as it affects the territory hitherto administered by me is approximately as follows:- From a point on the Bimbia river East of Tiko, along this river to the Mungo River, thence along the boundary between Victoria, Johann Albrechtshöhe and Dschang districts on the one side and Duala and Bare districts on the other to a point on the Southern boundary of Dschang district immediately South of Fongwang, thence in a North-Easterly direction to the Mun River at the point where the district boundaries of Bamenda, Dschang and Euanan meet.
4. On and after the 1st day of April 1916 the territory lying to East of this line will be administered solely by French authorities, that to the West of the line by British Authorities.
5. The inhabitants of these territories will, I am confident, continue to render to the representative of the power within whose sphere they may fall, the same loyalty and obedience which they have displayed towards myself during the period of my Administration.

3

**ANGLO - FRENCH
CAMEROONS BOUNDARY
DESCRIPTION**

Cameroons

Franco-British Declaration.

The undersigned;

Sir Graeme Thomson, G.C.M.G., K.C.E., Governor
of the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria,
et Paul Marchand Governor of the French

Cameroons;

have agreed to determine the frontier, separating the territories of the Cameroons placed respectively under the authority of the British and French Governments, as is traced on the map annexed to this declaration and defined in the description also annexed hereto.

The boundary starts from the junction of the three old British French and German boundaries at a point in Lake Chad $13^{\circ}.05'$ Latitude North and approximately $14^{\circ}.05'$ Longitude East of Greenwich. From there the boundary has been determined as follows:-

(2) On a straight line as far as the mouth of the Ebeji.

(3) Thence from this mouth along the course of the river Ebeji, which bears on the upper part the names of Lewejil, Labejed, Ngalarem, Lebeit et Ngada, as far as the confluence of the rivers Kalia and lebalit.

(4) Thence from the confluence of the rivers Ngada, Kalia and Lebalit along the course of the rivers Kalia or Ame as far as its confluence with the river Dorma or Kutelaha (Koutelaha)

(5) Thence from the confluence of the rivers Kalia and Dorma or Kutelaha along the course of this last river as far as a point to the South of the village of Segage where it meets a marsh stretching towards the South.

(6) Thence by a line through the middle of this marsh to where it meets the road from Segage towards a marsh named Sale.

(7)

(7) Thence following the road to a point about a Kilometre and a half to the North of the said marsh.

(8) Thence passing about a Kilometre to the West of the marsh as far as a point about a Kilometre and a half to the South of the marsh on the road leading to the village of Gourgouron.

1120 (9) Thence following this road to a point situated about two Kilometres to the North West of the village of Gourgouron and passing through a marsh nearly a Kilometre to the north of this village to a point situated about two Kilometres to the West on the Gourgouron-Ferfarti road leaving the villages of Sale, Mada and Gourgouron to France.

(10) Thence following this road and meeting a number of water-holes (shown on Moisel's map under the name of Amjumba) to a point situated about a Kilometre from the village of Ferfarti and entering a marsh situated 500 metres to the North of this village which is still assigned to France.

(11) Thence turning to the West, South West and South as far as the bed of a defined river and following the bed of this river in a South-westerly direction to a large marsh named Umm Jumba (Amjumba) leaving the villages of Galadima Jidda, Abu Kharaza and Ulba to England.

(12) Thence following a line through the middle of this marsh passing the bed of a small stream which is frequently lost in the marsh, as far as a water-hole named Diguilaba and a confluence with another line of marsh running more to the South in the direction of Wasa rock.

(13) Thence going on and meeting the bed of a better defined stream crossing the marsh of Kulujia and Kodo as far as a marsh named Agzabame.

(14) Thence crossing this marsh where it reaches a river passing quite close to the village of Limanti (Limani) to a confluence at about two kilometres to the North West of this village.

(15) Thence following the Limanti)Wabisei (Uagisa) road as far as a brook situated about a kilometre to the East of Wabisei and passing through the middle of the villages of Bangimami and Imohide and leaving the village of Djarandjoua to France.

(16) Thence following this brook as far as a marsh situated about three kilometres to the West of Wabisei.

(17) Thence crossing this marsh to a point where it meets the river Kolofata and following this river as far as its confluence with the river Gwanje or Keraua.

(18) Thence following the Keraua as far as its confluence in the mountains with a river coming from the West and known by the "Kirdis" inhabiting the mountains under the name of Kohom (shown on Moisel's map under the name of Gatagule) cutting into two parts the village of Keraua and separating the two villages of Ishigashiya.

(19) Thence it runs from this confluence as far as the top of Mount Ngosi in a south-westerly direction given by the course of the Kohom (Gatagule) which is taken as the natural boundary from its confluence as far as its source in Mount Ngosi; the villages of Matagum and Hijie being left to France, and the Sections of Uledde and of Laherre situated to the north of the Kohom to England; those Tchidoui (Hiduwe) situated to the south of Kohom to France.

0 1120 (20) Thence on a line in a South Westerly direction following the tops of the Mountain range of Ngosi leaving to France the parts of Ngosi situated on the Eastern slopes, and to England the parts situated on the Western slopes,

to

to a point situated between the source of the river Zimurkara and the source of the river Devurua; the watershed so defined also leaves the village of Bugelta to England and the village of Iuru to France.

(21) Thence in a ^{South} South/Westerly direction

leaving the village of Dila on the British side, the village of Libam on the French side to the hill of Matakam.

(22) Thence running due West to a point to the South of the village of Wisik where it turns to the South on a line running along the watershed and passing by Mabas on the French side, after which it leaves Wula on the English side running South and bounded by cultivated land to the East of the line of the watershed.

(23) Thence passing Humunsi on the French side the boundary lies between the mountains of Jel and Kamale Mogode on the French side and running along the watershed.

(24) Thence passing Humsiki including the farmlands of the valley to the west of the village on the French side, the boundary crosses Mount Kuli.

(25) Thence running due South between Mukta (British) and Muti (French) the incorrect line of the watershed shown by Moisel on his map being adhered to leaving Bourha and Dihl on the French side, Madogoba Gandira on the British, Bugela or Bukula, Madoudji, Kadanahanga on the French, Ouda, Tua and Isambourga on the British side and Buka on the French side.

(26) Thence the boundary runs through Mount Mulikia (named also Lourougoua).

(27) Thence from the top of Mount Mulikia to the source of the Tsikakiri leaving Kotcha to Britain and Dumo to France and following a line marked by four provisional landmarks erected in September, 1920, by Messrs Vereker and Piton.

(28) Thence along the course of the Tsikakiri as it exists in reality and not as it is shown on Moisel's map to its confluence with the River Tiel.

(29) Thence the course of the Mayo Tiel as far as its confluence with the Benue.

(30) Thence along the course of the Benue upstream as far as its confluence with the Faro.

(31) Thence along the course of the Faro as far as the mouth of its branch the Mao Hesso situated about four Kilometres south of Chikito.

(32) Thence along the course of the Mao Hesso as far as landmark No.6 of the old British German frontier.

20.1119 (33) Thence a line starting from Beacon 6, passing Beacon 7 finishing at the old Beacon 8.

(34) Thence from this mark 8 placed on the left bank of the Mao Youwai a small stream flowing from the West and emptying itself into the Mayo Faro, in a straight line running towards the South west and reaching the summit of Wanni Range a very prominent peak to the North of a chain of mountains extending towards the Alantika Mountains and situated to the East of the old Frontier Mark No.10.

(35) Thence the frontier follows the watershed from the Mao Wari to the West and from the Mao Faro to the East where it rejoins the Alantika Range, it follows the line of the watershed of the Benue to the North West and of the Faro to the South East as far as the South Peak of the Alantika Mountains to a point two Kilometres to the North of the source of the River Mali.

01119. (36) Thence from this Peak by the River Sassiri, leaving Kobi to France and Kobi Leinde to Great Britain, Tebou and Tsoho to France, as far as the confluence with the first stream coming from the Balakossa Range (this confluence touches the Kobodji Mapeo Track) from this stream towards the South leaving Uro Belo to Great Britain and Nanaoua to France.

(37) Thence the boundary rejoins the old Boundary about Lapao in French Territory following the line of the watershed of the Balakossa range as far as a point situated to

the West of the source of the Labidje or Kadam river which flows into the River Deo and from the river Sampee flowing into the River Baleo to the North West.

(38) Thence from this point along the line of the watershed between the river Baleo and the River Noumerou along the crest of the Tschapeu Range, to a point two Kilometres to the North of Namberu turning by this village which is in Nigeria, going up a valley North East and then South West which crosses the Banglang range about a Kilometre to the South of the source of the Kordo river.

(39) Thence from this point on a straight line running towards the confluence of the rivers Ngomba and Deo until the line meets the River Kolob.

(40) Thence along a line parallel to the Bare Fort Lamy Track and to two Kilometres to the West of this track which remains in French territory.

01119 (41) Thence a line parallel to and distant two Kilometres to the West from this road (which is approximately that marked Faulborn January 1908 on Moisel's map) to a point on the Maio Tipsal (Tiba, Tibsat or Tussa on Moisel's map) two Kilometres to the South West of the point at which the road crosses said Maio Tipsal.

(42) Thence the course of the Maio Tipsal upstream to its confluence with the Maio Mafu, flowing from the West, to a point some 12 Kilometres to the South West of Kwancha town.

MOISEL'S MAP (43) Thence a straight line running South West to the highest peak of the Hosere Jongbi (Dutschi - n - Djombi of Moisel's map).

(44) Thence the watershed between the basins of the Maio Taraba on the West and the Maio Deo on the East to the Second from the North of the four peaks of the Hosere Bakari Be (Dutschi - n - Bertua on Moisel's map). These four peaks run from North to South parallel to and about three Kilometres to West of the road from Bare to Fort Lamy.

(45) From this second peak issues the Maio Tapare which, flowing

flowing East to the Maio Deo, forms the boundary between the Districts of Kwancha and Dodeo.

This peak is the source of the Maio Tapare, and is two miles due West of the Maio Tapare Rest-house. This line leaves the villages of Mafou and Kounti in French Territory.

(46) Thence following the watershed between the Maio Tapare (and its affluents) and the Maio Deo (and its affluents) along, successively, the two remaining peaks of the Hosere Bakari Be (running from North to South), the three peaks of the Hosere N'Yamboli, the two peaks of the Hosere Maio Baji, Hosere Lainga. These three little groups of Hosere N'Yamboli, Hosere Maio Baji and Hosere Lainga run South West and form the Bapai range. Behind the Bapai range is the Sapbe Kauyel which is in British Territory.

(47) Thence across the saddle connecting the Bapai range and the imposing Genderu Mountains. From this saddle the Frontier climbs to the first prominent peak in the Genderu Mountains (known as Hosere Jauro Gotel or as Hosere Jagam), thence along the remaining three peaks of Hosere Jauro Gotel (or Hosere Jagam), thence along the four peaks of Hosere Sangoji to Sapbe M'Bailaji. These last three groups of hills constitute part of the watershed between the Maio Taraba and the Maio Yin.

At (48) Thence to Hosere Lowul which is well over two Kilometres from the Kwancha - Banyo main road. This peak (Hosere Lowul) lies on a magnetic bearing of 296 from the apex of the Genderu Pass on the above-mentioned main road. From this apex, which is distant $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Genderu Rest-house, and which lies between a peak of Hosere M'Bailaji (to the West) and a smaller hill, known as Hosere Burutol, to the East, Hosere M'Bailaji has a magnetic bearing of 45 and Hosere Burutol one of 185.

MOISEL'S MAP (49) Thence a line, crossing the Maio Yin at a point some four Kilometres to the West of the figure 1,200 (denoting height in metres of a low conical hill) on Moisel's map E 2, to a prominent conical peak, Hosere Gulungel, at the foot of which

which (in French Territory) is a spring impregnated with potash which is well-known to all cattle-owners in the vicinity. This Hosere Gulungel has a magnetic bearing of 228 from the point (5 miles from Genderu Rest-house which is known locally as "Kampani Massa" on the main Kwancha - Banyo road where it (Hosere Gulungel) first comes into view. From this same point the magnetic bearing to Hosere Lowul is 11. The Salt lick of Banare lies in British Territory.

(50) This peak, Hosere Gulungel, is the first of six forming the little chain of the Hosere Golurde (not "Gorulde" as on Moisel's map E.2). The frontier runs along these six Golurde peaks, thence to a little isolated peak (Hosere Bolsumri) leaving the Bolsumri Potash spring on the British side. The magnetic bearings from Maio Lelewal (otherwise known as Yakuba) Rest-house are:- to Hosere Gulungel 356, to the sixth peak of Hosere Golurde/^{Chain}323, and to Hosere Bolsumri 302. Hosere Bolsumri, the nearest peak on the Frontier to the Kwancha - Banyo road, is over two Kilometres from this road.

MOISEL'S MAP 8 (51) Thence along the chain of hills known as Hosere N'Getti, which form the watershed between the Maio Gangan and the Maio Yin (and Taraba), and which ends in a high flat peak on a magnetic bearing of 248 from Maio Lelewal (or Yakuba) Rest-House.

(52) Thence a line over a high plateau, crowded with mountain-tops, forming the watershed between the Maio Gangan to the West (British) and the Maio Dupbe to East (French) and the Maio Banyo to West (French). These two last-named rivers flow into the Maio M'Banti. The whole of this line is entirely uninhabited for fully five miles on either side, and it extends for some 13 or 14 miles in length. It is, moreover, impassable at the very height of the rains. It lies on a very lofty and desolate plateau, and, starting first in a southerly direction, swings to the South West as it winds among a sea of mountain-tops forming in succession the groups known

locally

locally as Hosere N'Yam'Yeri, Sapbe Bnokni, Sapbe Pelmali Sapbe Wade, Sapbe Gallal and Sapbe Sirgu.

(53) Sapbe Sirgu, known to the local Pagans as "Yajin", and called loosely "Gotei Berge" on Moisel's map E 2, is the last part of the watershed between Maio Gangan and Maio Banyo. The Banyo-Gashaka-Ibi road climbs steeply up this Sapbe Sirgu and cuts the Frontier at the apex of the pass six miles to the North West of the Gandua Rest-house (the last rest-house on this road in French Territory).

(54) Thence to a point at the South West end of the Sapbe Sirgu, two Kilometres to the North of the letter "i" in the word "Tukobi" on Moisel's map E 2. This point is on the common watershed between the three sets of head-waters of the Maio Gashaka (British), the Maio Donga (or Kari) British, and also of the Maio Teram (French).

MOISEL'S
MAP (55) Thence a line running, generally, due South, to cross the Banyo-Kuma road two miles to West of the 1,630 metres hill on Moisel's map E 2.

(56) Thence the Frontier swings to the East, following the watershed between the Maio Donga (or Kari) and the Maio Teram, thence to the South East, among the Hosere N'Yem. Leaving the Sabri potash spring in the Gashaka District in British Territory. Thence South South West through, successively, the crests of the Hosere N'Danganl, Hosere Kewal, Hosere Wajuru, and the Hosere Bangaro which last lie to the West North West of the Pagan village of Bangaro, to a point on a saddle which connects the more westerly of the two parallel ridges forming the Hosere Bangaro with the higher Sapbe Ma (still further to the West). This saddle forms the watershed between the source of the Mai N'Gum (French), which later joins the Maio Teram six miles South of Banyo Town, and the source of the Maio Kemme which is one of the head waters of the Maio Donga. The Maio Kemme was traced for six miles from its source as it flowed East towards the large Pagan village of Kabri. The above-mentioned saddle is four miles from Bangaro village, and

is on the Banyo-Kabri path. Thus the prominent rocky bluff, Hosere Tangbau, lies entirely in French Territory.

(57) From this saddle the Frontier follows the watershed to a prominent peak, the second of the Sapbe Ma group of mountains. This peak is on a magnetic bearing of 215 from the above-mentioned point where the Banyo-Kabri path cuts the watershed between the Maio N'Gum (French) and the Maio Kenne (British).

(58) Thence the watershed runs generally South West along, in succession, the peaks of the Sapbe Ma, the Hosere Jin (in front of which range is a very prominent, detached, fang-like, rocky peak - also called Jin - visible for many miles from the North, East and South, which is entirely in French Territory), the Hosere Maio Dalle, and the Hosere Gesumi. In front of, and parallel to, the Hosere Gesumi is the chain of the less lofty Hosere Ribao. These Hosere Ribao are close to, and overlook, the Ribao Rest-house (the third Rest-house from Banyo) and are wholly in French Territory.

(59) Thence the Frontier continues amongst the peaks of the Hosere Gerumi, following the watershed between the head-waters of the Maio Donga to the North, and the Maio Kwi (French) to the South, and the Maio Mabe (French) to the South. These head-waters of the latter two (French) rivers emerge from between the Hosere Chemo, the Hosere Lu, the Hosere Atta, and the Hosere Songkorong which, in succession, form the foot-hills to the loftier Gesumi range behind them to the North West North of Songkorong village, which is on the Banyo-Kumbo-Bamenda road, these Hosere Gesumi are called by the local Pagans Hosere Hambere.

(60) Thence the Frontier follows the watershed amongst these Hosere Hambere (or Gesumi) to the North of the sources of the Maio Kombe, Maio Gur and Maio Malam to a fairly prominent, pointed peak which lies on a magnetic bearing of 170° from a cairn of stones, 8 feet high, erected on September 15th, 1920, on the South side of the above Banyo-Kumbo-Bamenda road at a point

point one mile from N'Yorong Rest-camp and $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Songkorong village.

(61) From this peak in the Hosere Hambere (or Gesumi), which is situated just to the East of the visible source of the Maio M'Fi (or Baban), the Frontier follows the watershed visible all the way from the Cairn, between the Maio Malam to East (French) and the Maio M'Fi (or Baban) to West (British) till it cuts the Banyo-Kumbo-Baxenda road at the Cairn. This Cairn is immediately under the highest peak of the Hosere Nangban, which is shown on Moisel's map F 2 as Hosere Jadji, but Jadji is really the name of the Pagan head of N'Yorong village.

(62) Thence the Frontier ascends this highest peak of Hosere Nangban, following the watershed between the Maio Monchar and the Maio Nimaju, which are both to the East and which both flow into the Maio Malam (French), and a series of little burns on the West which flow into the Maio M'Fi (or Baban), British.

(63) Thence the Frontier, following this watershed up and over this highest peak of the Hosere Nangban to its far, or South West side, at once strikes the source of the Maio Mafu.

(64) Thence the Frontier is formed by the median line of the Maio Mafu, going downstream, to its confluence with the Maio Mabe (or N'Sang). This confluence also marks the end of the Frontier between Yola Province (Kwanacha Division) and the circumscription of N'Gaundere.

(65) Thence the median of the Maio Mabe going upstream to its confluence with the River Nketitup.

(66) Thence the course of the River Nketitup upstream to its source at the foot of Mount Batfang (Banso) or Kouetnana (Bamun).

(67) Thence a line South-westwards to the ravine situated at the head of the pass separating the two peaks of Mount Batfang (Banso) or Kouetnana (Bamun).

(68) Thence a line South-south-eastwards to the westernmost point of Lake Keban (Banso) or Tamfi (Bamun) some to leave

MOISEL'S
MAP

RO 1014
4.

leave this lake entirely to France.

(69) Thence a line Southwards to the summit of Mount Panangan.

(70) Thence a line South-south-westwards to the foot of Mount Bantiwan so as to leave this hill entirely to Great Britain.

(71) Thence a line South-westwards to the summit of Mount Ngori.

(72) Thence a line Westwards passing through the centre to the Western edge of the salt-spring called by the Bansos Lip and by the Bamuns You.

(73) Thence a line West-south-westwards to the sudden bend towards the South in the River Mbui (Banso) or Mvi (Bamun), which is shown on Moisel's map and is situated at the exact point where this river enters the plain from between the mountains of Zemboui to the South and Njamjom (Banso) or Mveng (Bamun) to the North.

(74) Thence the river Mbui or Mvi upstream to its confluence with the River Molier (Banso) or Nkou (Bamun).

R010/4 (75) Thence the River Molier (Banso) upstream to a point 200 yards below the ford on the path between the villages of Koubokam and Koutopi so as to leave the Bamun village and plateau of Koubokam to France and the area called by the Bansos Mookum to Great Britain.

(76) Thence a line parallel to the Koubokam - Koutopi path on its Northern side until the stream Moirum (Banso) or Ketchouperin (Bamun) is reached thus leaving the Koubokam - Koutopi path wholly in French territory.

(77) Thence the stream Ketchouperin or Moirum until its junction with the River Moirum (Banso and Bamun) or Upper Nun.

(78) Thence the Moirum to its junction with the River Nun.

(79) Thence the River Nun to its junction with the River Ngwanonsia or Chawnga or Chawga.

(80) Thence the River Ngwanonsia upstream to the point where it is crossed by the Nkwefu-Bambalang Road.

(81) Thence a line Westward through the swamp to the Northern extremity of the island of Nkwefu (an elder of the Bagam village of Fombefu).

(82) Thence a line Westward through the swamp to the point where the Fombefu - Nkwefu path cuts the river Ta or Tantom.

(83) Thence the River Tantom upstream to its confluence with the River Sefu or Mekanigo.

(84) Thence the River Sefu upstream to its source.

(85) Thence a line South-Westwards to the apex of the large isolated rock called Ngoma Fominyam.

(86) Thence a line Southwards to the source of the river Webinga near point 1300 in Moisel's map and to the East of it

(87) Thence the River Webinga to its confluence with the Mbonso (Bali - Bagam) or Momogo (Bagam).

14. ROAD 14 (88) Thence the River Mbonso to its confluence with the River Mifi.

(89) Thence the River Mifi upstream to its confluence with the River Mogo or Dochi.

(90) Thence the River Mogo upstream to its confluence with the stream Dugum (Bali-Bagam) or Mousete - Fontchili (Bagam) which is slightly above where the Bagam - Bali-Bagam road crosses the River Mogo.

(91) Thence the stream Dugum to its source which is marked by a cairn of stones on the Eastern side of Mount Ngenkoa (Bali-Bagam) or Koungo (Bagam)

(92) Thence a line to a cairn of stones at the top of the defile between Mount Ngenkoa in the South and Mount Tabira (Bali-Bagam) or Koumenou (Bagam) in the North.

(93) Thence a line to the bend in the River Bingwa (Bali-Bagam) or Seporo (Bagam) about sixty yards from the above mentioned cairn.

(94) Thence the River Bingwa to its confluence with the River Mifi.

(95)

(95) Thence the River Mifi upstream to its confluence with the River Kongwong.

(96) Thence the River Kongwong upstream to its junction with the River Tooloo or Ntoulou.

(97) Thence the River Tooloo to a cairn at the top of the water fall about one kilometre above the confluence of the Rivers Tooloo and Kongwong.

(98) Thence a straight line on a magnetic bearing of one hundred and thirty degrees to the summit of a circular peak immediately to the North of the defile Zemembi through which passes the Babadju-Bapinyi path.

(99) Thence the line of heights overlooking to the East the vale of Babadju and to the West the valley of the Meso to the peak Asimi where this line of heights ends.

(100) Thence a straight line to the centre of the marsh shewn on Moisel's map as Mbetscho and called Kifi by the natives of Babinyi and Tchimbintcho by those of Babadju.

(101) Thence the crest of the watershed between the Cross River on the West and the River Noun on the East to a beacon in the centre of a small area of forest named Mepong about 400 metres South East of Mount Lekonkwe or Etchemtankeu on the crest of the watershed.

3. RD 1043 (102) Thence the stream Tantchempong, which has its source about twenty five metres South West of the above mentioned beacon, to its confluence with the stream Mintchemcharlee.

(103) Thence the stream Mintchemcharlee upstream to the point where it most nearly reaches two small rocks named Tolezet which mark the boundary between the willages of Fossong Elelen and Fongo Tongo or the road between those villages.

(104) Thence a line passing through the two rocks named Tolezet to the source of the stream Monchenjemaw or Montchi Zemo.

(105) Thence this stream to its confluence with the ^{stream} Munchisemor or Montchi Zemoua which has its source about fifty metres West of the largest of the three rocks called Melogomalee or Melegomele.

(106) Thence the stream Munchisemole to its source.

(107) Thence a line passing through the centre of the largest of the three rocks called Melogomalee to the source of the stream Monchita or Montchi Menie about one hundred metres South South East of the above named rock.

(108) Thence the stream Monchita to its confluence with the River Bamig.

RO
1043. (109) Thence the River Bamig upstream to its source on a forest covered hill called Nkenchop (the point where the River Bamig crosses the Dachang-Fontem Road is marked by a beacon).

(110) Thence a line through the crest of the hill Nkenchop to the crest of a forest covered hill called Siambi.

(111) Thence a straight line to a beacon placed on the watershed at a point known as Ntchoungomo.

(112) Thence a line following the crest of the watershed between the Cross River on the West and the River Nkam on the East through the summits of Mounts Ngome and Jomen to the summit of Mount Wenmen.

RO
1082. (113) Thence a straight line running South South West to join the River Ngwe.

(114) Thence the River Ngwe for a distance of three Kilometres to its affluent the stream Liplo.

(115) Thence the stream Liplo to a point five hundred metres West of the Moangekam-Lo track.

(116) Thence a line running parallel with this track and five hundred metres West of it until this line reaches the crest of Mount Njimba.

RO
1082. (117) Thence a line along the crest of Mount Njimba to its summit which lies to the West of the French village of Moangekam.

(118) Thence a line through the summit of Mount Ngokela to the plain of Elung leaving the Muanya compound of Nyan in British territory.

(119) Thence a track cut across the plain and marked with posts so as to leave the village of Nyan in British territory and the village of Po-Wassum in French territory until this track reaches the stream Edidio.

(120) Thence this stream until it is crossed by the Poala-Muangel track.

(121) Thence a line running South South West along the summit of Mount Mananguba to the ridge surrounding the basin of the lakes.

(122) Thence a curved line along the Eastward side of the ridge until the point where the Muandon-Poala track crosses the ridge.

(123) Thence the Muandon-Poala track in a Westerly direction down the slopes of Mount Hahin and Mount Ebouye until it reaches the River Mbe.

(124) Thence the River Mbe which runs parallel with Mount Mueba, until a line of cairns and posts is reached.

(125) Thence this line of cairns and posts, which marks the boundary between the French villages of Muaminam (Grand Chef Nsasso) and the English villages of the Bakossi tribe (District Head Ntoko) and the Ninong tribe (District Head Makoge), to the point where an unnamed tributary from the North joins the River Eko.

(126) Thence a line touching the two westernmost points of the boundary of the former German plantation of Ngoll to the crest of Mount Elesiang.

(127) Thence along the crest of Mount Elesiang to the Northern most point of the tobacco plantation of Nkolankote.

(128) Thence a line running South South West along Mount Erdon, so as to leave the plantation of Nkolankote in French territory and the plantation of Essesung in British territory to the summit of Mount Coupe.

(129) Thence a straight line running South South West to a cairn of stones on the Lum-Ngab Road at a point six thousand nine hundred and thirty metres along this road from the Railway track.

(130) Thence a straight line in a South westerly direction to the source of the River Bubu.

(131)

(131) Thence the River Bubu to a point twelve hundred metres downstream from a place called Muanjong farm.

(132) Thence in a straight line in a Westerly direction to the source of the River Ediminjo.

(133) Thence the River Ediminjo to its confluence with the River Mungo.

(134) Thence the River Mungo to the point in its mouth where it meets the parallel $4^{\circ}2'30''$ north.

(135) Thence this parallel of latitude Westwards so as to reach the coast South of Tauben Island.

(136) Thence a line following the coast, passing South of Reither Island to Mokola Creek thus leaving the whole of the Moewe See in British Territory

(137) Thence a line following the Eastern banks of the Mokola Mbakwele, Njubanan-Jau, and Matumal creeks and cutting the mouths of the Mdossa-Bombe, Mikanje, Tende, Victoria and other unnamed creeks to the junction of Matumal and Victoria creeks.

(138) Thence a line running 35 degrees West of true South to the Atlantic Ocean.

(Sgd.) GRAEME THOMSON.

Governor of the Colony
and Protectorate of Nigeria.

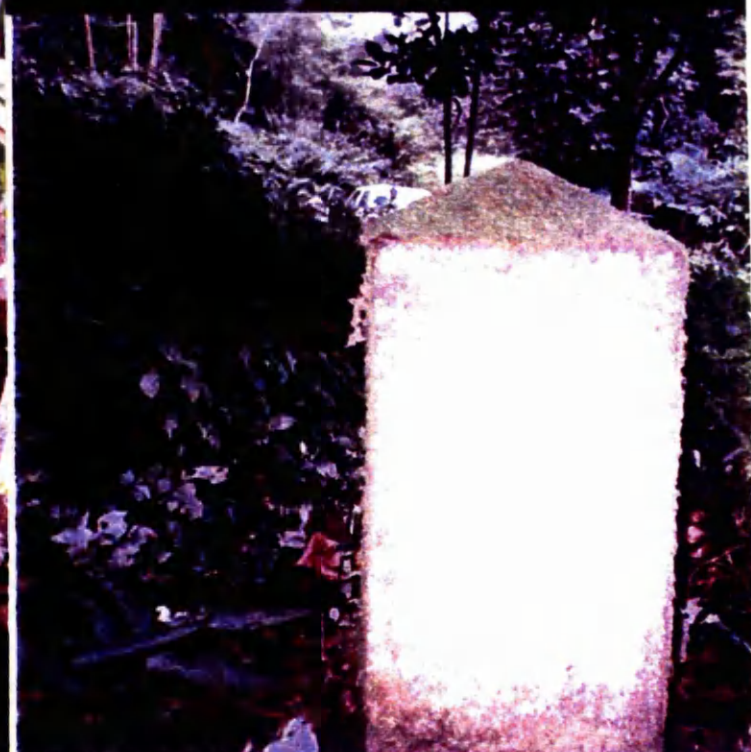
(Sgd) Marchand
GOVERNOR
Commissaire de la
Republique Francaise au Cameroun.

Novel' map
G.I.

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12. März 1985
Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst
d e d

Kladower Damm 299
1090 Berlin 22

Betr.: Kamerun, Tabak-Plantage Esosung

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren!

1. Mein Vater, Herr C.F. Raethke, hat in den Jahren 1903-14 in Kamerun im Bakossiland (Regenwald-Gebiet) am Fuße des Mont Coupé eine Tabak-Plantage aufgebaut: hochwertige Zigarren-Deckblätter, für die damals in Bremen höchste Preise (und Auszeichnungen) erzielt wurden. Das Gelände liegt in 1.060 m Höhe; bebaut waren bis 1914 120 ha. Noch heute befindet sich dort ein großes, äußerst stabiles, aber renovierungsbedürftiges ein- bis zweistöckiges Haus mit Kellergeschoß.

2. Unterhalb des Farmgeländes in ca. 2 km Entfernung liegt das Dorf Ndom, das über Loum - Tombel (von Tombel mit Landrover ca. 22 km über Nyasoso) erreichbar ist. Die Bewohner dieses Dorfes stellten damals die Arbeiter für die Farm, die nach dem 1. Weltkrieg von Engländern übernommen, aber 1969 aufgegeben wurde.

3. Als ich Ndom Mitte Februar besuchte, stellte ich fest, daß das riesige Gelände (gewiß 1 Qkm) mit Elefantengras sowie Busch- bzw. Baumwerk zugewachsen ist. Das Klima dort ist, vergleichsweise mit Douala) gesund und angenehm; kaum Moskitos. Die Dorfleute bauen privat Kaffee, Tee, Bananen u.a. an; Tabak habe ich nicht gesehen. Man bat mich sehr, dort zu bleiben, und die Farm wieder in Schwung zu bringen (praktisch sind die Leute seit 1969 arbeitslos und recht arm). Schon wegen meines Alters (65) mußte ich das ablehnen. Ich versprach aber, den Versuch zu unternehmen, für dieses Projekt in Deutschland Interesse zu erwecken.

4. Natürlich sind viele Schwierigkeiten, z.B. Transport-Probleme und die Vermarktungsfragen, zu lösen. Geprüft werden müßte m.E. auch,

- welche Plan-Prioritäten werden von der Kameruner Administration verfolgt -
- sind gleichgewichtige Partnerbeziehungen zwischen Investoren und Administration zu erwarten?
- wie sind die bürokratischen Hürden beschaffen (Kompetenz-Wirrwarr)?
- Klärung der Steuerfragen und des evtl. Gewinntransfers.

5. Ich bin mir also klar darüber, wieviele Fragen zunächst offen sind, sehe andererseits aber für einen jungen, tatkräftigen landwirtschaftlichen Fachmann auch eine evtl. große Chance, praktische Entwicklungshilfe zu leisten und sich zugleich eine gute Existenz aufzubauen: wachsen werden dort viele tropische

b.w.

Erzeugnisse, nicht nur Tabak.

Bitte prüfen Sie, ob Sie eine Möglichkeit sehen, diesen Vorschlag aufzugreifen und in Ihre Aktivitäten einzubeziehen. Mit dem Chief of Council von Ndom, Herrn Mukete Max Maioge, Ndom/Bakossi, Tombel-South Division, stehe ich in Verbindung; er hat Kopie diese Schreibens erhalten.

Für eine Antwort dankt Ihnen im voraus

Jürgen H. W. 5

Assembly in Yaoundé—a thing which is unknown in the British sector of the Cameroons.

It must be added that the statute of these French nations has given the inhabitants of the French Cameroons greater means of economic security than it has in the British Cameroons and this makes their ties with France well-nigh inseparable. . . .

As we have already pointed out in this memorandum, unification of the two Trust Territories will lead to a lot of complications because of divergent forms of administration and different economic systems. Difficulties in blending the two forms of local government systems, two forms of legal and educational systems and, worst of all, the harmonizing of the British and French cultures are factors to be reckoned with.

We are not prepared to forgo the benefits we have derived from the British Government and neither will the French Cameroonianians be prepared to sever their connexion with the French Union.

The bulk of the indigenous population of Kamerun is within the French sector. They number over 3 millions, and in the Southern Cameroons there are only 750,000 people. It follows, therefore, that the greater stakes lie on the other side of the border. In other words, the weight of choice will lean more to the side of those whose sector has the greater population.

We have studied the problem of unification very closely and carefully and are fortified in the decision we have taken by the arguments already advanced. Our views about unification have, therefore, been modified according to circumstances of the time, and our present attitude is summarized in a policy statement made by the Hon. E. M. L. Endeley, O.B.E., M.H.A., Premier of the Southern Cameroons, during a state banquet held in Buea on 29 May 1958, to mark the introduction of the ministerial system of Government in the Southern Cameroons, to wit, "We of this Government, however, having the political, economic and social well-being of the Southern Cameroons uppermost in our minds, are convinced that far from being a priority issue, unification should only be achieved by evolutionary means, that is, when an independent French Cameroons outside the French Union, and an independent Federation of Nigeria of which Southern Cameroons will form a part, would be in an unfettered position to explore the possibilities of union as part of the movement towards the creation of a United States of West Africa".

Since 1953 the Southern Cameroons has been faced with three general elections. Another general election is expected to take place early next year which will be followed by a federal election. Elections, apart from anything else, are expensive and necessitate the withdrawal of staff from their normal pursuits. The Visiting Mission will recall the Statement by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies at the Nigeria Constitutional Conference in London in 1953 when he made the separation of the Southern Cameroons from the Eastern Region of Nigeria conditional upon the outcome of a general election which was then pending in this Territory. Since the circumstances which have now arisen are essentially similar, we would urge that the same test of opinion be applied, and if our party wins the majority of seats in the House of Assembly, then it would be taken for granted that our party policy has the full support of the majority of our people.

In the event of it being finally decided, however, to hold a plebiscite as recommended by the British Administering Authority, we would, for the reasons advanced above, suggest that the referendum be as simple as possible and be conducted with the minimum of expense and inconvenience to the illiterate masses of our people. Moreover, we want safeguards to prevent the infiltration of saboteurs from the French sector into our sector in order to influence the referendum in favour of the unificationists.

Finally, we need hardly emphasize the fact that the Southern Cameroons is one of the under-developed areas on the west coast of Africa and needs extensive external financial aid if the Territory is to keep pace with her neighbours in all fields of human endeavour. The Mission will recall that we have repeatedly laid strong emphasis on this unenviable situation during each visit of representatives of the Trusteeship Council, but to no avail. In this connexion, we are constrained to invite the attention of the Visiting Mission to the findings and recommendations of the Mission organized by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development which visited Nigeria and Southern Cameroons in 1953. We would, therefore, enlist the earnest and sympathetic consideration of the Trusteeship Council with a view to the competent organ of the United Nations organization being asked to afford us the financial aid we sorely need.

(Signed) E. M. L. Endeley (KNC)
N. N. Mbile (KPP)

B. EXTRACTS FROM A MEMORANDUM, DATED 2 NOVEMBER 1958,
BY THE KAMERUN NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (KNDP)

The Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) attaches the greatest importance to the fourth United Nations Visiting Mission to the Cameroons because its report will influence major decisions affecting the political life of the people forever. We understand that the most important business of the Mission is to make recommendations to the United Nations on the method which the people of the Cameroons should adopt to determine their political future in relation to Nigeria. The second reason, which will come as the consequence of the first, is our relation with Northern Cameroons and Cameroons under French administration. We are much concerned in indicating the method we would like to employ in determining our future and, while leaving the Mission free to take its own decision, it should be the method which will set the Cameroons free from its entanglement in the Federation of Nigeria.

Secession

(a) The KNDP is fully certain that the people of the Cameroons under British administration want secession from the Federation of Nigeria. Our brothers of the northern sector have been silent over the question of secession from the Federation of Nigeria and union with us not because they do not want to be with us or because they are more akin to the people of Northern Nigeria than to us, but simply because they have no true representatives due also to the fact that the degree of literacy among them is very low. They therefore are not aware of what is happening to them. For these reasons we shall say very little about them, but would like the Mission to understand that they need to be properly educated on the present political changes and to give them time to understand the grave situation of having themselves implicated in an independent Federation of Nigeria. We therefore regret that we must confine our recommendations in the main to the Southern Cameroons and to encourage our brothers in the north to fight out their own salvation separately.

(b) Secession, as the Mission will note throughout its tour of the Southern Cameroons, has its origin in the masses and has influenced the stand now firmly taken by the KNDP. It is not the other way round, as asserted by the few advocates of integration who said that it was the KNDP which was influencing opinion in favour of it. Secession is not motivated by grievance as a result of ill treatment from Nigeria, but purely for the purpose of maintaining national identity. There can be therefore no question of appeasement either from the Administering Authority or from the Nigerians. Because the masses of our people desire to leave the Federation of Nigeria and seek a means of

building a Cameroons nation, we have decided to respect their wishes, and have to ask that the Mission be convinced that there is no alternative. The Kamerun National Congress (KNC), which has been the ruling party since 1954, gained its popularity because of the policy of secession and reunification which it has now unceremoniously abandoned. Its new policy of integration, which the leaders seek to hide under the cloak of "Association with the Federation of Nigeria", has been fully resented by the chiefs of the Southern Cameroons. This new doctrine is of very recent date and cannot be taken to mean that any reasonable number of the people support it.

Reunification

(a) Reunification is consequential upon secession. That is why for the time being, while we are still a part of the Federation of Nigeria, it is proper to make secession the beginning of reunification.

(b) Reunification is a matter in the hands of the people of those sections of Kamerun whose people, acting freely and knowingly, desire to unify. It cannot be imposed. The two Administering Authorities and the United Nations are requested to take note and to co-operate to see its realization in time. That the desire for reunification is there is obvious from the dramatic change of the Government of the Cameroons under French administration, and its swift advance to independence. The House of Assembly there has already sanctioned the wishes of the people for reunification. The next pronouncement remains to be made in the Southern Cameroons and Northern Cameroons. If the KNDP comes into power as a result of the pending general election to be held in early January 1959, a motion will be passed to confirm the consent of the people on this side for reunification. When the two Governments shall have spoken in favour of the move, it should be the place of the two Administering Authorities and the United Nations to lend us their co-operation. If reunification there is being approached as a matter between two self-governing States, we see no obstacles in our way.

(c) The KNDP feels that federation will suit a unified Kamerun. This will be a matter to be discussed between the Governments of the sections of the Kamerun.

Method of determining the wishes of the people as to secession or integration

The United Nations Visiting Mission is charged with the responsibility of making recommendations as to the method to be adopted in determining the wishes of the people as to their future relations with the Federation of Nigeria. We advance the following as most suitable in certain circumstances:

(a) *Plebiscite.* A plebiscite is necessary when the Mission feels that there is not sufficient proof from the people in favour of secession or integration. If the people do understand the issues involved, we consider that the Mission is right to rule in favour of the opinion which seems to them to be of the majority.

(b) *Election issue.* Where the people are sufficiently educated as to the issues involved in a contested general election, the result could be taken to reflect the wishes of the people provided that there is a big majority in favour of one of the two issues and provided that such a general election was fair and just and free from fraud. If it is so free, then a plebiscite following the result of the election will therefore be of no use.

(c) *Public opinion and the result of a general election.* Where the Mission is convinced that there is an overwhelming public opinion in favour of one of the issues, and this is supported by the result of a general election, we consider it proper if the Mission rescues its conclusions accordingly.

While hoping that the northern section will vote in favour of secession, we wish to recommend that the result of any ple-

biscite should be judged separately. This is because both sections of the Cameroons under the British administration have wide variations in the degree of attaining political status. The result of a plebiscite in the Southern Cameroons will mean simply that the people want secession to achieve reunification. A similar result in the northern sector would mean a host of other things. It will mean in the first instance that the people wish to secede from the Northern Regional House of Assembly or that they want to unify with the Southern Cameroons to form a State within a unified Kamerun. There are consequently more problems to be solved in the Northern than in the Southern Cameroons, and we do not wish to minimize our chances of secession and reunification by bringing both sections together as if they were one. We wish further to point out that in the event of a plebiscite being conducted, the people should be prepared for it, village by village, throughout the whole of 1959 and part of 1960, and the issues carefully explained. The United Nations knows this, but we wish also to add that we shall take part in canvassing the north for success in favour of secession and unification with us, or otherwise according to their choice.

The pending general election

We wish to make it abundantly clear to the United Nations Visiting Mission that the KNDP will undertake to carry out secession from the Federation of Nigeria if we come into power as the result of the pending general election. We have made this stand clear to the British delegation and the Nigerian delegations at the Nigeria Constitutional Conference held in London between 29 September and 26 October 1958. The Mission will appreciate this in view of the fact that Nigeria will also be preparing for its independence in 1960, and therefore if we should secede, we must do so before the United Kingdom Government hands over power to the Federation of Nigeria.

Development. We wish to recall that the previous United Nations Visiting Mission received petitions requesting direct financial and technical aid from the United Nations to make it possible for roads to be pushed through to connect the Benue and Adamawa sections of Northern Cameroons. This inability to meet our brothers has tended to create the opinion that they were a different tribe and that they want to remain part of Northern Nigeria. In addition, trade in the Southern Cameroons has flowed mainly from Nigeria because of lack of an all-season road to connect the Territory with our little ports at Victoria. We therefore strongly hope that the United Nations will include, in its programme for 1959, the Cameroons among those areas of the world which need financial and technical aid.

In conclusion, we wish to say that we have shelved other problems facing this Territory because we wish priority to be given to the ways of deciding the destiny of Kamerun as a nation at this crucial stage of its political history. Regarding 1959 as a transitional period, we request that the Administering Authority should enquire into all subjects affecting the existing relations between Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons financially, administratively and otherwise, and make recommendations on how to sever these services without difficulty when the time comes.

(Signed) J. N. Foncha
National President

C. EXTRACTS FROM A MEMORANDUM, DATED 10 OCTOBER 1958, BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHERN CAMEROONS CHIEFS' CONFERENCE

It will be appreciated that the repeated appeals of the Southern Cameroons people have always been for economic, educational, social and political developments; but this time, our

permanent concern—"our future relationship with an independent Nigeria"—has been made complicated, upsetting and ruinous not by the United Nations organization, not by the Administering Authority and not even by the Nigerians themselves, but by a few Cameroons beneficiaries. At the present level of developments, the people of this Territory honestly and relentlessly demand secession from the Federation of Nigeria in order to concentrate on much harder work towards self-government and independence outside the Federation of Nigeria as a direct member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. In this connexion, it must be stated that the demand of Mr. Endeley to associate this Territory with the Federation of Nigeria administratively and politically does not in any case reflect the wishes of the masses of the Territory. A plebiscite will be the only medium through which the free wishes of the people on their future can definitely be ascertained.

The Government of the Kamerun National Congress (KNC) has completely lost the confidence of the people of this Territory for inconsistency and unreliability and cannot therefore claim to speak for Southern Cameroons. This Government got into power because of its secession doctrine in the event of Nigeria becoming independent. Eventually Mr. Endeley, the leader of this unpopular party, changed from "secession" to "integration" and "association". This Territory is not prepared to tolerate this inconsistent and rather dictatorial Government. Neither is it prepared to achieve independence within the Federation of Nigeria. Under the circumstances it must be noted that Mr. Endeley's demand for the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement is not in keeping with the desire of the people of this Territory. This demand has been made only in the interest of a negligible few beneficiaries, Mr. Endeley himself not excluded.

(Signed) Achirimbi II,

Fon of Bafut,

President of the Southern Cameroons Chiefs' Conference

D. EXTRACTS FROM A MEMORANDUM, DATED 29 OCTOBER 1958, FROM MR. J. I. KAMSI ON BEHALF OF THE ONE KAMERUN PARTY

[Original text: French]

...
With regard to the national independence of Kamerun,

The Kamerunians of both zones and of all classes of society have decided in favour of the unity and independence of the country:

(a) Three nationalist movements, pioneers in furthering the lofty aims of the Kamerunians, have been dissolved and their leaders deported solely because they favour the unity and independence of the Kamerun;

(b) On 19 February 1958 the Legislative Assembly of Buea, Southern Kamerun, adopted a motion calling for the independence of the country in 1959;

(c) From 13 to 14 March 1958 the briefing Assembly of "One Kamerun" (OK) adopted a resolution calling for the reunification of Kamerun and the immediate proclamation of its independence;

(d) On 6 April 1958 the traditional chiefs from all corners of the western part of the country unanimously adopted a resolution calling for the immediate secession of Kamerun from the Federation of Nigeria and further declaring their support for the immediate independence of the country;

(e) The Assembly of Kamerunian Women, held at Kumba on 19 May 1958, adopted a resolution in favour of the immediate unity and independence of Kamerun;

(f) The Legislative Assembly of Yaoundé adopted a resolution on 20 October 1958 asking for the termination of the trusteeship in a reunified Kamerun on 1 January 1960.

All levels of society in Kamerun have amply expressed their desire for the unity and independence of Kamerun.

In the light of Article 76b of the United Nations Charter, appropriate action should be taken towards that end.

Consequently,

1. There should be a joint Assembly of all representatives of the north and south of Western Kamerun under British administration. However, since the chief aim of the Administering Authority is to annex Kamerun to Nigeria, the representatives of Northern Kamerun attend only the Assembly of the Northern Region of Nigeria; that indirect annexation threatens to deprive the Kamerunians of the north of their national identity.

2. Bearing in mind article 6 of the Atlantic Charter, the United Nations and the Administering Authorities should make a serious study of the natural frontiers of Kamerun, for a large portion of our land is included in the French and British colonial empires and another portion has been absorbed by Spain namely, "the island of Fernando Po".

3. We note with deep regret the malevolent way in which the Administering Authorities, States Members of the United Nations, disregard the resolutions of the United Nations, the provisions of the Charter and the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination.

4. We request:

(a) That the right of freedom of speech, assembly, association and expression should be respected;

(b) That articles 9 and 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should not remain a dead letter;

(c) The unconditional return of the Kamerunian nationalists deported for no valid reason;

(d) Compliance with Article 87 of the United Nations Charter.

5. We emphatically denounce the joint French-British policy of imprisoning political refugees without reason, the arrest by night and the removal at a late hour of Comrade Noubi Janvier, and we protest vigorously against the transfer to the French authorities of the four prisoners who had taken refuge in Bamenda.

We again point out that the repressive measures carried out by armed troops are continuing in Eastern Kamerun; the most flagrant example, revealed by the French authorities themselves, is the shooting of Mr. Ruben Um Nyobe and three other Kamerunians in the forest near Boumnyebel (see *Presse du Cameroun*, issue No. 2515, of 16 September 1958).

Referendum

6. In the interest of the United Nations, for the sake of economy and in order to avoid too much travelling, the referendum or plebiscite on the secession of Western Kamerun from the Federation of Nigeria and on the immediate reunification and independence of the Kamerun should be held as one single operation and should be couched in the following terms:

"Are you in favour of the secession of the western zone from the Federation of Nigeria and of the unification and independence of Kamerun?"

There will be only two candidates competing, namely, "yes" and "no".

Should the United Nations insist upon holding separate plebiscites, the one on the separation of the western zone of our country from the Federation of Nigeria should be carried out in two parts i.e., the results in Northern Kamerun should be kept separate from the results in Southern Kamerun. That procedure

would make it possible to avert the fate which befell Western Togoland. Thus each region will have to be responsible for its actions. This popular consultation should be held under the supervision of the United Nations.

7. The future of our country should in no event be decided by an election.

In conclusion, the will of the people and the right of peoples to self-determination must not be stifled.

The United Nations, the international tribunal guaranteeing the security of nations, must be equal to its task.

Long live friendship and peaceful coexistence among peoples!

Long live the United Nations!

Long live the young Kamerunian nation of tomorrow!

(Signed) Joseph Innocent KAMSI

ANNEX III

Decisions of the resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference, 1958, concerning the Southern and Northern Cameroons

The following are those sections of the "Report by the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference, held in London in September and October 1958" (Federation of Nigeria: Federal Government Printer, Lagos) which relate particularly to the Trust Territory.

A. CONCERNING THE SOUTHERN CAMEROONS

XV. The Southern Cameroons

65. Before Southern Cameroons affairs were considered by the full Conference, the Secretary of State held preliminary discussions with all delegates and advisers from the Southern Cameroons. The representatives of the Kamerun National Congress and the Kamerun People's Party stated that the major political objective of their parties was the attainment by the Southern Cameroons of the status of a region equal in all respects with the other regions in an independent Nigeria. They were accordingly anxious to achieve rapid constitutional progress to prepare themselves to take their place in an independent Nigeria.

66. The representatives of the Kamerun National Democratic Party said that their party did not wish the Southern Cameroons to become a permanent part of an independent Nigeria. Their objective for both the northern and southern sections of the British Cameroons was secession from the Federation of Nigeria. They were therefore opposed to further constitutional advance for the Southern Cameroons in any form which led to, or had as its objective, closer association with Nigeria.

67. The Secretary of State took note of the difference of view expressed. He said that, although the undertaking given in 1953 to accord self-government to any Region that requested it had applied only to the Regions existing at the time and there was therefore no commitment on the United Kingdom to agree to further constitutional advance, he was nevertheless prepared to accept in principle that the Southern Cameroons should become, at the appropriate time, a Region fully equal in status to the other Regions of Nigeria. Such a development, by preparing the people for full self-government, would be in fulfilment of one of the basic objectives of the Trusteeship Agreement while it would in no way commit the Southern Cameroons to permanent association with Nigeria, about which it would be for the people of the Territory to express their wishes at the right time. In view of the Trusteeship Agreement it would be necessary for the United Kingdom to retain in the hands of a representative of Her Majesty reserve executive and legislative powers in respect of the Southern Cameroons.

68. It was accordingly agreed with the Southern Cameroons representatives, and subsequently approved by the Conference, that no immediate constitutional changes should be made but that it should be open to the Southern Cameroons Government

which would be formed after the elections to be held in January 1959, to request the United Kingdom to bring into effect all or any of the following changes. The Secretary of State undertook that the United Kingdom Government would then give effect to these changes forthwith in so far as they could be made without constitutional amendment, and that the necessary legal instruments should be prepared as soon as possible.

(a) The Executive Council:

(1) The Deputy Commissioner should cease to be a member of the Executive Council and the House of Assembly.

(2) The Legal Secretary (or Attorney-General) should continue to be a public officer and to be a member of the Executive Council and the House of Assembly.

(3) At a convenient time after the 1959 budget the post of Financial Secretary should be abolished and instead a Minister of Finance should be appointed.

(4) There should be provision that the number of Ministers, in addition to the Premier, should be not less than four nor more than seven. Provision should be made for the appointment in addition of not more than three Parliamentary Secretaries.

(5) The Commissioner should appoint the Premier and should, on his recommendation, appoint other Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries.

(6) The Commissioner should continue to preside over the Executive Council, but this arrangement should be reviewed towards the end of 1959. The legal instruments should be so drawn as to make this possible without further amendment.

(b) The reserve legislative and executive powers:

These should be directly vested in the Commissioner, although there should continue to be provision empowering the Governor-General as High Commissioner for the Southern Cameroons to give the Commissioner directions as to the exercise of the powers vested in him. If and when the Southern Cameroons becomes a self-governing Region the position of its constitutional head would be similar to that of the Governors of the existing Regions in an independent Nigeria.

(c) Assent to legislation:

Subject to the High Commissioner's power to give him directions, the Commissioner should assent to legislation.

(d) The Judiciary:

One of the judges appointed for the High Courts of Lagos and the Southern Cameroons should be specifically assigned to the Southern Cameroons so that he would spend as much of the year as was necessary in the Southern Cameroons and be available in Lagos only for such time as he was not required in the Southern Cameroons.

elected members of the Assembly as the person best able in his opinion to command a majority in the Assembly and who is willing to be appointed. The Premier presides over the Council. The Northern Region is to obtain on 15 March 1959 the same self-governing status, which is open also, as explained in the Mission's report, to the Southern Cameroons if the people decide that they wish to remain part of the Federation after independence; while the trusteeship status existed, however, reserve executive and legislative powers would be retained by the Administering Authority in respect of both the Northern and Southern Cameroons.

At the head of the pyramid of government in the Region there are Governors representing the Crown. In the self-governing Regions the Governor occupies a position approaching that of a constitutional ruler, acting on the advice of popularly elected Ministers in all but a limited category of subjects; the occasions on which the Governor is empowered to act in his discretion are limited principally to the exercise of the power of pardon and of responsibilities in relation to the police force delegated by the Governor-General. Certain types of legislation may be disallowed by the United Kingdom Government.

At present the Governor-General presides over the Council of Ministers of the Federation. Certain powers are reserved to him by the Constitution and by his Royal Instructions: for example, he retains responsibility for the armed forces and for external affairs. He is also responsible, in his discretion, for the use and operational control of the Nigeria Police and is empowered, in his discretion, to give directions to the Governors of the Regions for the purpose of ensuring that the executive authority of the Region is not exercised in such a way as to prejudice the exercise of the executive authority of the Federation or to endanger the continuance of federal government.

The United Kingdom retains certain over-riding powers until

independence. These include the power to amend or to reconstitute the constitution, the power to disallow certain categories of legislation, and the power of the United Kingdom Parliament to legislate for Nigeria.

Nigeria is expected to attain independence with this form of constitution, suitably modified. The Secretary of State for the Colonies declared at the resumed London Conference in 1958 that he was authorized by the United Kingdom Government to say that if a resolution was passed by the new Federal Parliament early in 1960 asking for independence, the United Kingdom Government would agree to that request and to introduce a Bill in Parliament to enable Nigeria to become a fully independent country on 1 October 1960.

A number of important provisions were recommended by the Conference for inclusion in the constitutional instruments. Included provisions for fundamental rights and freedoms, including provisions for citizenship, procedures for changes in regional boundaries, powers to safeguard the nation, and provision for the control of the police. Procedures for the amendment of the constitution, including the regional constitutions, after independence were also recommended. The Conference agreed that the units of a federal structure were interdependent, no unit, including the Federation, should be able to amend its constitution in a way contrary to the general interests of the whole of Nigeria. Those parts of the Federal and Regional constitutions which were primarily of internal interest should therefore be amendable by a comparatively easy procedure requiring the concurrence of any other unit of the Federation. But the parts of the Federal and Regional constitutions which were of general concern should be entrenched and the procedure for their amendment should require the concurrence of all units of the Federation. Detailed provisions were recommended accordingly.

ANNEX VI

Election speeches by the principal political leaders of the Southern Cameroons, January 1959

A. ELECTION BROADCAST BY MR. P. M. KALE, LEADER OF THE KAMERUN PEOPLE'S PARTY (KPP), 15 JANUARY 1959

As we are approaching the third General Election into the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly, which was created in 1953 following the dissolution of the Eastern House of Assembly, I take this opportunity of addressing myself to the electorate of the twenty-six constituencies of the Southern Cameroons through the medium of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation on the stand of the Kamerun People's Party. But before I go further let me first of all give you a background of the KPP. The KPP was born in 1953 just at a time when there was a serious political crisis in Enugu which ended in the dissolution of the Eastern House of Assembly, during which time the Cameroons were attached to the Eastern Region. Thirteen Cameroonians were then legislators in the Eastern House of Assembly. After the crisis they broke off into two factions, forming two political parties, the KNC and the KPP. Since its inception the KPP has dedicated itself to the propagation of truth, the service of the Cameroons people and the preparedness to pay even the supreme sacrifice on behalf of our Fatherland, in order to bring home to our people those things that make for prosperity, health and happiness amongst civilized mankind. In the pursuit of these ideals, the KPP advocated this period of mingled goodwill and peaceful coexistence between Cameroonians and non-Cameroonians, irrespective of racial or tribal affinity. In other words, right from the word go the KPP adhered to the principle

that the unity of the Cameroons with Nigeria was vital to political progress and healthy development of the Cameroons. These ideals, lofty as they are, were misunderstood by enemies of the Kamerun People's Party, who painted them as saints and saviours of the Cameroons. The result was everything was done to discredit the Party's leaders and follow before the people throughout the length and breadth of the Cameroons. In spite of that, however, we held our ground firmly. Today, barely six years later, the cause of the KPP has been more than vindicated. A cross-section of the people begun to view matters from the right perspective. The future of the Cameroons is clear to them now in the light of constitutional arrangements and/or changes. Others, for sentimental or reasons are sceptical or rather pessimistic, and therefore divergent views as to the future of the Cameroons in relation to the Federation of Nigeria.

In plain language let me discuss the main differences, which seem to be purely ideological, between the KPP and its opponents. There are really only two of these opponents, the KNC and the OK—that is, One Kamerun. As to the KNC, there is no ideological difference between it and the KPP. The two parties' programmes are basically the same, because they have agreed that there can be no brighter future for the Cameroons than continued association with Nigeria. There is, however, an element of political opportunism in most of the KNCers, and their relentless attack on the leadership of the KPP by

sequential followers of the KNC. The seeds of these were, of course, sown by the entire pyramid of the KNC in 1953, but things have changed through the magnanimity of the leadership of the KNC, so I can afford to ignore that. The KPP believes in parliamentary democracy, Britain's proudest system of government; and to believe in democracy one must appreciate what Voltaire meant when he said "I disapprove of what you say, but will defend to the death your right to say it". We believe in freedom of speech and the right to appeal. We hold it as a fundamental human right that our opponents have the right to exist and to express their views as they see fit, so long as they do not impinge upon the rights of others. It is with that at the back of my mind that I am discussing the other political parties, and addressing myself strongly to the Cameroons electorate to be wary when the clock strikes for them to cast their votes on Saturday, 24 January this year of our Lord, 1959.

During the two Constitutional Conferences held in London, which I attended, the leaders of the KPP and the KNC agreed that the political life of the Cameroons, for reasons of administration and other arrangements concluded since forty years ago, was better secured by its continued association with Nigeria.

The last Constitutional Conference upheld this view by agreeing that, all things being equal, the Cameroons would constitute a full Region in the Federation of Nigeria, equal in all respects with the other Regions. As a practical step towards that goal the political status of the Cameroons has been enhanced by the introduction of the ministerial system of government. The attainment of self-government has also been agreed upon by constitutional arrangements to take effect as from October this year. These are some of the major achievements, amongst several other ones, which the combined efforts of the KPP and the KNC have borne for the benefit of Cameroonians, irrespective of creed or tribal connexions. In other words, the KPP is demonstrating to the world in a humble way the capacity of the black man to rule himself in his own country. Our stand to remain as a component part of the Federation of Nigeria is compatible with world opinion—an opinion which supports unity and not fragmentation of African races or groups, and it is also based on the indisputable fact that Cameroons political evolution has been greatly influenced by our association with Nigeria. That is so because for the forty years or more of the administration of the Cameroons as an integral part of Nigeria, Nigerian politicians and other leaders of thought, in their struggle to free Nigeria from the yoke of foreign rule, have always been conscious of Cameroonian national aspirations, have sympathized with same, and encouraged our growth towards becoming a self-governing territory. In fact, political parties in Nigeria have always had the Cameroons in their programme: for instance the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons and Dr. Mbadiwe's new political party, the Democratic Party of Nigeria and the Cameroons. But contrary to what the KPP maintain is contemporaneous with world opinion, the KNDP holds the view that the salvation of the Cameroons lies in its secession from Nigeria. Another political party, One Kamerun, holds the same view, and demands also unification of both the French and the British sectors of the Cameroons. The fundamental issue at stake, as I see it, is not who is right, but what is right. Having reached puberty somehow from British tutelage in so far as to achieve Regional status, having a Legislative Assembly with a Premier and Ministers, and guaranteed equal rights in the Federation of Nigeria, is it right for us to secede now and constitute the Southern Cameroons into a minute nation of three-quarters of a million people against 33 million strong of Nigeria, East, West and North, and four and a half millions of the French sector—or, having seceded, join the French sector with its four and a half millions and thereby throw overboard a culture that we have imbibed for forty years, and then embrace an entirely new one and start it all over again? Because however the protagonists of secession and unification argue the case, British political culture in relation to colonies is different from the French, and it is unthinkable

that four and a half millions tutored French Cameroonians would surrender to three-quarters of a million British trained Cameroonians.

Or is it better to remain as a component part of the Federation of Nigeria, and keep what we already hold for ourselves, the living ones of today, and for sons and daughters of the Cameroons yet unborn, bearing in mind that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush? The choice is before the Cameroons electorate. May the footprints on the sands of time which have guided great nations like Great Britain and the United States of America to build a heritage of freedom, guide you all in casting your votes.

B. ELECTION BROADCAST BY J. N. FONCHA, PRESIDENT-GENERAL OF THE KAMERUN NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (KNDP), 16 JANUARY 1959

Cameroonians and friends of the Cameroons, in a few days you will be called upon to perform the most important of the civic duties you owe the Southern Cameroons. The forthcoming general election to be held on 24 January 1959 is an opportunity for us all to choose the party which has proved itself to be devoted to the preservation of the national identity of the Cameroons. I have spoken to many of you right in your village gatherings and have given sufficient warnings as to the snares the KNC Government was preparing for us. Now that your time to give judgement against them is drawing near, I wish to recall some of the reasons why you should be careful to make a proper choice.

When in March 1955 I took the decision to go on the Opposition I had foreseen that the KNC would abandon our cherished policy of secession from the Federation of Nigeria. The alliance concluded with the Action Group without consulting the opinion of the National Executive Committee was a direct reversal of the famous "Benevolent Neutrality" declaration of April, 1953, and was a piece of insult to democratic-minded Cameroonians. It was an indication that worse decisions would be taken again unless something was done to curb the emerging dictators within the party. Those who now remain within the KNC have stooped so low to policies propounded against their own conscience that they have accepted serfdom as their lot. This is the time to shake off the chains of dictators from your hands and conscience and so help the nationalist party to regain freedom of thought and speech for you.

I have tasted the bitterness of being in opposition to a Government which works against the wishes of its people, but I have been the more happy for it because I have held up the national aspiration of Cameroonians from being bartered away secretly. At the Bamenda Summit Conference of May 1956, the KNDP stood firmly for secession from the Federation of Nigeria, thus forcing the KNC to take refuge under the platform of the KPP. The two hitherto bitter enemies found room for a compromise and together they signed a common resolution to remain part of an independent Nigeria, and requested that only a full regional status be accorded. This first submission of the NKC to the KPP was a betrayal of the trust imposed upon it by well meaning citizens of the Southern Cameroons and an eye opener to my prediction that it was heading towards integration.

It was a happy issue that the disagreement created at the Bamenda Summit Conference was carried to the Nigeria Constitutional Conference held in London in 1957. Here, the KNC/KPP continued to present a united front against the KNDP, but ideology rather than numerical strength was the deciding factor. The result of the Conference, as could be seen, proved to be more favourable for the KNDP than the allied parties; for the Secretary of State for the Colonies being between and betwixt had to rebound the matter to the Cameroons people at home. He, however, gave the two options to those between remaining a permanent part of an independent Nigeria or to secede from it and to

continue under the Trust Administration of the United Kingdom Government for a time before our own independence as free Cameroons people. He then added the warnings that Her Majesty's Government would be bound to follow the wishes of the majority whichever way they might choose to go.

The resumed Conference made no marked change in the stand of the two opposing parties. However, the KNDP delegation was able to force an agreement for the time for holding the general elections, an achievement which is all the more appreciated in view of the dilatoriness and unwillingness on the part of the KNC/KPP Government to go to the polls.

Each succeeding conference revealed some hidden aspects of the KNC plans for integration and hastened its fall. The Bamenda Conference prepared the way for the 1957 general election in which the KNDP rose from two to five, thus reducing the KNC from ten to six, and enabling the KPP to increase its lone member to two, thus forcing a patched-up government formed by using the six Native Administration nominated members. The Second Conference caused a further internal strife which resulted in the formation of two factions within the KNC Government. The Secessionist faction later on broke off and joined the KNDP. To maintain a majority at least in the House of Assembly, a huge concession had to be offered to the KPP to enable it to agree to a coalition government. Meanwhile the KNC had become so depleted that the few members remaining had to be kept up by false promises. Some of them have been appointed members of boards which do not exist and they now know only too late that they have been deceived.

You can now see how much we of the Opposition have done to sustain the fight for freedom for the Cameroons. By delaying tactics we have given Cameroonians the opportunity to mobilize. It is now the business of the whole nation to strike with a mighty force the final blow. Therefore let us all be ready for the zero hour, which is 24 January 1959.

Why must the KNDP capture the next Government of the Southern Cameroons? We all know the answer only too well. I mentioned earlier that I have for the past four years tasted the bitterness of a government which works against the wishes of its people. The future of the Southern Cameroons to me looks gloomy and I am determined to set things right with the goodwill of the thousands of Cameroonians now ready to contribute their shares for the success of a KNDP Government.

I wish therefore to ensure all citizens and friends of the Cameroons that once the KNDP is voted into power they will have justice and the respect due to them. The implementation of the recommendations of the resumed Conference would be a regrettable thing if it were left in the hands of the KNC/KPP Government. Cameroonians, if they would be considered for higher appointment at all would have to bend low, cap in hand, and consent to the meanest orders against their conscience. If they now rule with an iron hand even when the soil has been removed beneath their feet, how much more if they were given another opportunity to carry on for the next five years? Intimidation and victimization of the civil servants had been the order of the day, and I fail to see how in a democratic world of today human beings would continue to work under such conditions.

A KNDP government would liberate our workers from fear and an uncertain future and would enkindle in them the spirit of patriotism and self-respect which are essential for success in any business. Employment and promotion shall be on merit, and efficiency shall be obtained by mutual respect and trust which are essential between the legislators and the civil servants. The establishment of a Cameroons Civil Service this year would mean nothing to Cameroonians if this were done by a KNC/KPP Government. The KNDP as the nationalist party will be the one to follow our policy of Cameroonizing the Civil Service of this Territory. While strangers continue to have chances for employment, this will be limited to the very few, special ones with

special technical knowledge necessary for continuing the present establishment.

Another important constitutional change which must not be allowed to fall in the hands of a dictatorial government is the inauguration of the House of Chiefs. The KNDP regards the House of Chiefs as an additional authority for the building up of peaceful and stable government. Its inauguration will disclose the valuable practice gained through long experience of village politics which should be directed to fit in with the running of modern Governments. The only party fitted to direct such body is the KNDP, which has long been interested in it.

Let me now draw your attention to our economic potentialities and say what a KNDP Government would do about them. The integrationists have since the inception of the Southern Cameroons Regional Status fed us with the alleged poverty of the Territory, but we were never discouraged because we know the facts. We maintained that this was not true, but that the shortcomings in our yearly estimates were due to the arbitrary award of 1 per cent to the Territory as its own share of the constitution grant, and we continued to say that it was quite below our just contribution. How far we were right was proved by the Fiscal Commission, an impartial body which quickly saw the matter in its correct perspective. Instead of 1 per cent it proved that our share was 5 per cent. Thus, instead of receiving from the Federal Bank only £200,000 in a good year for the Southern Cameroons, we were due £1 million and a balance of £800,000 was retained in error. Secession, we maintain, will bring the Southern Cameroons an era of prosperity, for instead of receiving only a part of our income, we shall retain the whole.

Indeed, we are poor in the midst of plenty. Our soil is comparably richer than that of any Region of the Federation. Our banana crop, the easiest source of wealth available for everybody, refuses to grow in other Regions of the Federation. In addition oil palm, cocoa, coffee and rubber, the main source of the wealth of the Eastern and Western Regions, grow almost uncultivated in the Southern Cameroons. Tea, pepper, castor oil, citrus, soya beans etc. are proved to grow luxuriantly in the Territory. Vegetables are of numerous varieties. Our timber resources are great.

It is our plan that once we come into power we shall liberate the funds of the Regional Development Agency and give suitable loans to those farmers who are desirous of making use of our rich soil. The KNC/KPP government has failed in its promise for loans.

And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, the general election and its purpose: You have been warned of the consequences of your vote on the 24th. You will choose between freedom or eternal subordination. The KNC and KPP stand for permanent subjugation of your right for a Cameroons nationhood to that of Nigeria. The return of the KNC/KPP to power would mean submission to the regime of approved dictators. It shocks right-thinking people to imagine it could happen again. If you do, apart from giving up yourselves, your children, the land and its wealth to an independent Nigerian Government, you would be giving yourselves once more to brutal rebuke as well as restoring a regime of terror to the peaceful, loving people of the Cameroons.

But if you vote the KNDP to power, you will secede from the Federation before 1960. You will then work for real freedom for the Cameroons as a nation. You will build up the economy of the Southern Cameroons on a better footing under the guidance of United Kingdom Government as the Administering Authority. The freedom loving peoples of the world will admire you and will, through their representatives in the United Nations organization, give us the assistance necessary for a new, emerging nation. Under the KNDP government you will enjoy the sympathy of those who have suffered injustice in order to make you free and happy.

Secession from the Federation of Nigeria will place the Southern Cameroons in a position to negotiate terms for reunification with

Encouragement in this field has been sustained by advancing moderate short-term loans to farmers through their co-operative societies and the recent inauguration of the nucleus of a Co-operative Bank. This will lead to a definite policy of establishing a genuine spirit of self-help among Cameroons peoples.

Educationally, and in spite of our limited resources, we speeded our scholarship policy and sent more Cameroonians who otherwise could not afford education abroad to study the professions, and in a few years started reaping the benefit by seeing young Cameroonians take up Senior Service or European posts in the country. The first girls' secondary school has been introduced to save our girls from the difficulties they experienced in going abroad for secondary education, and it is a pleasure to see that Cameroons girls are quickly taking their place as workers in various fields. A vigorous programme for teacher training is being pursued.

In the sphere of roads, a great deal has been achieved in the last four years as compared with the state in which we were before 1953. There are now permanent bridges throughout our Federal network, and a programme of widening and surfacing is going on.

A plan to improve our feeder roads into the productive areas is being pursued and the Tombel road is to be made all-season by the end of this year. Work on the Mamfe road is in progress and survey work on the Bakabe-Fontem road is being carried out now. By 1960, we shall not suffer the seasonal handicap of having our roads closed in the wet season.

We are now proud of having at least one hospital in every Division and are also improving and are expanding old hospitals as well as extending maternity and welfare services into the rural areas.

Plans are afoot for introducing pipe-borne water into all our important towns in the Territory, and towns like Kumba, Buea, Tiko, Bamenda, Nkambe have already been served.

I could go on like this the whole evening, and I can say categorically that in spite of handicaps, the face of this Territory has been more greatly changed in the last four years than it was ever dreamt of in the first forty years under British administration as part of the Eastern Region.

There has been vigorous commercial activity and expansion following in the wake of this political advance and both banking and commercial houses have opened up expensive branches throughout the Territory. Investment in timber business and plantation industry have not lagged behind. All these have meant more opportunities for employment and training for Cameroonians in their country, especially as the Government has insisted on providing adequate safeguards for their welfare in their interests.

These and other things has my party planned and done for you. The programme stretches far into the future until greater prosperity and better living standards become the order of the day in the Southern Cameroons and our people can hold their own and command respect and recognition in the ever growing community of Independent West African Territories.

What do our newly fledged and untried adversaries like the Kamerun National Democratic Party and One Kamerun offer

the people? Nothing but the never-ending and meaningless slogan of secession from the Federation of Nigeria. They simply have no faith in the capacity of the Cameroons people to progress at the pace of other Regions or manage their own affairs efficiently. They stated quite categorically before the Secretary of State last October that the Cameroons people are too backward to have absorbed the constitutional changes introduced in 1958 adequately and warrant the new proposals asked for by KNC/KPP Alliance which include:

(1) A full African Ministerial Cabinet (excepting the Legal Secretary);

(2) An independent Judiciary and Public Service for the Territory;

(3) Regional self-government this year;

(4) Independence with the other Regions of the Federation in 1960 on a basis of full equality.

They advocate secession and unification with the French Cameroons and a blank future. Their reasons for this is that they fear enslavement by Nigeria but wouldn't mind enslavement under a French Cameroons which would have been independent in January 1960 and therefore politically more advanced than the Southern Cameroons. They talk glibly of wishing to retain the Cameroons identity. What other identity do we want besides the one offered by the independence of our legislature and the power to manage our domestic affairs in the way we want?

They have allied themselves to One Kamerun party, the reincarnation of the notorious UPC, which was very fitly rejected in 1957 elections.

If the French Cameroons is in such a happy state over their political future, why do French Cameroonians now resident here not pack up *en masse* and go home to rejoice as Chananians and Guineans did? Why do they cling like leeches and flock daily to this Sector?

The issues before you all are clear as crystal. The Kamerun National Democratic Party has neither the men nor the programme for the next government of this country.

If you allow yourselves to heed their emotional and alarmist cry of "Wolf, Wolf" when there is no wolf about, you may live to regret it for generations yet to come. But I trust in the sound and independent judgement which is characteristic of the Southern Cameroons electorate and which has weathered you through the trials in the early years of our political struggles, and I call on you to return the KNC in greater strength than ever, for you have all the worthy sons of the country contesting on the KNC platform and the rest in the KPP platform. Reject the KNDP as political imposters who want to reap where they did not sow.

A new KNC government assures you of fearless and thoughtful leadership, continued progress and a secure and peaceful future. A KNDP or One Kamerun government means nothing but noise, a blank and uncertain future and a possible plunge back into barbarian tribal law and the stone age.

I am confident that as usual you will vote for the "Banana and the house" and return your party, the KNC, to power to take good care of your future.

Avoiding trouble along the Cameroon frontier A DELICATE TASK FOR BRITAIN

By Richard Cox

Politically West Africa is almost as explosive as any part of that continent. In the Cameroun Republic, which became independent on January 1, there are an estimated fifty thousand people in revolt against the Government and an average of two hundred killings every month.

Although the revolt is in former French trusteeship and the French Army has been asked back to help to put it down, its repercussions in the neighbouring British trusteeship of the Southern Cameroons are likely to involve the British Army before long. We may well be vilified in West Africa for imperialist machinations in an area that, paradoxically, we have never taken any real interest in and that we are only too anxious to leave.

Arbitrary division

The trouble is centred on the Bamileke tribe, which lives along the range of hills and low mountains running down to the Cameroon mountain and the volcano island of Fernando Po. This tribe was divided, as arbitrarily as Germany has more recently been, when the German colony of Camerun was made a League of Nations trusteeship after the Great War. But as the frontier runs in some places along remote mountainsides and in others through almost impenetrable jungle and thick banana plantations it is almost uncontrollable. This never used to matter. Natives crossed freely to see their relatives, to trade and smuggle. The British always crossed to use the French roads when driving long distances, because the ones on their own side are so appalling.

However, the two parts of the tribe were inevitably under very different Administrations. The Colonial Office put the Southern Cameroons under the wing of Eastern Nigeria, made a mental note that it was a nicely remote spot to send badly behaved district officers, and then quietly forgot about the place. Law and order were maintained, but except in the South there was virtually no development. The Bamileke lived on in primitive happiness, largely uneducated, talking the pidgin-English so well reproduced by Gerald Durrell in "the Bafut Beagles." It is still a colonial never-never land. When I was there recently a D.O. I know had been asked by a distant village if he would please collect their back taxes for the past ten years.

On the former French side, where there are far more Bamileke, a curious mixture of development and reaction has produced a veritable powder keg. The Bamileke there are the hardest working tribe in the country and they form a sixth of the total population of three millions, but they occupy a disproportionately small amount of land. The French ruled through the chiefs, who retained completely feudal powers, yet roads, good primary education, and the money put into the country by France all combined to make the Bamileke wake up. Resent-

ment against the chiefs and land hunger were strong when the U.P.C. party was founded. This party demanded independence and union with the British Cameroons, so it naturally appealed to the Bamileke. When, in 1955, it was declared illegal and its leader, Dr Felix Moumie, fled abroad, the Bamileke were just in the mood to run wild. Dr Moumie ordered a terrorist campaign to force the French out, and the slaughter began. Aided by Czech arms and advice—there are undoubtedly Communists

passes can complete the proof. Some terrorists go unhindered still, but many come up before a magistrate. They are declared illegal immigrants and are taken to the frontier and handed over, where the French security forces most probably make a quick clean end of the matter against the nearest wall. When you have seen the destroyed villages and children with no hands and feet you cannot blame the French either. You can only marvel at the patience with which the Nigerian Army patrols go out, carrying Bren guns, rifles, and no ammunition, and successfully arrest the terrorists without incident or violence. Confidence has been restored in the administration of the Southern Cameroons remarkably quickly.

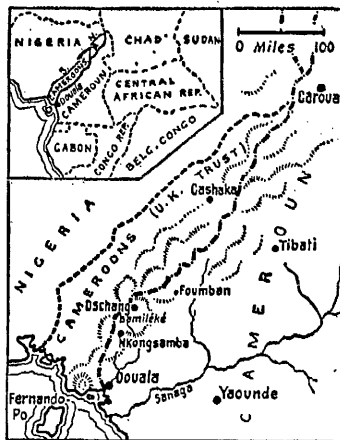
Withdrawal of troops

Far from being pleased, Mr Foncha, the Premier of the Southern Cameroons, has asked for the removal of the troops by October 1, when they will be withdrawn anyway, as an independent Nigeria wisely wants to keep out of the affair. The Premier proposes to replace them with a Southern Cameroon Army not yet in existence, but supposedly to be manned by the numerous Cameroonians now serving with distinction in other West African armies. This would sound better if anyone were able to name these said soldiers. Admittedly, it placates the Opposition, over whom Mr Foncha no longer has a majority, and who would fiercely oppose the arrival of British troops. But it does not solve the problem.

It is difficult to see how Britain can avoid the responsibility, at least until the plebiscite in April, when the Cameroons will decide whether to join Nigeria or the Cameroun Republic.

While the Colonial Office seems to have ceased to bother about the administration of the country, it is certainly now worried about this military question. But if the Colonial Office feels it ought to do something, the Foreign Office must hope devoutly that it will not. When the Northern Cameroons voted in its plebiscite three months ago to remain with Britain there were howls throughout West Africa. I have had it seriously put to me by Nigerian Ministers that we influenced that plebiscite in order to keep the area for a future military and nuclear base. It would be exceptionally ironic if, having decided not to give the Southern Cameroons such an option of remaining under British rule, the Government should in its last six months of tenure be forced to give apparently solid evidence of our militantly imperialist designs on a strategically useless corner of Africa.

Indeed it would be easy to regard the whole affair as a traditional farce, in which all the events combine to force the Colonial Office into the very position it has been trying to avoid from the start, were it not that for the ordinary people of the Southern Cameroons it is serious. For the entire time of our trusteeship we have done the absolute minimum for them and now, whatever their politicians may say, they do need our help.



with both Moumie and the rebels—it has continued ever since, undeterred by the achievement of independence, the likelihood of Cameroon unity, and the legalisation of the U.P.C.

It is in fact largely out of Dr Moumie's control. The burning of villages and the mutilation of women and children has resulted in vendettas between villages, while "young intellectuals" have taken their chance, formed their own bands, and set about destroying the power of the chiefs. The countryside is in anarchy. Moumie dare not return to lead the U.P.C. and could not stop the violence if he tried. French troops are doing their best, but are due to leave on June 30, and will be happy to do so.

Naturally all this has affected the Bamileke on the British side. Not only have they been alarmed and distressed, they have been forced to shelter their terrorist cousins, who need somewhere quiet to hide out and plan new raids. In January this year internal security and the apprehensions of the population demanded some action by the authorities. So the Nigerian Army sent two battalions to police the frontier and deport terrorists.

Quite apart from the difficulties of physically catching suspects who move along mountain tracks up to two days' march from the nearest road, there is the problem of positively identifying them. The policemen who accompany every patrol to make the arrests can usually tell a French Bamileke from a British one, but often only the possession of terrorist rings, badges, or

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700 flee from New Republic

BUEA, Southern Cameroons,
June 18

MORE than 700 refugees from the Cameroon Republic have crossed the border into the Southern Cameroons in the past two days, according to official sources here. Men, women and children have arrived carrying on their heads the few belongings that they have been able to bring away.

Over 5,000 refugees from the new republic—independent since January after 40 years of French rule—have already settled in this British trusteeship territory, which is to vote next year on whether to join the Cameroon Republic or Nigeria.

The increased flow of refugees, according to the same sources, is due to increased activity by Cameroon Republic security forces in the disturbed Bamileke region. They are driving terrorists towards the villages near the border, and the villagers in turn are fleeing from the terrorists.

Europeans Killed

Europeans, mostly French in Douala, asked the Cameroon Prime Minister for increased protection when he visited the town this week, according to reports.

Six Europeans are said to have been killed by terrorists in Douala this month. Attacks are being made in daylight on Europeans and on shops. Europeans and Africans working for European firms have gone on strike in protest. Nearly all shops in Douala are closed and tension is high, added the reports.—
Reuter.

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S Cam file
Security 15th

Big army hunt for African terrorists

From Pieter Lessing

DOUALA, Cameroon Republic, Tuesday.—French and Cameroonian troops this morning began a mass sweep through terrorist-held North-West Cameroons.

This follows the latest series of bomb outrages which in two weeks have claimed seven European and countless African dead.

British troops are standing by near the border to prevent terrorists fleeing into the British Cameroons.

Revolt

Documents captured during recent raids suggest that Moumie, who is directing the terrorist campaign from the safety of Guinea, may be preparing to return to the Cameroons to lead a general revolt of the Balleke tribe to establish an autonomous Communist regime in the North-West Cameroons.

The French have accused the British authorities of allowing terrorists to take refuge in the British Cameroons where they can rest and regroup.

The total number of dead since the terror campaign started 13 months ago is estimated at well over 4,000. The savageness of the terrorist attacks is similar to that of Mau Mau in Kenya.

I was taken to mass graves where women and children were indiscriminately hacked to pieces and buried together.

NEWS CHRONICLE

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825/18/01

22 JUN 1960

Yorkshire Post

S. Cameroons want British protection

BUEA (Southern Cameroons), Thursday.—The Parliament of the Southern Cameroons, the British protectorate bordering on the terrorist-ridden State of Cameroon, today appealed to Britain to set up a Southern Cameroons Military Force. The Parliament in Buea passed a motion requesting British assistance by 14 votes to 13. Mr. John Foncha, the Premier, said during the debate that Nigerian troops guarding the border between the Southern Cameroons and the newly-independent Cameroon would not have any right to remain in the country after Nigeria became independent on October 1.—British United Press.

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EVENING NEWS, FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 1958

CAMEROON ATROCITIES

Are these revelations true?

A UNITED Nations Visiting Mission is due in the French Cameroons to determine the true aspiration of the people and feverish preparations are being made by the Nationalists to present one united front for the total liberation of the territory from the shackles of French imperialism.

The following are information collected from reliable source in Douala and we are asking the French Ambassador in Accra to answer the following questionnaires which are indeed very shocking treatments and atrocities:

IS IT TRUE THAT :

1. On 17/7/57 in Douala, early in the morning all children on their way to school have been arrested and taken to the nearest Police Headquarters for identification. Only 3 students were released. All others were murdered and thrown into the Wouri river?
2. On 8/11/57 in Douala, in the New-Bell quarter, 300 people were arrested and taken to Makak concentration camp and since then, nothing was heard about them?
3. On 5/1/58 in the Dinde quarter, in Douala, 30 women were arrested and raped by French soldiers before being carried off to unknown places.
4. On the same date, more than 60 people arrested and barricaded inside a house, were burnt alive by French soldiers. A new treatment for political prisoners was inaugurated on that same day: Forcing them to swallow a great amount of salt and to drink urine.
5. 10/2/58—37 students who had gone fishing on the banks of Wouri River were murdered by a French patrol and their bodies thrown into the river. In the evening, in all quarters of Douala, French soldiers closely watched the victims parents who were not allowed to cry over the loss of their children.
6. On 2/3/58—Six army trucks full of prisoners were driven to the banks of the River Sanaga and returned empty. There were no survivors. On that same evening, four other trucks took patriots to the Mokollo concentration camp, 1,200 kms. from Douala. Their families remained without news from them.
7. On 9/4/58—All children under fifteen years of age were gathered from the Ngodi quarter of Douala. There were nine trucks full of them. No one knows what happened to the poor little ones.

(To Be Continued)

DECRET

Le Président de la République Française,

Vu les décrets des 23 mars 1921 et 21 Février 1925 déterminant les attributions du Commissaire de la République Française dans les territoires du Cameroun ;

Vu le règlement sur la comptabilité du 14 janvier 1869 ;

Vu le décret du 30 decembre 1912 sur le regime financier des colonies ;

Vu le décret du 31 decembre 1925 fixant le regime monetaire du Cameroun ;

Sur la proposition du Ministre des Finances et du Ministre des Colonies,

Decrete :

Article 1. L'acceptation en paiement des monnaies anglaise dans les caisses publiques est autorisée dans les regions du Cameroun designees par arrêté du Commissaire de la République. Le cours de ces monnaies sera fixé par arrêté, dès promulgations du présent décret, et ultérieurement, au moins une fois par mois, apres avis du Trésorier-Payeur.

Ce cours fixé, en principe, d'après le cours commercial local, devra tenir compte des frais éventuels de retour des monnaies anglaises dans leurs pays d'origine et des frais ou commissions de banque en vue de leur échange en monnaie française ou en cheque.

Ces monnaies ne pourront, sauf autorisation spéciale de Ministre des Finances, servir qu'au paiement des dépenses publiques qui doivent être acquittées en territoire britannique, et a condition que la somme a payer soit mandatée en francs.

Article 2e. Les comptables justifient leurs entrées en monnaies anglaises par une mention a la souche et au verso des quittances ou receptifs délivrés aux parties versantes. Les sorties sont justifiées par la production des bons de retrait délivrés par l'ordonnateur.

Le trésorier-payeur tient un registre auxiliaire représentant le détail des entrées et des sorties des monnaies anglaises.

Article 3. Les pertes ou bénéfices de change qui résulteront éventuellement des variations du taux d'acceptation des monnaies anglaises seront imputés au budget du Cameroun.

Les augmentations ou diminutions d'encaisse provenant des bénéfices ou pertes de change devront être inscrites à un compte ouvert parmi les opérations hors budget du budget spécial sous la rubrique « Frais et bénéfices provenant de l'échange des monnaies anglaises. Les opérations effectuées au titre de ce dernier compte seront soldées mensuellement par le comptable, soit par versement au budget si elles laissent un bénéfice, soit, dans le cas contraire, par un versement par le budget.

Article 4. Le Ministre des Finances et le Ministre des Colonies sont chargés, chacun en ce qui le concerne, de l'exécution du présent décret, qui sera inséré au journal officiel de la République Française et au Bulletin Officiel du Ministère des Colonies./.

Fait à Paris, le

Par le Président de la République :

Le Ministre des Finances,

Le Ministre des Colonies,

**THE THIRD ALL-AFRICAN PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE
CAIRO, MARCH, 1961**

(Resolution on Cameroon)

Considering that there exists in the Kameroun strong French, British and West-German military bases, in conformity with the agreement signed between the Kameroun Government and these powers,

Considering that a popular consultation was organised in this country in the presence of a foreign army and at the moment when all democratic freedoms were suppressed and when the population did not express itself freely,

Condemns the agreement signed between Mr. Philips and the French Government eliminating national sovereignty and practically converting this territory into a French department in Africa;

Strongly stands against the bombardment of numerous regions in the Kameroun by the French artillery and the repeated executions of Kameroonese people struggling for independence;

Strongly protests against the arbitrary division into two parts, not only the Kameroun as a whole but of West-Kameroun;
Hails the result of the plebiscite on February 11th and 12th this year as a victory of the Kameroonese people and the fruit of many years of struggle for a true unity and independence;

Regrets that numerous frauds were organised by the British imperialists to prevent the Kameroun from regaining its political entity;

Requests all Independent African States to consider the gravity of the situation in the Kameroun and to support the following propositions which answer the profound aspirations of the people

of the Kameroun both in the UN and outside it:

1. The immediate and complete withdrawal of French and British Military troops and technicians in the Kameroun.
 2. The abrogation of French, British and other agreements.
 3. The restoration and respect of democratic and syndical freedoms and the liberation of political prisoners in the two zones.
 4. The immediate and complete Africanisation of management posts;
- Invites all the popular forces of Africa to support the Kameroonesse people in their just struggle for true unity and independence.¹

¹ Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism. A short political guide*. London: Pall Mall Press, pp. 47-8.

ATROCITIES IN THE FRENCH CAMEROON

10:4:58—The residence of Mr. Ruben Umnyobe, Secretary General of the U.P.C. was besieged, whilst all his furniture and personal belongings were seized. All his neighbours were arrested driven out of town, and killed.

3:3:58 — In the New-Bell quarter, around seven p.m. more than 500 patriots were arrested and taken to unknown places.

14:4:58 — An important military detachment composed of five trucks, arrived in the Pitti village, about 20 kilometres from Dwala.

BAMILEKE REGION

13:2:58 — Following the assassination of an important "lackery" Wafo Bafang, 15 followers of the U.P.C. arrested were imprisoned in the concentration camp of this locality. One of them was executed without trial.

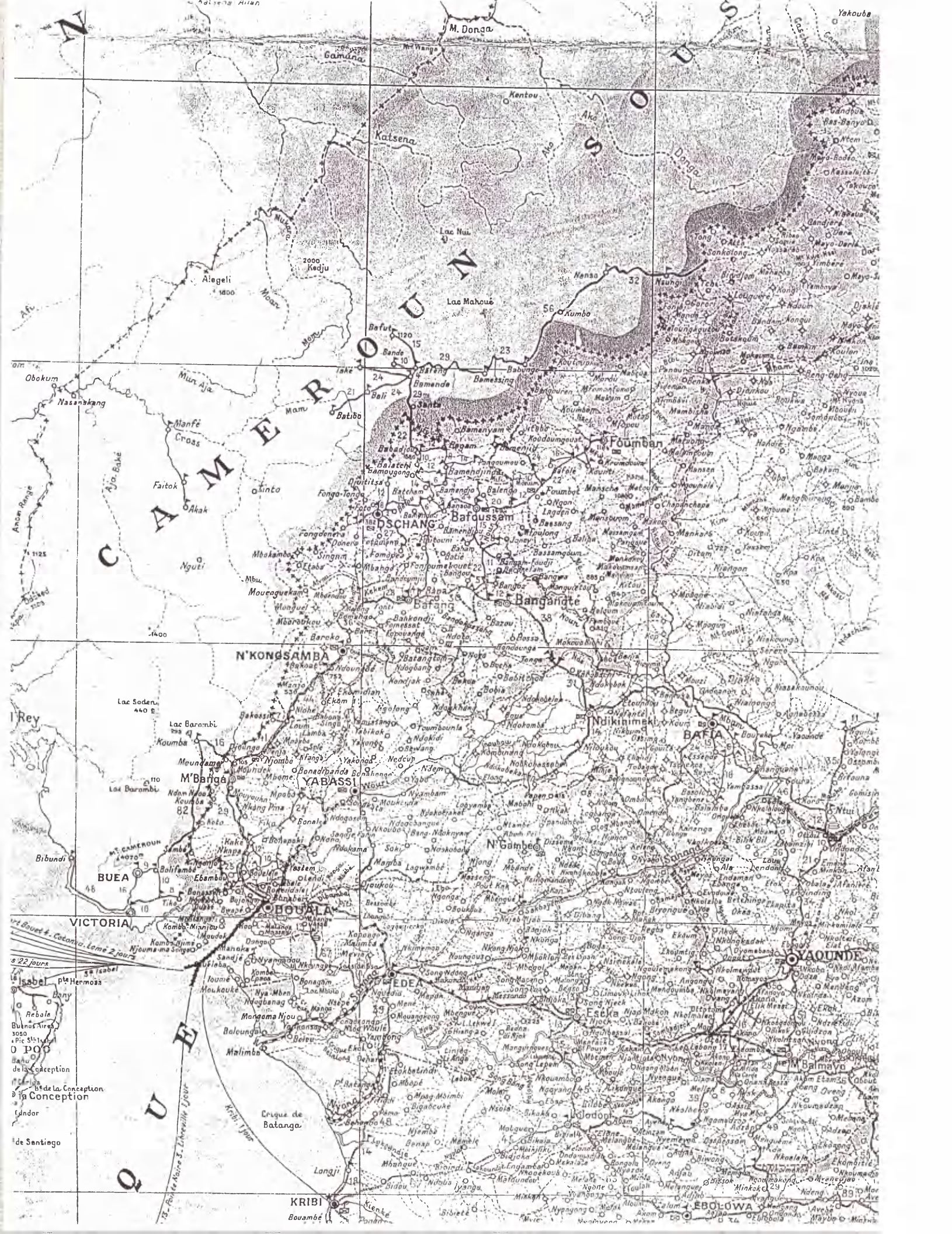
28:3:58 — The popular leader of Bagang, Ngankam Mathias, was arrested and imprisoned together with all the followers of his

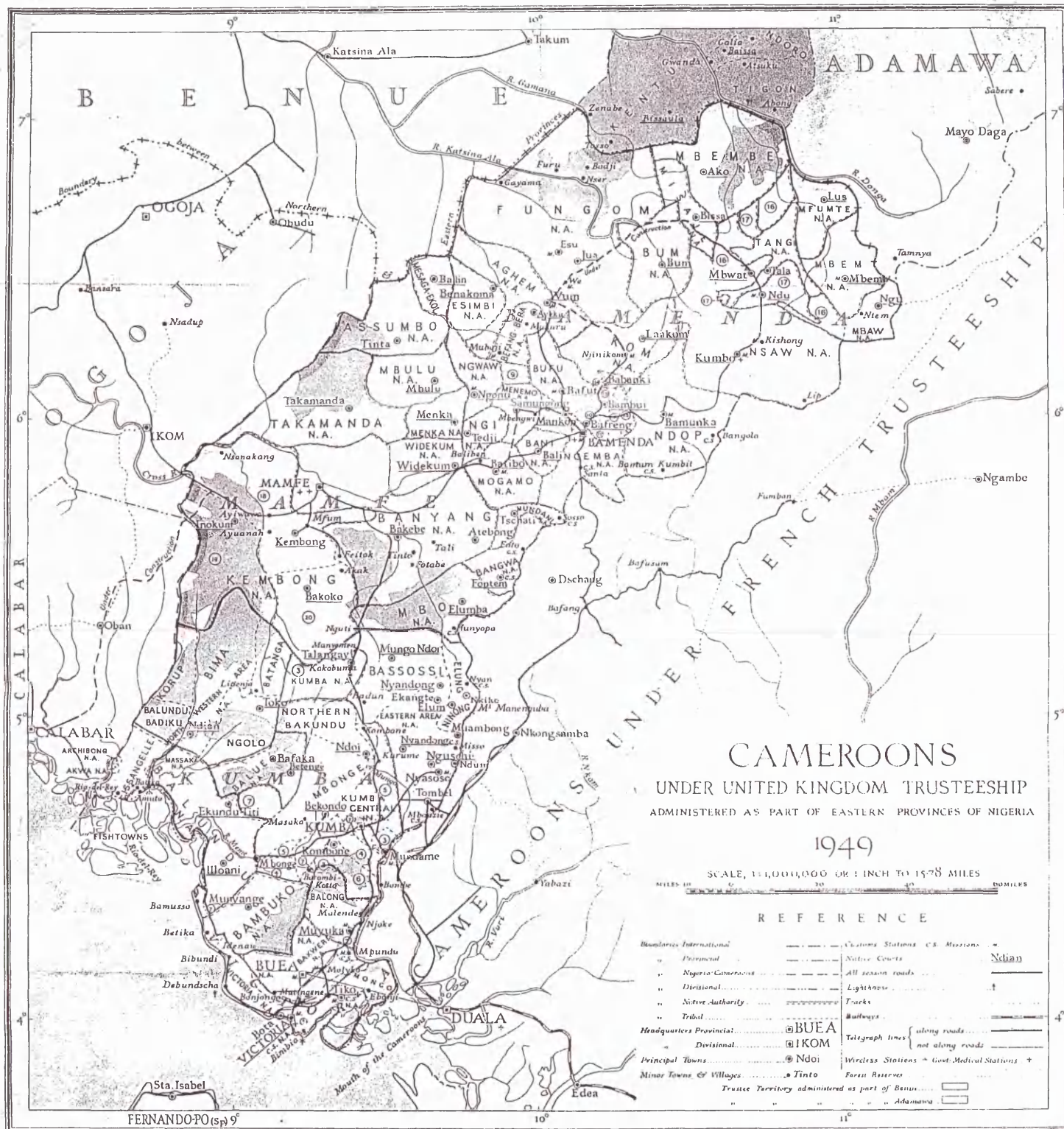
movement. All they get as daily ration, is salt-water.

25:4:58 — In the Fokoue village 249 people out of 251 gathered in a traditional assembly, were arrested by police forces, taken to the Dschang concentration camp and their throats were severed.

It should be added that, on this very same day, twenty soldiers raped pregnant women and a ten-year old girl.

Four man-nurses were put under arrest, and tortured in the hospital of the Protestant church of Bangwa, in the middle of the religious service. No one knows what happened to them.





1750/765/4-50

NOTE: The smaller Native Authority and Tribal Areas and those consisting of two or more detached portions are indicated by numbers thus ①

VICTORIA DIV: ① BIMBA ② BALONG
KUMBA : ③ BALONG ④ KUMBE ⑤ KUMBE ⑥ KUMBE ⑦ KUMBE ⑧ KUMBE ⑨ KUMBE ⑩ KUMBE
BAMENGA DIV: ⑪ NGEMBA ⑫ BAFRENG ⑬ BAMENGA ⑭ SAMBILI ⑮ SAMBILI-LUNCAW ⑯ SAMBILI ⑰ SAMBILI ⑱ SAMBILI ⑲ SAMBILI ⑳ SAMBILI
MAMFE DIV: ① KEAKA ② EKWE ③ ORANG

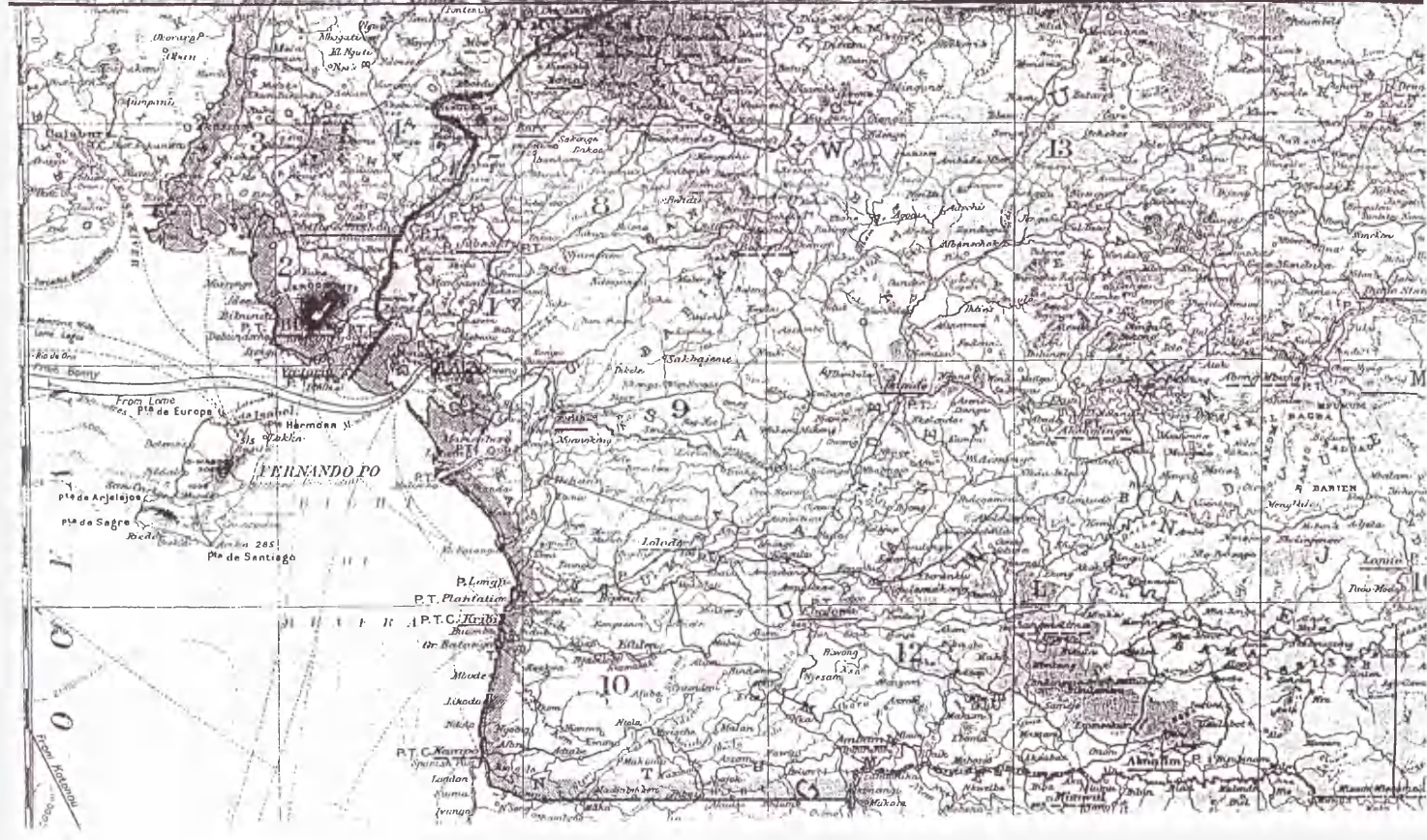
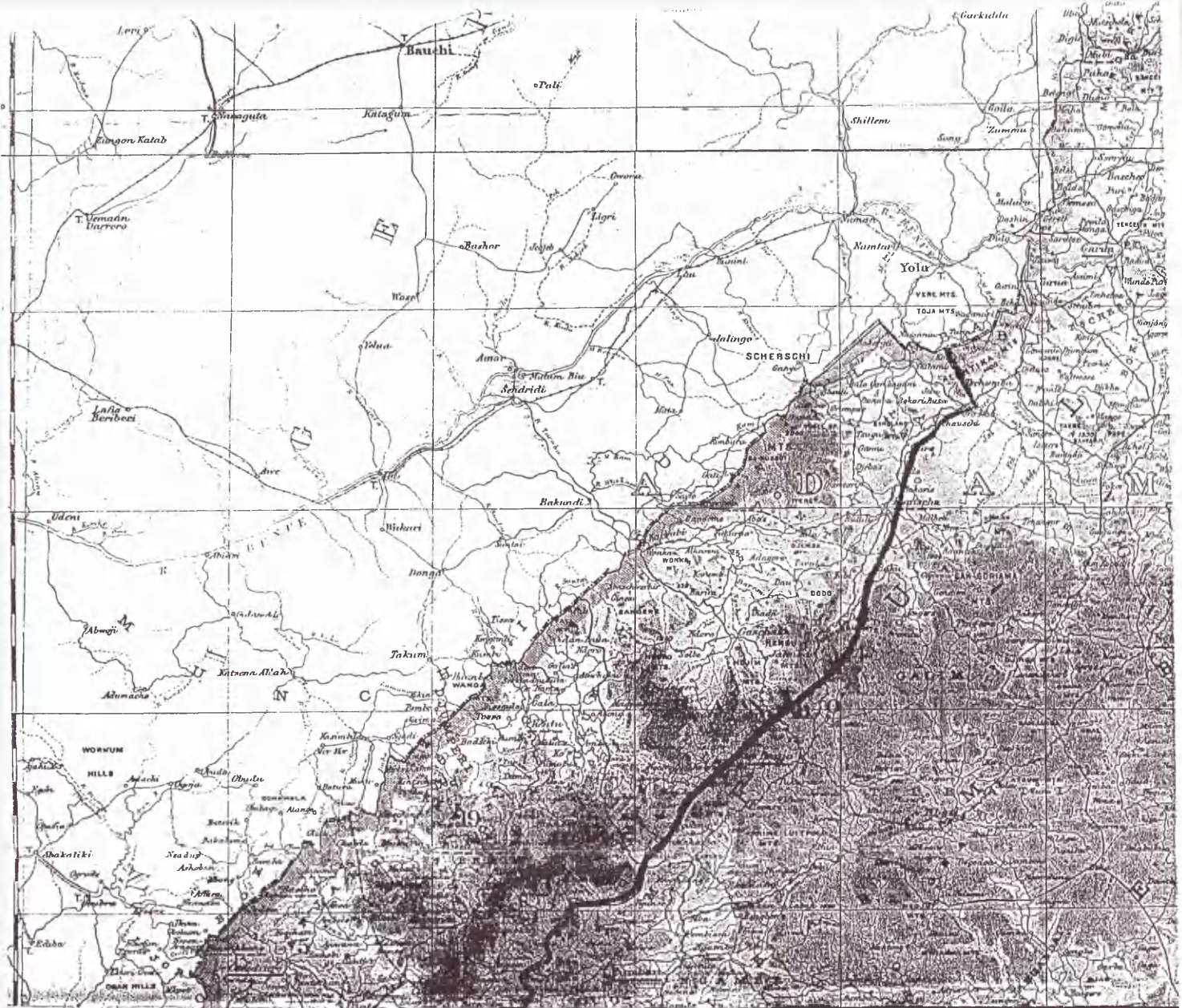
Drawn & Reproduced by Survey Dept., Lagos, Nigeria.

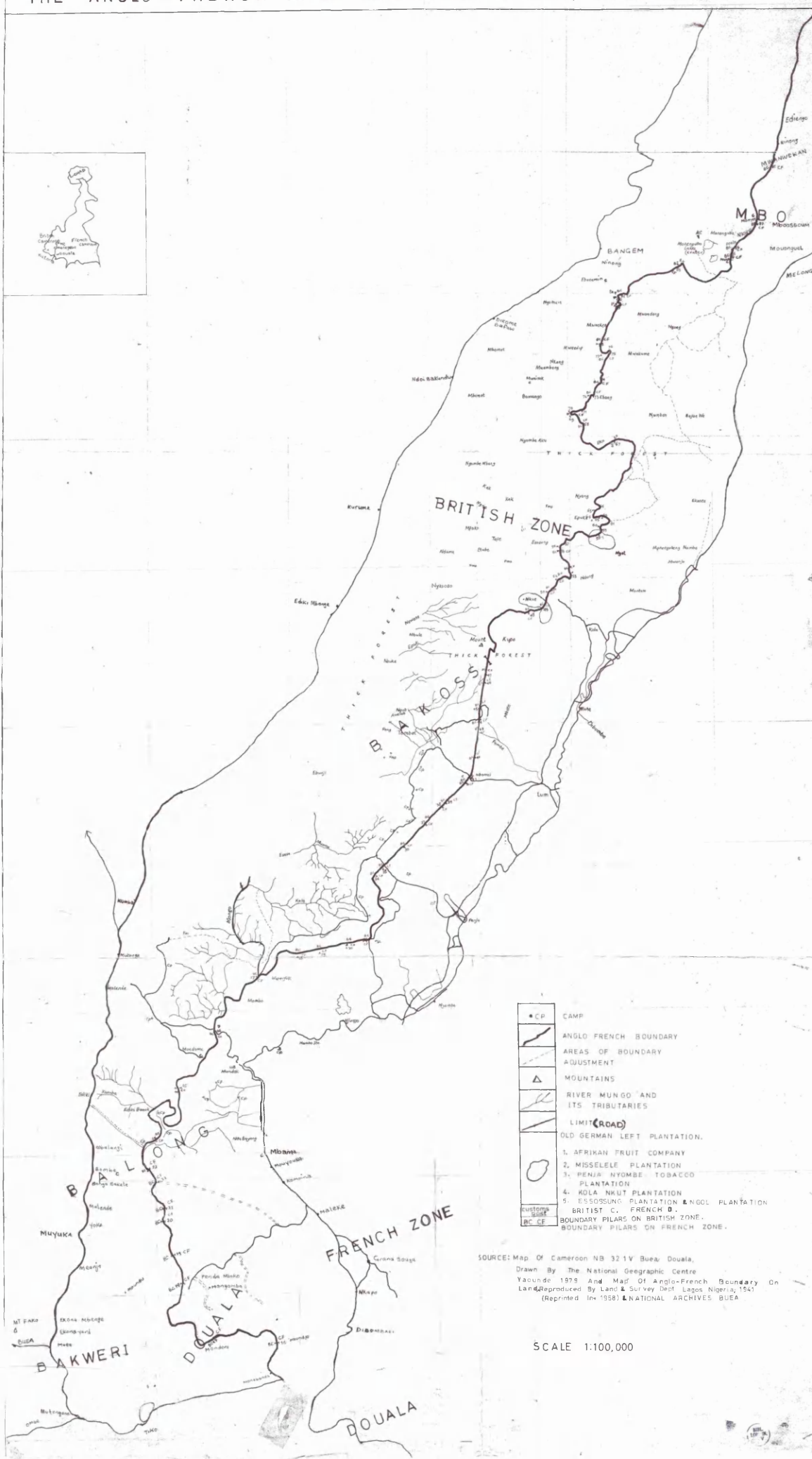
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GARTHOEGUE

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SOURCE: Map Of Cameroon NB 32 1 V Buea Douala,
Drawn By The National Geographic Centre
Yaounde 1979 And Map Of Anglo-French Boundary On
Land Reproduced By Land & Survey Dept Lagos Nigeria, 1941
(Reprinted In 1958) & NATIONAL ARCHIVES BUEA

SCALE 1:100,000