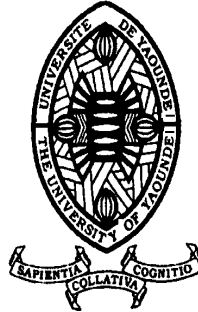


THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

POST GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR  
SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL  
SCIENCES

DOCTORAL RESEARCH UNIT FOR  
SOCIAL SCIENCES



UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I

CENTRE DE RECHERCHE ET DE  
FORMATION DOCTORALE EN  
"SCIENCES HUMAINES, SOCIALES  
ET EDUCATIVES"

UNITE DE RECHERCHE ET DE  
FORMATION DOCTORALE EN  
SCIENCES HUMAINES

**COMPETITIVE POLITICS AND THE DYNAMICS OF  
MILITANCY IN CAMEROON: BASIS AND  
IMPLICATIONS ON POLITICAL PLURALISM AND  
DEVELOPMENT 1961-1992,  
A HISTORICAL SURVEY.**

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Specialty: History of International Relations

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Mention

Tres Honorable



To

My Mother

Margerete Bih Awah. For laying a solid foundation for my being.

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## ABSTRACT

This research piece titled **Competitive Politics and the Dynamics of Militancy in Cameroon: Basis and Implications on Political Pluralism and Development 1961-1992, a Historical Survey**. Brings to lime light the dynamics of militancy as a historical reality in the practice and conduct of politics in Cameroon, traces the origins of political competition in the territory, as well as its manifestations from where is exposed the inconsistency of political actors who as militants, failed to uphold a unique ideal of power thus remained dynamic, versatile and flexible to hang on to any ideal of power so long as it met their personal power aspirations. Examining and analysing this attitude and conduct of political actors through the lens of John Cartwright's theories on political support, methodological individualism and the modernisation theory of development, We came about with the establishment of our thesis which hold that; Politics in Post-independent Cameroon away from being a function of development for general wellbeing, was rather a function of interest for self-preservation against the greater purpose of service to the people and the nation, hence, putting to question the effectiveness of democracy. To successfully conduct this research the qualitative research method was effectively engaged and applied. Since the work is concerned with the practice and conduct of partisan politics in the context of political competition, which automatically necessitates an in-depth analyses of behavioural traits, attitudes, opinions, mind sets, and value systems, the interactive and documentary research approach imposed itself as an imperative. We proceeded in this approach by collecting a wide range of primary and secondary data which permitted a successful diagnosis of the problem. To capture the intentions, attitudes, opinions, mind-sets and facts on the conduct of militancy in post-independent Cameroon we privileged data from newspaper accounts and reports, not living out oral accounts from interviews and documentaries spotlighting key political actors of the period. The end result of the findings revealed that militancy in post-independent Cameroon had remained permanently dynamic and these dynamics besides consolidating the quest for freedom, democracy and the individualisation of politics, it proliferated political parties and produced adverse effects on the general welfare and development of the territory as it enhanced social inequality, conflict and corruption which are all repugnant to development and the wellbeing of the people.

## RESUME

*Ce travail de recherche intitulé **Competitive Politics and The Dynamics of Militancy in Cameroon: Basis and Implications on Political Pluralism and Development 1961-1992, a Historical survey**. Retraces les origines de la compétition politique au Cameroun ainsi que ses manifestations, d'où l'inconsistance des acteurs politiques qui, en tant que militants, n'ont pas réussi à défendre un idéal unique de pouvoir et sont restés dynamiques, Polyvalents et flexibles pour s'accrocher à n'importe quel idéal de pouvoir tant qu'il répondait à leurs aspirations personnelles de pouvoir. En examinant et en analysant cette attitude et cette conduite des acteurs politiques à travers le prisme des théories de John Cartwright sur l'adhérence politique, l'individualisme méthodique et la théorie de la modernisation du développement, nous sommes parvenus à l'établissement de notre thèse qui soutient que la politique dans le Cameroun Post-indépendant, loin d'être une fonction de développement pour le bien-être générale, était plutôt une fonction d'intérêt pour l'auto-préservation contre l'objectif plus important du service au peuple et à la nation, mettant ainsi en question l'efficacité de la démocratie. Pour mener à bien cette recherche, la méthode de recherche qualitative a été utilisée et appliquée de manière efficace. Etant donné que le travail porte sur la pratique et la conduite de la politique partisane dans le contexte de la concurrence politique, ce qui nécessite automatiquement une analyse approfondie des traits de comportement, des attitudes, des opinions, des mentalités et des systèmes de valeurs, l'approche de la recherche interactive et documentaire s'est imposée comme un impératif. Nous avons procédé à cette approche en collectant un large éventail de données primaire et secondaire qui ont permis de bien diagnostiquer le problème. Pour saisir les intentions, les attitudes, les opinions, les mentalités et les faits relatifs à la conduite du militantisme dans le Cameroun post-indépendant, nous avons privilégié les données tirées des comptes rendus et des rapports des journaux, sans négliger les récits oraux tirés des entretiens et des documentaires mettant en lumière les principaux acteurs politiques de l'époque. Le résultat final des recherches a révélé que le militantisme dans le Cameroun post-indépendant est resté en permanence dynamique et que cette dynamique, en plus de consolider la quête de liberté, de démocratie et d'individualisation de la politique, a fait proliférer les parties politiques et a produit des effets néfastes sur le bien-être générale et le développement du territoire en renforçant l'inégalité sociale, les conflits et la corruption qui sont tous répugnants pour le développement et le bien-être de la population.*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATION

<b>ALCAM:</b>	<i>Assemblée Legislative du Cameroun</i>
<b>AM:</b>	Ambazonia Movement
<b>ANICHRA:</b>	African Network against Illiteracy Conflicts and Human Rights Abuse
<b>APA:</b>	Anglophone Patriotic Alliance
<b>ARCAM:</b>	<i>Assemblée Représentative du Cameroun</i>
<b>ATCAM:</b>	<i>Assemblée Territoriale du Cameroun</i>
<b>BaIU:</b>	Bamenda Improvement Union
<b>BCO:</b>	Bakweri Cultural Organisation
<b>BDC:</b>	<i>Bloc Démocratique Camerounaise</i>
<b>BNP:</b>	<i>Bureau National Provisoire</i>
<b>CAM:</b>	Cameroon Anglophone Movement
<b>CCC:</b>	Cameroon Commoners Congress
<b>CCSC:</b>	<i>Confédération Camerounaise des Syndicat Croyant</i>
<b>CDCWU:</b>	Cameroon development Corporation Welfare Union
<b>CFTC:</b>	<i>Confédération Française des travailleurs Croyant</i>
<b>CHGA:</b>	<i>Cercle Histoire Géographie Archéologie</i>
<b>CIP:</b>	Cameroon Indigenes Party
<b>CLCM:</b>	<i>Comité pour la libération de Celestin Monga</i>
<b>CNE:</b>	<i>Centre Nationale de Education</i>
<b>CNF:</b>	Cameroon National Federation
<b>CNU:</b>	Cameroon National Union
<b>CPDM:</b>	Cameroon Peoples' Democratic Movement
<b>CPNC:</b>	Cameroon People National Congress
<b>CRTV:</b>	Cameroon Radio Television
<b>CSG:</b>	Christian Study Group
<b>CUC:</b>	Cameroon United Congress
<b>CWU:</b>	Cameroon Welfare Union
<b>CYL:</b>	Cameroon Youth League
<b>DC:</b>	<i>Démocrates Camerounais</i>
<b>ESOCAM:</b>	<i>Evolution Sociale Camerounais</i>

<b>FALSS:</b>	Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences
<b>FNU:</b>	<i>Front Nationale Unifié</i>
<b>FO:</b>	<i>Forces Ouvrière</i>
<b>FRC:</b>	Federal Republic of Cameroon
<b>RFI:</b>	<i>Radio France Internationale</i>
<b>FWCM:</b>	Free West Cameroon movement
<b>GTTC:</b>	Government Teachers Training College
<b>HRW:</b>	Human Rights Watch
<b>IEP:</b>	<i>Institut d'études Politiques</i>
<b>IHEOM :</b>	<i>Institut des Hautes Etudes d'Outre-Mer</i>
<b>INDECAM:</b>	<i>Indépendant Camerounais</i>
<b>JEUCAFRA :</b>	<i>Jeunese Camerounaise Française</i>
<b>KEDGV:</b>	<i>Kamerun Eingentborenen Deutsch Gesintenverein</i>
<b>KLP:</b>	Kamerun Labour Party
<b>KNC:</b>	Kamerun National Congress
<b>KNDP:</b>	Kamerun National Democratic Party
<b>KPP:</b>	Kamerun People Party
<b>KUCP:</b>	Kamerun United Commoners Party
<b>KUNC:</b>	Kamerun United National Congress
<b>KUP:</b>	Kamerun United Party
<b>MANC:</b>	<i>Mouvement d'Action Nationale Camerounaise</i>
<b>MANIDEM:</b>	<i>Manifeste pour La Démocratie au Cameroun</i>
<b>MCP:</b>	Muslim Congress Party
<b>MEDIAFRANCAM:</b>	<i>Mediation Franco-Camerounaise</i>
<b>MPs:</b>	Members of Parliament
<b>MP:</b>	Movement progressiste
<b>NAB:</b>	National Archives Buea
<b>NAY:</b>	National Archives Yaounde
<b>OCDH :</b>	<i>Organisation Camerounaise de Droits de L'Homme</i>
<b>OK:</b>	One Kamerun
<b>PI :</b>	<i>Paysan Indépendants</i>
<b>PM :</b>	Prime Minister

<b>PNTC:</b>	<i>Parti Nationale Travailist Camerounais</i>
<b>PSC:</b>	<i>Parti socialiste Camerounais</i>
<b>RACAM:</b>	<i>Rassemblement Camerounais</i>
<b>RAPECA:</b>	<i>Rassemblement du Peuple Camerounais</i>
<b>RENAICAM:</b>	<i>Renaissance Camerounais</i>
<b>SDF:</b>	Social Democratic Front
<b>SDO:</b>	Senior Divisional officer
<b>STV:</b>	Spectrum Television
<b>UAFAC:</b>	<i>Union d'action France-Cameroon</i>
<b>UC:</b>	<i>Union Camerounaise</i>
<b>UCTC:</b>	<i>Union Camerounaise des Travailleurs Croyant</i>
<b>UNEK :</b>	<i>Union Nationale des étudiants Kamerunais</i>
<b>UNO:</b>	United Nations Organisation
<b>UPC:</b>	<i>Union des Populations du Cameroun</i>
<b>USAC:</b>	<i>Union des Syndicat Autonome du Cameroun</i>
<b>USC:</b>	<i>Union Social Camerounais</i>
<b>USCC :</b>	<i>Union Syndical Confédéré du Cameroun</i>
<b>WCHA:</b>	West Cameroon House of Assembly
<b>YSH :</b>	Yaoundé School of History

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

The desire for power remains an intrinsic particularity of Man and has continuously determined a greater part of his actions, as well as thoughts and aspirations. Deprived of this strong urge for power Man will be a mere innate object at the mercy of nature and predators. The manifestation of this intrinsic particularity of man has plunged humankind into several confrontations and battles; the first of which was the battle to domesticate the natural environment. The victory recorded by Man in this first existential battle greatly affirmed and strengthened his determination to safeguard and manifest power even at the detriment of fellow Man. Since fellow Man, was also an intrinsically power conscious being, their coinciding and conflicting interest has provoked a second confrontation which has laid down and institutionalised a permanent struggle and quest for power which over the ages has remained the ultimate goal of Man.

This quest for power therefore, has lured Man into the formulation of principles, strategies theories, and even mechanisms all geared towards conquering power and dominating the others. These theories, strategies, principles and mechanisms devised to attain power have generally been termed Politics. Lucidly expressed by Andrew Heywood as the naked struggle for power<sup>1</sup>, politics has become an inherent phenomenon in all human societies and has greatly influenced ideas, beliefs, values, and even actions.

This was the case in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe with the birth of the idea of imperialism which was eventually manifested in Africa and Cameroon in particular at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. This idea which was greatly animated and driven by the quest for power brought Europe and Africa into serious confrontation and the outcome of this confrontation was the European subjugation and domination of Cameroon. Cameroon, after falling prey to German domination and power for over 30years, was to become again in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century an object of Western “Realpolitik”<sup>2</sup> at the end of the First World War. The outcome of this, was the partitioning of

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<sup>1</sup> A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies : an introduction*, Palgrave, Macmillan, third edition, nd, p2

<sup>2</sup> This expression was first used in Germany to describe the policies put in place to materialise German unification in 1870 and by extension the expression is presently used in international politics to refer to all foreign policies based on the principle of calculation, power parity and national interest.

the territory in 1916, thereby, institutionalising the conventional Anglo-French boundary<sup>3</sup> which officially introduced in 1922 the exercise of British and French power in their respective portions of Cameroon. With this new territorial reconfiguration of Cameroon by Western Realpolitik, the British and the French power just like the former Germany became very visible in all aspects of life in the territory. Though constantly challenged and confronted by the Cameroonians who also desired power, European superiority was brandished and lorded over natives as strategy of power conservation. To further sustain this power, they devised strategies and principles codified as colonial policies which at the end greatly infringed and even suppressed the Cameroonian people's rights to attain power as well.

Since every human aspires and quest for power naturally, the suppression of Cameroonian aspirations and quest to equally exercise their power had to instigate the build-up of counter-power or opposition to British and French presence in the form of what was popularly referred to as Cameroonian nationalism<sup>4</sup>. Though in its early beginnings it proved ineffective and futile, by the end of the Second World War in 1945, Cameroonian nationalism took a new national dimension that was well structured, organised, and coordinated by movements, trade unions, interest groups and pressure groups whose strong aspiration for power led to their transformation into full fleshed political parties<sup>5</sup>.

The first of these parties emerged in 1948 in French Cameroon and was called the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (UPC)<sup>6</sup> while in British Cameroons the first emerged in 1953 and was called the Kamerun National Congress (KNC).<sup>7</sup> These pioneer political parties in the French and British Cameroon respectively had as principal concern; Self-rule and total restitution of the people's right to power. These ideas which won for these parties mass support from elite and grassroots militants, was to become the platform on which the struggle for Cameroonian power against Western power took its course. Unfortunately, unable to reason in the same dimension and perspective of power, serious cracks were to emerge within the newly

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<sup>3</sup> V. G. Fanso, "Intergroup Relations and the Cameroon Reunification: A prototype of Africa's Frontier Problem" in, *F.A.L.S.S Annals University of Yaoundé I* vol.1, n°2(eds) Jean Louis Dongmo et al, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1985, pp.37- 40.

<sup>4</sup> Nationalism refers here to the doctrine that projects the predominance of national interest over specific group interest. It is also a political movement spear headed by individuals who strongly desire to assert or impose their power or predominance as a people in all domains of life.

<sup>5</sup> See J. Ebune, *The growth of Political Parties in Southern Cameroons 1916-1961*, Yaoundé, CEPER, 1992, p .246. see also D. Abwa, *Cameroun: Histoire d'un, Nationalisme 1884-1961*, Yaoundé, Edition CLE, 2010, p. 412  
<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> E. A. Aka, *British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961: A Study in Colonialism and Underdevelopment*, Plattville, Nkenji GlobalTech, 2002, p. 292.

created political parties. While some Cameroonians were strongly driven by the quest for National Power and Sovereignty, others were driven by the quest for Personal Power.

This was to eventually provoke power confrontations within and among Cameroonians hence leading to divisions and a complete fragmentation of the Cameroonian ideal of power into several individual ideologies and factions of power which jeopardised the struggle against Western Power in 1960 and 1961. Instead of finding a common ground of action against Western Imperialism, Poverty and Underdevelopment, the several ideological factions rather multiplied manoeuvres aimed at further divisions to effectively safeguard personal power at the detriment of national power and sovereignty.

In this perspective therefore, politics as the struggle for power was to completely lose its relevance in sovereignty to gain relevance in the Neo-colonial Presidential Jacobinism instituted by Ahidjo which consolidated divisions for political competition in the guise of effective democracy. In this new dimension of politics, National Power and Sovereignty became secondary concerns while individual interest took the lead. Thus politics in Cameroon from 1961 shifted from the struggle for Power to the struggle for “**power**”<sup>8</sup> (interest). It was therefore in the search for and consolidation of this interest that political actors in Cameroon since 1961 persistently wavered and remained inconsistent in their political engagement, hence moving from political party to another depending on where they could tap maximum interest. This in effect consolidated competitive politics that eventually set in motion what we have termed the Dynamics of militancy in Cameroon.

### **Conceptual Framework**

For a better digestion and understanding of our discussions in this thesis, the clarity of concepts and underlying theoretical arguments are an indispensable prerequisite. To this effect 4 Key concepts and theories constitute the essential elements of discussion in this frame work. By their effective understanding and interpretation ambiguity is automatically dissipated while establishing clarity in the flow of reason throughout our discussion. To start with, let us take the concept **Politics**.

several scholars have provided different definitions to the concept of politics. It is a concept derived from the Greek word Politikos meaning the organisation of power within the state or

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<sup>8</sup> Emphasis mine.

better still the art of governing public affairs<sup>9</sup>. According to Yves Lacost, politics is first and foremost about the governing of the city state and on a broader perspective it has to do with arguments, debates and rivalries among men over laws and issues that affect the nation<sup>10</sup>. William Little noted that politics is the science and art of government which deals with the form of organisation and administration of a state or part of one with the regulation of its relation with other states<sup>11</sup>. As for Geoffrey Roberts, politics involves the activities of groups of various kinds including groups sometimes of specific political type. It is distinguished from other social processes by its concern with the public goals of the society.<sup>12</sup> C.A. Leeds adds that politics is an expensive use of power, rule or authority within the society. In order to control this power, competition may take place between individuals to determine who will exercise leadership in groups and between groups to decide which aims and policies will have precedence in government.<sup>13</sup> Leeds definition is better expressed by Willibroad Dze-Ngwa, who holds that Politics is nothing other than the coining of policies to gain power, influence and control people<sup>14</sup>. In the same line Heywood clearly puts it that politics is little more than a naked struggle for power.

Drawing from the above views and others we can authoritatively say that politics is the ability of individuals and interest groups to use wit and coin strategies with the aim of mobilising support to gain power and influence public opinion and policy either to their advantage or that of the general public.

**Party-Politics:** It is often confused for the French expression *Partie politique* whose equivalence in English is political party. A better understanding of the concept will require first an understanding of the term political party. A political party is a group of people who come together out of the desire to obtain political power<sup>15</sup> or better still it is the articulate organisation of society's active political agents who are concerned with the control of government power and who compete for popular support with other groups holding divergent views.<sup>16</sup> By

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<sup>9</sup> *Encyclopédie Grand Larousse Universel* (Tom 12) Larousse, Paris, 1993, p, 8267.

<sup>10</sup> Y. Lacoste, *Dictionnaire de géopolitique*, Flammarion, Paris, p. 19-22.

<sup>11</sup> W. Little et al, *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, vol.II, oxford university press, 1973, p. 1620.

<sup>12</sup> G. K. Roberts, *A Dictionary of Political Analysis*, London, Longman, 1971, p.169.

<sup>13</sup> C. A. Leeds, *Political Studies*, London, MacDonal and Evans, 1975, p.4.

<sup>14</sup> W. Dze-Ngwa in Pre-defence discussions with PhD and Masters Students on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at ANICHRA Head Quarters Yaoundé

<sup>15</sup> *Academic American Encyclopaedia*, Princetown New Jersey, Arête Publishing Company Inc. 1980, P.400.

<sup>16</sup> S. Neumann, *Modern Political Parties: Approach to Comparative Politics*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1965, P.395-96.



competing, political parties and actors directly engage in party-politics. Party-politics therefore, is politics engaged in by political parties and actors as distinguished from other interest groups and individuals. It is politics based on strict adherence to the policies and principles of a political party regardless of the public interest<sup>17</sup>. Hence, party-politics or competitive politics is nothing other than the politics of belonging. Better still it is the use of wit and strategy by political parties and actors to mobilise support around their distinguished identities so as to obtain militants, for the purpose of winning the race for power, and influencing public policy in their interest or that of the general public.

**Militancy:** is a concept which is very much pregnant in meaning. It could be religious as well as political. According to Merriam Webster it is the active championing of a course or belief, a state or condition of being combative<sup>18</sup>. Andrew Heywood on his part thinks that it is the zeal and passion of one who is engaged in combat.<sup>19</sup> Such a person is often called a militant. In politics, a militant is one who adheres to a political party and participates actively to the life of the party in every aspect.<sup>20</sup> In other words, militancy expresses a strong sense of belonging; that is, adhering to the vision and ideology of a party with the conviction and the zeal to contribute in its advancement. Therefore, militancy without full engagement is nothing but what Joseph Eyafa calls *du Militantisme Aveugle*<sup>21</sup> (*blind militancy*). Such persons are best described as supporters or sympathisers, who have strong attachment or love for the party, its ideology, take part in its rallies but cannot be voted or stand for election on the ticket of the party. They rather serve the interest of ambitious politicians.<sup>22</sup> Holding a similar view, Celestine Atanga<sup>23</sup> adds that Militancy in a political party must be backed by membership (owning a party membership card) without which one remains a mere sympathiser or supporter.

Today many politicians refuse to identify with the concept of Militancy and rather prefer Party Membership.<sup>24</sup> This is because Religious Fundamentalists have embraced a conventional state-centered view of politics wherein they have pursued a highly distinctive style of political

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.Encyclopedia the free dictionary. Com>. 29<sup>th</sup> /07/2013, 6:30PM

<sup>18</sup> [Http://www.Merriam-webster.Com/dictionary/29<sup>th</sup>/07/2013,6:30Pm](http://www.Merriam-webster.Com/dictionary/29th/07/2013,6:30Pm).

<sup>19</sup> A. Heywood, *Political ideology*. p. 243.

<sup>20</sup> Encyclopédie Grand Larousse Universel, (Tom10), p. 6947.

<sup>21</sup> J. Marie B.Eyafa, *RDPC:FLEURON DU RENOUVEAU (histoire électorale et perspectives)*, Edition 2011, Yaoundé, nd, p. 281.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Celestine Atanga, 47years, Politician and SDF National Vice Secretary in charge of political education, Yaoundé, 10<sup>th</sup>/ 07/2014.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

activity which is vigorous, militant and violent<sup>25</sup>. In a way to dissociate from this fundamentalist view of militancy, many have refused to be identified as militants. But this does not in any way cancel the fact that Militancy has to do with political activism animated by zeal and passion all in the defense of a specific interest, political opinion or ideology. Thus Militancy in Cameroon politics as used in this study, is all about the active role of engaged politicians in the defence of specific party interests or ideologies.

**Dynamics:** As a concept, is derived from the word dynamic, which is a verb describing an action. The concept was first used in physics as a branch in the field of Mechanics that deals with motion of objects and material under applied forces.<sup>26</sup> Over the years, this purely mathematical concept as developed by Isaac Newton,<sup>27</sup> has gained more meaning and significance in other domains of knowledge. In physics dynamics refers to the science of the forces involved in movement that is, the force or power that produces movements and changes<sup>28</sup>. In social psychology, dynamics is more or less the description of a personality trait. Thus a dynamic person is one open to new experiences, who likes variety, freedom of expression over harmony, enjoys moving from one city to another, is more adaptive than non-adaptive, extroverted, enthusiastic, likes to have beliefs and ideas challenged, is optimistic and likes to keep him or herself constantly occupied<sup>29</sup>. According to the economist R.F.Harrod, dynamics in economics is the study of the evolution and growth of an economy over a long period. It is also the study of movements and fluctuations in economic activities.<sup>30</sup> As for A. Comte, dynamics or social dynamics is a branch of sociology that studies changes or successive stages in the evolution of social events.<sup>31</sup> Philosophically, the concept dynamics bring into confrontation two schools of thought, the traditionalists and evolutionists. In other words, we can talk of the struggle between Mechanism and Dynamism<sup>32</sup>.

From the above fields of knowledge which we have explored and others, it is noticed that the notion of change runs throughout. Therefore dynamics is a concept that expresses evolution and is directly opposed to immobility. It is all about the changing perspectives in a socio-

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<sup>25</sup> Heywood, *Political Ideologie*. p. 243.

<sup>26</sup> *Academic American Encyclopedia*, Vol. 6.

<sup>27</sup> Isaac Newton in his book *Principia Mathematica Philosophica Naturalis*, published in 1686 clearly developed the fundamentals of classical dynamics putting at the fore front the law of motion and gravitation. See *Academic American Encyclopedia* Vol.6.

<sup>28</sup> [Http://www.Encyclopedia](http://www.Encyclopedia) the free dictionary.Com.

<sup>29</sup> [Http://www.Similar](http://www.Similar) Minds.Com/r-drive/.29<sup>th</sup>/07/2013,6:30pm.

<sup>30</sup> *Encyclopédie Grand Larousse Universel*. p. 3467.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, p.3466.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3467.

cultural, economic or political system and their evolution over time<sup>33</sup>. It could as well be likened to what Abwa calls mutations in political engagements.<sup>34</sup> As such, dynamics as used in this study implies changes and flexibility in the conduct of partisan politics. Hence, the dynamics of militancy simply refers to the ease with which militants and supporters (sympathisers) of political parties changed or moved from one political party and ideology to another.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Militancy which is the vigorous and active struggle put up by organized groups or individuals in the defense or pursuit of specific economic, social and political interests happens to be firmly rooted on some key principles or theories which influence adherence and engagement in party-politics. According to John Cartwright<sup>35</sup> adherence to a party or support for the opposition in developing countries is shaped by three political principles or theories which are;

**Generalised discontent**, by this theory Cartwright holds that when a people foresee the achievement of their socio-economic and political interest within a particular political ideology they will militate for it but the moment this party or ideology fails to meet their aspirations, out of discontent they will automatically divert their support to the next party or ideology in which they believe their aspirations could be met.<sup>36</sup> This confirms what Crispus Numfor calls the politics of interest in the Cameroons.<sup>37</sup> Thus a party that holds power or mass support should never compromise the aspirations of its militants because it can lead to generalised discontent which has a direct effect on militancy both within the party holding power and the opposition. For the discontented supporters of the government party will automatically move en mass into the opposition. This could be to sanction the previous party or to simply pursue a new ideology which is believed to offer better options for the attainment of the people's aspirations.

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<sup>33</sup> W. Dze-Ngwa, "Boundary Dynamics and the Search for Geopolitical Space: The Case of the Mbororo in the North West Region of Cameroon", In *Boundaries and History in Africa: Issues in conventional boundaries and ideological frontiers*, (eds) Abwa, Maryland Publishers, Bamenda, 2011, p.15.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with D. Abwa 61years, Professor of History University of Yaounde I, Yaoundé ,9<sup>th</sup>/07/ 2014.

<sup>35</sup> J. Cartwright, "Party Competition in a Developing Nation: The Basis of Support for an Opposition in Sierra Leon" *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, vol.10, 1972, p.71-321.Cited in *The Growth of Political Parties in The Southern Cameroon.* , p.145.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Crispus Numfor 72yaers, Retired Journalist, Yaoundé, 18<sup>th</sup>/07/2014

For instance the KNDP party which had suddenly emerged in 1961 as the most popular party in West Cameroons saw its popularity greatly reduced by 1965 as it lost most of its militants to the opposition CUC because of generalised discontent within the party provoked by S.T. Muna.<sup>38</sup> The outcome of this was the eventual loss of power by the KNDP led Jua government which was replaced by the Muna led government in 1967. In as much as generalized discontent will fuel party dissention and enlarge opposition, in Cameroon it was not always the case as at some points generalized discontent instead favour political convergence around a unique party as a way out in the addressing of their discontentment. This was the case with the Legal UPC and the CPNC militants who no longer comfortable in their party policy, decided to endorse the unique party idea in 1966;

**Sensitivity to discrimination.** <sup>39</sup>Here, the idea of imbalanced development within the same territorial confinements is the justification for support to an opposition. People being rational beings will be very sensitive to any form of discrimination visible within the society, and when such discrimination take a socio-political dimension wherein within the same society the different regions are affected differently by development such that one region appears more developed than the other there would be significant effects on militancy. Where socio-economic development has not been fostered, support for the ruling or popular ideology will diminish as many will eventually divert their support to a new ideology or party which they believe would foster their development. This theory which justifies militancy in the opposition and the basis for the collapse of power in the ruling majority does not take into consideration the influence of Clientelism and Corruption which when put on board in the political game rather consolidates the ruling party as the best place to achieve socio-economic development.<sup>40</sup> Thus in this light belonging to the ruling party best guarantees development than crossing over to the opposition.

To this effect militancy in opposition as response to unequal redistribution of national wealth loses completely its stand since the effects of corruption and Clientelism will instead consolidate and attract militancy within the ruling majority as a guarantee for sharing in national wealth. This was the case with the *Indépendant Démocrate* party militants who

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<sup>38</sup> See, S. Ngemasong, "Crisis within the KNDP, 1959-1966, An Historical Analysis", MA Dissertation, University of Buea 2004.

<sup>39</sup> J. Cartwright, "Party Competition in a Developing Nation... p.71-321.

<sup>40</sup> See, <sup>40</sup> F. B. Nyamnjoh, "Cameroon: A Country United By Ethnic Ambition and Difference" in *African Affaire* Vol. 98, 1999, pp. 101-118

realizing the total abandonment of their constituency and its elite in the development agenda due to its harboring of the DC opposition stronghold, decided to come out of the opposition to endorse the UC ruling majority of Ahidjo. Thus sensitivity to discrimination will justify political adherence but will hardly justify political engagement or militancy.

**Desire for Change,**<sup>41</sup> which is a highly coveted political slogan has also been theorised by Cartwright as an essential element that sustains militancy in party politics. It should be noted that change is an ideal for which every progressive society aspires. Thus in a politically pluralist society, the greater the number of militants a political party attracts will depend on its ability to propel positive change. This has always been the creed of young people who generally have a very strong desire for rapid transformation, and where this could easily be attained, that is where they will all give their support as militants for the cause of change.

This was the case in the late 1980's in Cameroon where by a great majority of the people greatly exasperated by the depreciating economic situation of the country as well as its collapsing governance system marred by corruption and authoritarian repression embraced the idea of change to the point of challenging the unique party status quo and re-launching opposition politics in 1990 with the ultimate goal of effecting change. The theory of change in politics it should be noted is one with great complexities. To Cartwright, change justifies adherence to the opposition which could be misleading in the understanding of militancy. For the fact that change justifies political adherence does not mean it can as well justify political engagement since in Cameroon, not all who adhered to the opposition in 1990 effectively engaged and militated for change in the opposition.

Following the insufficiencies noticed with the above three principle of J. Cartwright which limits political support to adherence and undermines engagement which constitutes the core of militancy, contemporary scholars of politics in a bit to fill the gaps created by theories of adherence which only consolidates democracy in a Centre-Periphery approach (ruling party and opposition) have suggested the theory of populism which beyond popular support calls for popular engagements.

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<sup>41</sup> J. Cartwright, "Party Competition in a Developing Nation: p.71-321. Cited in *The Growth of Political Parties in the Southern Cameroon*. , p.145.

**Populism**<sup>42</sup> as a word, comes from the Latin *Populus* which means “People”. Its definitional complexity renders its meaning very proverbial and thus cannot be generalized<sup>43</sup>. As a body of knowledge populism is a particular tradition of political thought that holds the belief that the instincts and wishes of the people provide the principal legitimate guide to political action or engagement<sup>44</sup>. Thus beyond adherence, populism sets the pace for engagement as it addresses existing cleavages inherent in representative democracy that often benefit the elites at the detriment of the people. Therefore in populism the people take engagement for their liberation through popular movements in which they put in great zeal and passion to address or defend their common cause. This theory which places great emphasis on liberal democracy<sup>45</sup> has been the livewire of Cameroon's competitive politics since 1961. Its ability to provoke adherence and justify engagement has made populism a cherished political weapon in Cameroon's politics. In as much as the periphery (opposition) emphasized on populism to access power for a new democratic order, the Centre (elite ruling majority) also made appeals to populism for the consolidation of power for a more liberal democracy.

The contextual flexibility of populism in Cameroon's politics has in the course of time multiplied cleavages instead of eradicating them. This in effect laid the foundation of dynamic militancy as the people trapped in between the Centre and the Periphery decided to embrace what we can now call opportunistic engagement or militancy. Thus from populism we have move into a new dimension of political support and militancy which is opportunism. Throughout post independent Cameroon politics and militancy have been heavily sustained and rooted in the theory of Opportunism.

**Political Opportunism** is nothing else but politics of indetermination. Here, militancy or political engagement is very much conscious of existing opportunities in both sides of the political divide, that is; the center and the periphery, as a result settles for inconsistency or dynamics. In this particular theoretical framework, political engagement remained strong only as much as the opportunity for engagement was stronger and in the same way became weak and even vanished when the opportunity for engagement reduced or vanished. This, in

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<sup>42</sup> A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies*. p.242.

<sup>43</sup> N. Urbinati, “Political Theory of Populism”, in *Annual Reviews of Political Science*, Vol.22, 2019, Pp. 111-127

<sup>44</sup> See, A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies*.p.242. See also D. Acemoglu et al, “A Political Theory of Populism” in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2013, pp., 771-805. And, J. P. Gagnon et al, “What is Populism?, Who is the Populist?” in *Democratic Theory*, vol. 5, :2, 2018, pp. vi- xxvi

<sup>45</sup> N. Urbinati, “Political Theory of Populism”, p. 115.

concrete form will be highlighted through the prism of methodological individualism<sup>46</sup> which is the theory around which our arguments and discussions in this thesis will be anchored on.

Another theory that sustained the discussions in this thesis was the **Modernisation Theory**. Drawing inspiration from the Modernisation Theory of Development<sup>47</sup> which shaped and structured post independent African economies and kept them in total dependence and alienation, we came to the realisation that, the Aid-based or Top-Bottom Development paradigm and its excruciating failures as witnessed in Africa,<sup>48</sup> was the development standard on which post-independent Cameroons leaders established their political ideologies. These ideologies which projected development not as an end in itself but rather as a means to an end, provoked serious development crisis in the territory as the endless conflict between the manifest and the latent function of development<sup>49</sup> remained unresolved throughout 1961-1992. Unable to reconcile the Manifest and Latent function of development, political actors in Cameroon rather chose to propagate illusionary manifestos which kept the people (militants) wavering from one ideology to the other just to accomplish their quest and thirst for socio-economic improvement and transformation.

## Literature Review

Political History in Cameroon is a field that has caught the attention of a great number of historians, researchers, and even political activist. This explains why much has been said, written and published in this domain. Considering the abundance of literature available in this field, it was really astonishing to discover that little or no interest had been given to the practice and conduct of militancy in competitive politics. For the few authors and researchers who evoked the issue of militancy in Cameroon's politics, they did so while addressing different issues and not the dynamics of militancy which this thesis sets out to address.

N. N. Mbile<sup>50</sup> in his personal memoire on politics in Cameroon as a whole and British Southern Cameroons in particular, narrates his personal experience as a politician in British

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<sup>46</sup> Methodological individualism is a framework that describes social phenomena as a consequence of subjective personal motivations by individual actors. Class or group dynamics which operate on systemic explanations are deemed illusory, and thus rejected or deprioritised. In other words, it holds that social phenomena can only be adequately explained by tracing it back to the actions of individuals involved, taken separately.

<sup>47</sup>C. Ake, *Democracy and Development in Africa*, the Brookings Institute, Washington DC, 1996, Pp.9-14.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., see also Lorenzo, G. Bellu, *Development and Development Paradigms a (Reasoned )Review of Prevailing Visions*, FAO EASYPol, May 2011, Pp, 2-13

<sup>49</sup> Ake, *Democracy and Development*. p.9.

<sup>50</sup> N. N., Mbile, *Cameroon political story: Memories of an Authentic Eyewitness*, Limbe, Press print, 1999.pp.1-354.

Cameroons, and the reunified Cameroon. In an exhaustive narrative, he paints a picture of politics in the territory beginning with the British Cameroons and extending to the reunified Cameroon. In this historical narrative, the author handles issues like political consciousness and nationalism, constitutional changes and the 1961 plebiscite, elections, competitive politics and democracy in Cameroon. Though he is not concerned with the dynamics of militancy, his narrative provided us with much data on the conduct and practice of politics elaborated in our work.

Luc Sindjoun's<sup>51</sup> introduction to *Political Parties and Democracy* makes an interesting discussion on the existing relation between democracy and multiparty politics. While questioning which concept influences the other most, the author arrives at the conclusion that there is an existing dynamic relation between Democracy and political parties. In as much as democracy produces political parties or pluralism and political parties or pluralism attest to the presence of democracy, there could still be political parties or pluralism without necessarily experiencing democracy. Though the author is not directly interested in competitive politics or militancy; the work however provides us with important elements for an objective assessment of competitive politics and militancy on democracy in Cameroon.

Anthony Ndi<sup>52</sup>, in a two volume<sup>53</sup> publication on the History of Southern Cameroons, examines important controversies that have continuously animated debates in the political evolution of Cameroon. While addressing certain common distortions in the History of Southern Cameroons which became West Cameroon in 1961, he examines the individual role of political actors in the shaping of the political evolution of Cameroon. Though not concerned with competitive politics and militancy, the author reveals important facts on the conduct of politics and the attitudes of key political actors and militants which goes a long way to enrich this current research piece.

Herman Touo's<sup>54</sup> work on multiparty politics and democratic construction in Cameroon, makes an interesting analysis on the impact of democratization on authoritarian regimes.

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<sup>51</sup> Luc Sindjoun, "Introduction to Political Parties and Democracy: Part 1: Africa: Which makes which?" In *Political Parties and Democracy Vol. IV Africa and Oceania* (Eds.) Kay Lawson et al, California, PRAEGER, 2010, pp.2-7

<sup>52</sup> A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited, 1950-1972: Unveiling Inescapable Traps, Vol.1*, Bamenda, Paul's Press, 2013, pp., 383.

<sup>53</sup> A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited: North-South west Nexus 1858-1972 Myth, History and Reality*, Bamenda, Paul's Press, 2013, pp., 231.

<sup>54</sup> H. Touo, "Multiparty Politics and Democratic Construction in Cameroon", In *Political Parties and Democracy Vol. IV Africa and Oceania* (Eds.) Kay Lawson et al, California, PRAEGER, 2010, pp.2-7



Focusing attention on Cameroon, the author shows how political change introduced in Cameroon in the late 1980's following the democratization wave produced significant impact on the country's democratic process with the re-emergence of multiparty politics to replace the authoritarian one-party regime. Since according to the author political change in authoritarian context usually has three outcomes, the rebirth of multiparty politics was to be accompanied by ethnic manipulations which enhanced dissensions in opposition politics and as such consolidated a dominant party system in Cameroon. Though the author is not directly concerned with competitive politics and militancy, he evokes aspects of dissensions and carpet crossings which this current work examines in greater details.

The study on the Cameroons produced by P.M. Kale<sup>55</sup> traces the different stages of political evolution in the Cameroons, from the Portuguese exploration in the early 16<sup>th</sup> Century to the consolidation of German rule and to the later partition of Kamerun between Britain and France in 1916. It is from this background that the author situates political awakening in British Southern Cameroons, and handles other issues like the 1961 Plebiscites and reunification. Though discussing different issues, he evokes in passing the dynamics of militancy in carpet crossing but his analyses are limited to Southern Cameroons and not post independent Cameroon which is the focus of this current work.

N.N. Nfor<sup>56</sup> on his part examines important issues on the fate of the Cameroons after the plebiscite but pays no particular attention to the role political parties and their militants played in influencing the plebiscite results to disfavor the British Southern Cameroons..

J. M. Zang Atangana<sup>57</sup> who in 1989 made an interesting analysis of the political scene in Cameroon which to him has been greatly animated by political parties, holds that in both British and French Cameroon's political parties played a great role in enhancing the political evolution of Cameroon. He presents all this without paying any attention to the conduct of militancy within these political parties.

D. Abwa<sup>58</sup> in an interesting historical piece makes an analysis of the nationalist movement and most especially the appropriation of this movement by political parties in both the British and French Cameroon with the ultimate goal of achieving self-government. His

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<sup>55</sup> P. M. Kale, *Political Evolution in the Cameroons*, Buea, August, 1967, p.92.

<sup>56</sup> N. N. Nfor, *The Southern Cameroons: The Truth of the Matter*, Bamenda, 2003, p.70.

<sup>57</sup> J. M. Atangana, *les forces politiques au Cameroun réuni* (tom I) Paris Harmattan, 1989, p.180.

<sup>58</sup> D. Abwa, *Cameroun : Histoire d'un Nationalisme 1884-1961*, Yaoundé, Editions clé, 2010 , p.412, see also André Marie Mbida, *Premier Premier Ministre Camerounais (1917-1980) autopsie d'une carrière politique*, Paris, Harmattan, 1993, p.288.

interest is, however, nationalism so he pays no attention to the conduct of militancy within these political parties and their effect on competitive politics.

Abwa, in another publication which treats and develops a biographical study of a prominent Cameroonian political actor in the name of Andre Marie Mbida, handles the figure as a great figure who significantly influenced the political evolution of Cameroon, but pays no attention to the role he played as a militant and political actor in the enhancement of inconsistencies and the dynamics of militancy which the current study addresses.

V. J. Ngoh<sup>59</sup> as well as Eyongetah and R. Brain<sup>60</sup> have produced historical classics which trace the history of Cameroon and its evolution since 1800. In unveiling and developing general issues they paid particular attention to political evolution in Cameroon but with little or no interest in the conduct of militancy and its resulting dynamics. In a more specialised study exclusively dedicated to the political evolution of Cameroon, Victor J. Ngoh,<sup>61</sup> addresses important issues on politics, electoral competitions and the conduct of militancy in both British and French Cameroon, but the study is limited in its time bounds to 1961 which is in essence the starting point of this new study or thesis. Thus the work in question provided us with a strong base of arguments developed in this present thesis.

Philip Gaillard<sup>62</sup>, in a two volume publication consecrated to the study of Cameroon's history elaborately treats the political evolution of Cameroon from the ante-colonial through the colonial to the post-colonial era. In the second volume of the book which treats the political evolution of Cameroon under Ahidjo and Biya, the Author concentrates on the individuals and their respective policies of governance which to an extent addresses political issues such as the conduct of partisan politics and democracy in Cameroon. His handling of the above issues which put on limelight the significant influence of neo-colonialism in Cameroon, does not in any way evoke the dynamics of militancy which characterised post independent politics in Cameroon. In another interesting biographical study consecrated on Ahidjo, P. Gaillard, examines the Person of Ahidjo and his personality as a great actor and politician who significantly influenced the course of Cameroon history and politics. The author in this work

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<sup>59</sup> V. J. Ngoh, *History Of Cameroon Since 1800*, limbe, presbook, 1992 p.192

<sup>60</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A History of Cameroon*. London, longman,1974, p.192

<sup>61</sup> V. J. Ngoh, "The political Evolution of Cameroon, 1884-1961", MA Dissertation in History, Portland University, 1979, Pp,104.

<sup>62</sup> P. Gaillard, *le Cameroun Tom 1 & 2*, Paris Harmattan, 1989. See also, *Ahmadou Ahidjo : Patriote et Despote, bâtisseur de l'état Camerounaise (1922-1989)*, Editions Jeune Afrique livres, 1994.

evokes the inconsistency of militancy as displayed by political actors in their struggle to build a Cameroonian democracy completely hijacked by Ahidjo and later Biya. Though the author evokes the inconsistency of militancy, his treatment of the issue is very superficial as this in the first place was never the focus of his work

Fabien Eboussi Boulaga<sup>63</sup>, in a cross examination of the practice of democracy in Cameroon under Ahidjo and Paul Biya, laments over the bad shape of democracy in the territory while evoking the singular responsibility of governance and the individual responsibility political actors. Though his work is not focused on militancy and competitive politics, he elaborately discusses electoral competitions in Cameroons and the response of militancy to the political changes that took place under Ahidjo and Biya. By so doing the work enriched our current thesis by providing it with a bench mark for effective comparisons of militancy in the one-party regime of Ahidjo and the multi-party regime of Biya.

David Mokam<sup>64</sup> while also addressing the question of democracy in Cameroon, pays greater attention to the evolution of Cameroon's democracy which according to his analyses evolved in a completely unique pattern and model which contradicts the universal standards of democracy. Thus the ruling democracy as projected by Mokam greatly shaped competitive politics in Cameroon as it established the foundations of the One-party system and the continuous domination of the ruling party in the territory. Though attention here is not on militancy, the work contributes to the understanding of divide and rule in Cameroon politics which is handled by this current study

Abel Eyinga<sup>65</sup> on his part, while making a balance sheet of the UPC party since its creation till the return to multi-party politics, the author focuses attention on the series of division and dissensions that characterised militancy within the party. By so doing the work pushes further reflection in to the *raison-d'être* of persistent dissensions and divisions within political parties in Cameroon which in effect is the focus of this present study on politics and militancy in Cameroon.

Joseph Ebune<sup>66</sup> in greater detail examines the rise of political consciousness and the birth of political parties in Southern Cameroons. While projecting the glaring role played by

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<sup>63</sup> F. Eboussi Boulaga, *La Démocratie de Transit au Cameroun*, Paris Harmattan, 1997.

<sup>64</sup> D. Mokam, "The Search for a Cameroonian Model of Democracy or The Search for the Domination of the State Party: 1966-2006", in *Cadernos des Estudos Africanos*, vol. 23, July 2012, pp.85-108.

<sup>65</sup> A. Eyinga, *L'UPC: Une Révolution Manquée ?*, Editions Chaka, 1991, pp.191.

<sup>66</sup> J. Ebune, *The Growth of Political parties in Southern Cameroons 1916-1961*, Yaoundé CEPER, 1992, p. 246

political parties in the determination of the future of the territory, the author however does not focus his interest on the conduct of militancy and its dynamics as was exhibited in the political landscape of the territory. However the work enriched the current research study as it provided us a theoretical base for the understanding of militancy and political support for parties in electoral competitions.

Emmanuel Aloangamo Aka<sup>67</sup> on his part makes an appraisal of the British mandate and trusteeship in Southern Cameroons which qualifies as being exploitative. In his analyses British rule in the territory enhanced underdevelopment which provided the fuel for political agitations, the birth of political parties and the quest for self-determination. While addressing all this issues, he evokes the dynamics of militancy as manifested in carpet crossing witnessed in the Southern Cameroons Assemblies. Though this is treated superficially as it was not in any way the focus of his work, the book however enriched the current work with an ideological base for Anglophone militancy as developed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

V.G.Fanso's<sup>68</sup> article on Inter group Relations expatiates on the partition of Cameroon as the bases on which reunification as a political ideology gained popular appeal amongst the frontiers people of British and French Cameroons. Though this work pays less attention to political activities, it however provided some data on the rise of political consciousness in Cameroon which was the foundation of militancy currently addressed by our thesis.

Jide Osun-Tokun<sup>69</sup> in his work examines the partition of Cameroons, one of the primordial causes of Southern Cameroons nationalism. This article though rich in background information on the rise of political consciousness in Cameroon, does not examine the evolution and impact of this phenomenon on the political evolution of Cameroons, as it was not the concern of the author. However his work has aided in building the base of this current study which is political consciousness.

In his study on Traditional Authorities, Chem-Langée<sup>70</sup> again, examines the crucial role of traditional authorities in British Southern Cameroons politics. In doing this he shows how traditional rulers influenced politics through their mobility from one party to another, but

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<sup>67</sup> E. A. Aka, *British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961: A Study In Colonialism An Underdevelopment*, Platville, Nkenji Global Tech, 2002, p. 292

<sup>68</sup>V.G. Fanso, "Inter-Group Relations and the Cameroon Reunification, pp.37-52.

<sup>69</sup> J. Osun-Tokun, "Great Britain and the final partition of the Cameroons 1916-1922" in *AFRICA ZAMANI Journal of African History* N<sup>o</sup> 6&7 December 1977, pp.53-71.

<sup>70</sup> B. Chem-Langhëe, "Southern Cameroons Traditional Authorities and the Nationalist Movement 1953-1961" in *AFRICA ZAMANI Revue Afrique*. N<sup>o</sup> 022 ,14 June 1984, p.54-80.

remains non exhaustive in his analyses. Though he addresses the dynamics of militancy orchestrated by traditional rulers, his focus is however on the southern Cameroons and not post-independent Cameroon which is our focus. The same author in another work<sup>71</sup> paints a picture of the political evolution of Cameroons in a process marked by disagreements, opposing views and conflicting ideologies. These elements which he pays less attention to, will be given an in-depth analysis in this current study on the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon.

Francis B. Nyamnjoh<sup>72</sup>, in a paper, addresses the politics of division in Cameroon which in his analyses is presented as a governance strategy to consolidate power by the ruling majority regime of Ahidjo and later Biya. Though he does not pay particular attention to militancy, his work however provides strong arguments which support and enhance the dynamics of militancy as developed by this recent study.

John M. Mwaruvie<sup>73</sup> in an article, handles the issue of political cooperation in Kenya as an instrument of ethnic conflict management. The author however does not go further to show how such cooperation may influence militants' ideology and aspirations thus bringing about dynamics in militancy as was the case in Cameroon. Though this work treats the dynamics of militancy its focus is ethnic conflict management and the geographical scope is not Cameroon as the case of the current piece.

Claude Ake<sup>74</sup>, in discussing development paradigms in Africa, successively brings out the strong connection that exist between politics and development. In as much as the author does not have Cameroon politics as focus, his analyse on African Development policies which have been seriously influenced by politics and democratic practices, provides our current work with enough arguments to assess the contribution of politics to human development in post independent Cameroon.

Pal Ahluwalia<sup>75</sup> is another author interested in African politics he treats a great variety of questions patterning to African politics amongst which were the question of colonialism,

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<sup>71</sup> B.Chem-Langhëe, "The Road to the Unitary State of Cameroon 1959-1972" in *ANNALS Faculty of Arts Letters and Social Sciences University of Yaoundé I* Vol. VI, N<sup>o</sup> 1&2 January-July, 1990 pp. 3-22.

<sup>72</sup> F. B. Nyamnjoh, "Cameroon: A Country United By Ethnic Ambition and Difference" in *African Affaire* Vol. 98, 1999, pp. 101-118.

<sup>73</sup> J. M. Mwaruvie, "Political Party Cooperation in Post-Election as Ethnic Tension (Kenyan case) in the Anthropology of Africa: Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", Proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Pan African anthropological association, p. 243.

<sup>74</sup> C. Ake, *Democracy and Development in Africa*, Washington DC, The Brookings Institution, 1996, pp. 185

<sup>75</sup> Pal Ahluwalia, *Politics and Post-Colonial Theory: African Inflections*, London Routledge, 2001, pp.177.

post-colonialism, democracy and human rights. Though he does not discuss militancy and competitive politics in his work, his work however provided this current study with a strong theoretical basis for a proper analysis of post-independent politics in Cameroon.

Michael B. Aleyomi<sup>76</sup>, in the study of politics and party defections in Nigeria, raises alarm on the consistency of party defection and carpet crossing in the Kogi state. Though his focus is Nigeria, the study significantly exposes the weaknesses of inconsistent political engagement in party-politics which our current thesis addresses with focus on Cameroon. Like Aleyomi, B.T. Badejo and N.G. Obah<sup>77</sup> also developed an interesting discussion on party defection and carpet crossing. Unlike the previous author who placed emphasis on Kogi state the latter puts their concern on Nigeria as a whole. Thus their work though not on Cameroon provides enough elements and considerations for political engagement which are very much analysed in the current research which has post-independent Cameroon as focus

Piet Konings,<sup>78</sup> in a concise and elaborate study of the civil society in Cameroon, focuses attention on the politics of belonging in Anglophone Cameroon. While exposing the ethnic and divisive tendencies existing in Anglophone nationalism in Cameroon, the author recounts the different battles for recognition and belonging staged by the Anglophone civil society in Cameroon. In this battle the role of the Roman Catholic Church is very preponderant as its implications in Cameroon's politics and the Anglophone movement in particular produced remarkable effects on political engagements and militancy which in effect enriches the ideological discourse on Anglophone militancy and political engagement as addressed in this present research piece.

Besides published books and articles we also have Master dissertations and Doctorate Thesis which have also explored our field of interest. Amongst them we have the work of Tata S.N.<sup>79</sup> He examines the process leading to Cameroons reunification and the political evolution after reunification. In doing this, he handles issues like the growth of Cameroons nationalism, the birth of political parties and partisan politics in Cameroon from 1961 to the end of the

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<sup>76</sup> M. B. Aleyomi, "Election and the politics of party Defection in Nigeria: A Clue from Kogi State", in *Covenant University Journal of Politics and International Affairs (CUJPIA)* Vol. 1. No. 1 2013.

<sup>77</sup> B.T. Badejo & N. G. Obah-Akpowoghaha, "The Impact of Cross Carpeting and Multiplicity of Political Parties in Nigerian Democratic Process", in *Journal of African Studies and Development (JASD)*, Vol. 7, No. 8, August 2015? Pp. 215-230;

<sup>78</sup> P. Konings, *Neoliberal Bandwagonism : Civil Society and the Politics of Belonging in Anglophone Cameroon*, Bamenda, Langaa Research Publishing CIG, & African Studies Centre, Leiden, 2009, pp.274.

<sup>79</sup> S. N. Tata, "The Evolution of The Reunified Cameroon 1961-1982" Ph .D Thesis, University of Lagos, Nigeria, 1991. pp. 71-113.

Ahidjo regime in 1982. Our study, though addresses some of these issues, is distinct from it in that it lays emphasis on the dynamics of militancy which was not the concern of this author.

Assembe Ndi Alvine<sup>80</sup> on her part focuses attention on political alliances concluded by outstanding political figures in Cameroon from 1956 -1966. Though she is also concerned with the conduct and practice of politics, which greatly added to our data on political practices, her work is limited to political alliances and pays no major attention to dissensions, disengagements and carpet crossings within parties which spark of dynamics in militancy as addressed by this current research.

Willibroad Dze-Ngwa<sup>81</sup> in his thesis, makes an interesting assessment of the post reunification era in Cameroon with emphasis on the challenges of national unity and national integration. This work that paints a clear picture of the political context in Cameroon before and after reunification puts up interesting analyses on the stakes that shaped militancy in Cameroon, thereby enriching this current work with data o determinants of militancy but unfortunately pays no particular attention to the dynamics of militancy since that was not his focus.

Ngamchara Mbouemboue<sup>82</sup> in an interesting piece examines from a sociological stand point the impacts of the movement of militants from one political party to another on the practice of democracy in Cameroon. Though the work evokes the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon politics, the approach is sociological and not historical and as such has inspired this current work which makes a historical assessment of the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon politics.

Laive Fru Awah<sup>83</sup>, in an elaborate study of party-politics in British Southern Cameroons discussed the basis manifestation and impact of the dynamics of militancy in Southern Cameroons from 1953-1961. Though this work is limited in space and time, it greatly inspired the current study which addresses in greater details the dynamics of militancy in the post-independent and reunified Cameroon from 1961-1992.

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<sup>80</sup> A. Assembe N., “Les Ententes Politiques Au Cameroun : De la Loi-cadre a L’institution Du Partie Unique (1956-1966),” *Mémoire de Maitrise*, Département D’Histoire, Université de Yaoundé I, 2008, p.156.

<sup>81</sup>W. Dze-Ngwa, “National Unity and National Integration in Cameroon 1916 – 2000: Dreams and Realities” PhD Thesis University of Yaoundé I, 2007.

<sup>82</sup> C.N Mbouemboue, « Mobilite des Elites Politiques et Democratie au Cameroun : les Logiqus des Demisions, Transfuges et Dissidences et leurs Impact sur la Vie Partisane », *Mémoire de Maitrise Sociologie*, Université de Yaoundé I, 2001.

<sup>83</sup> L. Fru Awah, “Party-Politics and the Dynamics of Militancy in British Southern Cameroons, 1953-1961: a Historical Perspective”. MA Dissertation in History, University of Yaoundé I, 2015.

Yves Joseph Mintoogue<sup>84</sup>, while addressing the question of militancy in Cameroon's politics pays particular attention to the recruitment/ mobilisation, structure and engagement of militancy within the UPC from 1948- 1955. Though the work does not discuss the dynamics of militancy, it paints an ideal picture of political engagement which the current research puts to question

Without claiming that this current work on competitive Politics and militancy will exhaust the subject, we strongly believe that its contributions will go a long way to add to the existing knowledge on competitive politics as well as on the conduct and practice of militancy in Cameroon.

### **Statement of Problem**

The struggle for power as an inherent human phenomenon, has continuously animated human society and greatly shaped the course of its history. From the birth of human society followed by their struggle for survival through the domestication of nature, Power has always been the ultimate goal. The desire to dominate, control and influence has always been the priority of Man from time immemorial since the attainment of this intrinsic urge of Man guaranteed him safety, security, comfort, affluence and above all peace. It was therefore against this back ground that early human settlements in the territory that was to become Cameroon battled against nature and each other through war and diplomacy all just to have absolute control, influence and consolidate power. At a time they thought this goal had been attained, a bigger challenge presented itself to them which was Western imperialism. Jealous of their consolidated power they had to struggle against imperialism in a common nationalist front which only started recording victories in the late 1940's after it was energised by modern party systems.

The birth of political parties through which the nationalist cause was canalised, activated and provoked great enthusiasm and determination rooted in the Hope for total liberation and effective exercise of power and sovereignty by the Cameroonian people. This hope projected in the horizon by the emergence of political parties gradually started dwindling down with the passing of time as these political parties, seduced by the glory of power, lose completely their focus which was national power and sovereignty to pursue individual glory, interest and power.

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<sup>84</sup> Y. Joseph Mintoogue, « L'indigène comme Acteur Politique, Militantisme et Formes de Participations Politique dans L'Union des Population du Cameroun (UPC) 1948-1955, » Mémoire de Master en Science Politique, Université de Paris 1 Sorbonne, 2010-2011.



The pursuit of individual interest and power which was incompatible with the nationalist quest provoked serious chaos in Cameroon materialised in conflict, dissention, fragmentation and intense competition this time not against the common enemy imperialism, but rather against each other for the conservation of individual political interest, power and influence. To attain their goal some parties went as far as fraternising with imperialism just to obtain enough support so as to trample on others and make their interest prevail. The outcome of this was a failed independence in 1960 and 1961 and the eventual confiscation of national sovereignty by individual politicians at the mercy of western neo-colonialism. The challenge since 1961 has therefore been that of bringing back power and sovereignty to the Cameroonian People for greater and effective human development and progress. How then would this power and sovereignty get back to the people? This has been the unanswered question in Cameroons Post-independent politics and the central problem this Thesis sets out to address.

This question of how to get back power and sovereignty to the people has continuously divided the political class provoking intense competitive-politics which has all along been heavily driven by opportunism characterised by constant defections, dissentions, divisions and carpet crossing among political actors. With the recurrence of defections, dissentions, divisions and carpet crossings in Cameroons politics, militancy automatically has remained very inconsistent and dynamic in nature thus raising great concerns as to the effectiveness of competitive politics in the consolidation of the people's power or Democracy in Cameroon.

From the above stated problem, emerges two major interrogations. The first is; why has competitive politics in Cameroon since 1961 been unable to restore power and sovereignty to the people? Secondly; of what relevance has the dynamics of militancy which characterised Cameroon's politics since independence been to its democratic construction and development?

### **Aims/ Objectives**

This study generally has as objective to investigate the practice and conduct of partisan politics in Cameroon with the aim of unveiling the dynamics that characterised militancy in the territory as well as the implications of such dynamics on Cameroon's democracy and development. To this effect, the study specifically seeks;

- To trace the roots of the political consciousness in Cameroon and its contributions to the birth of competitive politics in territory.
- To examine the driving force and ideologies that shaped political consciousness and spark up competitive politics in post independent Cameroon

- To discuss and analyse the recurrence of dissensions and defections in Cameroon's post-independent politics which greatly consolidated inconsistent militancy or political engagement in the territory.
- To examine the role of political and civil society actors in the enhancement of the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon.
- To assess the implications of the dynamics of militancy on Cameroon's democratic construction as well as its impact on the general human development in the territory.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is well established in three dimensions: first, the study makes a new contribution to the political historiography of Cameroon as it opens doors into a new field of investigation unknown to several antecedent researchers on Cameroon politics. This new field of historical research is the field of Militancy. As such this thesis will eventually serve as a reference for future researchers interested in the history of competitive politics and the conduct of militancy in Cameroon's politics.

Equally this work is significant in that it lays bare a great deal of factors and considerations that determine political support and militancy in competitive politics. It as well reveals the cowardice of Cameroon's political actors and their persistent inconsistency in militancy which since 1961 have continuously enhanced dynamics of militancy in Cameroon's competitive politics. The strength and weaknesses of this prolonged history of political inconsistency as exhumed and exposed by this thesis, provides a suitable benchmark for policy and decision making by government as well as current and future political actors especially on issues of party creation, political mobilisation and electoral competition. In like manner, the study makes a strong contribution to the political process and development in Cameroon as it identifies the major germs infecting the political process such as individualism, corruption and authoritarianism, and then provides a solution or way-out through a People-based politics as vector for a developed and prosperous Cameroon.

Finally this research study in its interdisciplinary approach valorises interdisciplinary research, just as the teachings of the history scholars of the annals school prescribe that "the enduring structure of the past *la long durée* can only be examined properly if History incorporates into its study not only man, but rather takes into consideration his milieu and the whole of human activity whose study therefore will require a multiplicity of fields and methods. Hence, an historical examination of the conduct of militancy in competitive politics will be

incomplete if a rapprochement is not established between History and other disciplines. Thus the blend of History with Social psychology, Economics, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, and Law in this research study renders our thesis of great significance in the evolution of science and interdisciplinary research.

### **Scope / Delimitation**

This research study spans through the period 1961-1992. The choice of this time scope is not accidental rather it was motivated by strong Historical justifications from the take-off point to the denouement. The take-off point 1961 which corresponds to the year of Reunification between British and French Cameroon is historically significant as our starting point since it marked the birth of a new nation called the Federal Republic of Cameroon. It equally marked the beginning of a very challenging nation building process involving two distinct territories with distinct colonial identities. It was a period characterised by new political reforms, policies and ideologies that had great bearing on competitive politics and militancy throughout Post-independent Cameroon. It was indeed the veritable beginning of post-independent Cameroon. The year 1992 which is our end point or denouement is equally of great historical significance as it corresponds to the effective return to multiparty politics with the organisation of the first pluralist presidential elections after over 25years of the one-party system. It was a period marked by great political effervescence characterised by a strong urge for freedom and liberal democracy with a spontaneous and rapid proliferation of political parties which gave a new impetus to competitive politics as the political scene saw the entry of new actors. It was also a period of political contestation with a heavy implication of the civil society all of which significantly influenced militancy and politics in post-independent Cameroon.

### **Sources and Methodology**

To successfully conduct this research study the qualitative research method was effectively engaged and applied. Since the work is concerned with the practice and conduct of partisan politics or militancy in the context of political competition, which automatically necessitates an in-depth analyses of behavioural traits, attitudes, opinions, mind sets, and value systems, the interactive and documentary research approach (Qualitative Research Approach) imposed itself as an imperative<sup>85</sup>. Thus we proceeded in this approach by collecting a wide

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<sup>85</sup>A.Sama, *Skills in Research Writing*, Yaoundé, Wivans, 2012, p. 50.

range of data from primary and secondary sources which permitted a successful diagnosis of the problem.

To capture the intentions, attitudes, opinions, mind-sets and facts on the conduct of militancy in post-independent Cameroon we privileged data from newspaper accounts and administrative reports corresponding to the time scope of the research. We mostly exploited news paper accounts from; *La Presse du Cameroun*, *Cameroon Tribune*, *Le Messager*, *Kamerun Times* and *The Cameroon Champion*. Aside the newspaper accounts and reports, a wide range of data was collected from specialised published books on Cameroon, Africa and global politics. Scientific articles, dissertations and thesis on the political evolution of Cameroon, political ideologies and development were also exploited. To access this data, public and private libraries were consulted in the city of Yaoundé, Buea, Bamenda and Douala amongst which we have the library of the faculty of arts letters and Social Sciences (FALSS) of the University of Yaoundé 1, the National Centre for Education,(CNE) the *Cercle D'Histoire Geographie Archeology* (CHGA) library, the Library of the African Network against Illiteracy Conflict and Human Rights Abuse (ANICHRA), together with the Yaoundé National Archives (NAY), the Northwest Regional Archives and the Buea National Archives (NAB) not living out online electronic contents.

To fill up the gaps inherent in newspaper reporting and other secondary data so as to ascertain and establish the facts, oral interviews were conducted. Altogether, fifty (50) persons were interviewed, amongst them we have politicians (actors), Traditional rulers, academics, civil society actors and living eye witnesses. Of the 50 persons interviewed, 47 are Men and 3 are women depicting clearly the absence of gender parity in Cameroons' political space. The principal research tool put to use so as to carry out this research exercise was the question guide and simple methodique observation which according to Regis debrey<sup>86</sup> is fundamental in the identification of problem for, according to him; "*C'est l'observation méthodique enrichie de connaissances nombreuses et bien enregistrées avec une volonté inébranlable de voir Claire; qui constitue les éléments nécessaires pour poser un diagnostique*"

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<sup>86</sup> R. Debray, Cited in "Violence, conflits ethniques et problème d'insécurité aux abords sud du lac Tchad Dimension Historique" Ph D Project, by Saibou Issa, Yaoundé, 1996, p.13.

The use of this tool was carefully guided by the methods and techniques of oral historical research which put together, eased the analysis of our data in total respect of the historical method with special emphasis on the thematic and chronological approach.

### **Problems Encountered**

The realisation of this research piece was not void of challenges. At various stages of the evolution of this work we encountered difficulties which seriously hindered and affected the smooth progress of the work. To start with, our first challenge was to have access to the Yaoundé National Archives. We started our research at a time when the institution was undergoing restructuring and renovation which consequently remained closed and inaccessible to the public, it was practically difficult for us at the time to collect important archival data needed for the work, we were compelled to wait patiently for the archives to be reopened to the public before we could carry on with the work. This greatly distorted our calendar of activities and retarded the smooth progression of our work. When we finally had access to the archives another problem surfaced which was the non availability of the staff assigned to assist us in the collection of data. Solicited by other administrative exigencies this staff was always unavailable consequently we missed many days of work which also contributed in retarding the progression of the work. However, in order to minimise the loss of time, the time allocated for work at the archives which could not be utilised was redirected in the collection of secondary data through readings in libraries and research centres.

Another crucial problem faced was that of collecting oral data. Meeting most of our informants was not an easy task especially the first generation political actors of post independent Cameroon most of whom were challenged by the weight of age and could not receive us when solicited. This seriously affected our morale and down played the quality of our data. However, to fill these gaps, we resorted to oral interviews which these actors had granted on TV documentaries and programs such as *Beacons of Time* on CRTV, *Entretien Avec* on STV and *La Verite en face* of Equinox TV. As for the second generation of political actors and eye witnesses whom we believed meeting them would not pose any serious problem, the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the imposed restrictions on gatherings with strict barrier measures in March 2020 caused many of our appointments to be cancelled as the informants for safety reasons could not receive us. Realising the gap this could generate in our thesis we had to suggest online interviews to our informants, majority of whom adhere to the suggestion and we successfully conducted interviews through online platforms.

The application of counter and alternative measures to the above listed problems contributed greatly in guaranteeing and maintaining the quality of our research findings.

### **Organisation of Work**

This Thesis is structured and organised in Five Chapters of varying lengths which starts with a General Introduction and ends with a General Conclusion.

The first chapter is focused on political consciousness and militancy in Cameroon. It traces the origins of political consciousness in Cameroon History and establishes with ample evidence the role played by political consciousness in provoking competitive politics both before and after independence in Cameroon. This chapter lays the foundation of competitive politics and militancy in post-independent Cameroon.

Chapter Two focuses on competitive politics in post-independent Cameroon. It examines in greater details the long struggle to build a strong nation and consolidate within it an appropriate democratic model that ensures both freedom and development. The chapter exposes the plethora of political ideologies that affronted each other for the acquisition of power in post-independent Cameroon and their long struggle to consolidate democratic practices and general welfare for all Cameroonians

Chapter Three makes an in-depth analysis of the conduct and practice of politics in post-independent Cameroon. The chapter, in addressing competitive politics and the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon, exposes the inconsistency of political engagement by post-independent political actors and militants in Cameroon.

Chapter Four discusses the contributions of political actors to the enhancement of the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon. The chapter exposes the role of influential politicians and civil society actors in the enhancement of inconsistent political engagements or militancy in Cameroon.

The Fifth and the last chapter of the work makes a general assessment of the conduct and practice of militancy in post-independent Cameroon with emphasis on its implications on the countries democracy and development. The chapter makes an appraisal of the impact of the dynamics of militancy on Cameroon's democracy and the general wellbeing of the people.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND MILITANCY: THE GENESIS OF POLITICAL COMPETITION**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Cameroon in its historical construction has known several episodes of social change and political transformation which have had significant influence on power relations throughout the territory.<sup>87</sup> While emerging dominant forces from these transformations persistently imposed their hegemony, the subdued ones consistently devised measures of adaptation and riposte so as to equally control power. Under such conditions therefore, political consciousness and awareness firmly gained grounds within Cameroonian communities and with the catalysing effects of colonisation, counter power pressure groups as well as political parties gave it full expression. This chapter which sets the pace for a better understanding of the background of competitive politics in Cameroon, examines in a progressive chronological manner the various ways by which political consciousness gained grounds in Cameroon and how it shaped mentalities laying the foundation for political competition and militancy in the territory.

#### **I. The Birth of Political Awareness in Cameroon**

The rise of political consciousness or political awareness in Cameroon was a function of three determinants which included the Struggle for power among ethnic nations, Resistance to colonial domination, and the Quest for self-determination. These three Historical determinants in the life course of the Cameroonian nation, significantly shaped and influenced the world view as well as the political mentality of the people vis-à-vis others and themselves. These three

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<sup>87</sup> From a mosaic of ethnic nations existing independently each other with a rich cultural and historical heritage, the various people of Cameroon after entertaining a long history of diplomatic relations which often degenerated to conflicts of power and survival, were to finally enter the web of western imperialism which Germany effectively built, carved and shaped along the West African coast in the form of a triangle named Kamerun. This imperial web that successfully break the long existing power exercised by the various nations of the territory was to impose on these nations a new hegemony which they persistently struggled to do away with. Though the global conflagration of 1914 put an end to the German hegemony in the territory, it introduce a new Anglo-French hegemony with very imbalance power relations that instead motivated the people more to mobilise in offensive for the conquest of power and re-establish their long lost hegemony and power. Attaining this objective in the 1960s, the new leaders to who power was willed still chosed to sustain western hegemonies over the people preventing them from fully exercising their power hence opening room for rivalry and contestation all in the hope and quest for power. In all these socio-political transformations, competitive politics and militancy found a comfortable and permanent abode.

determinants in essence, magnified and established the perpetual quest for power and domination as the livewire that has continuously shaped power relations amongst the people hence setting the foundations for political mobilisation and engagement which was either in offensive to conquer power or in a defensive to consolidate power.

### **i. The Struggle for Power among Ethnic Nations**

Cameroon before its creation by the Germans was a territory constituted of several polities. These different polities existed independently each other with distinguished specificities expressed in their culture, language, economic activity, the conception and exercise of power. Within such a configuration of the territory emerged what has commonly been described by many as ethnic identities<sup>88</sup>. Political consciousness which is the awareness of an individual or a people of their right to power as well as the right to exercise such power in total freedom and legitimacy<sup>89</sup> is not a new phenomenon in the life of the people of Cameroon. From the early emergence of kingdoms and the setting up of their governments, there has always been a necessity to provide for the common defence of the community and ensure its domestic tranquillity. This greatly attests of the political consciousness of the people. It should therefore be précised that this freedom and tranquillity highly solicited by ethnic polities for the effective exercise of their power was usually perturbed by individuals who rose up against established institutions and even against other ethnic polities who plotted to seize their power or that of their neighbour and extend their hegemony. With this, the struggle for power within kingdoms and among ethnic nations greatly awaken the political consciousness of the people as they were constantly mobilised in one way or the other to militate in defence of their right to power or to extend their power and influence over their neighbours.

The history of Tibati as recounted by Eldridge Mohamadou<sup>90</sup> clearly shows how Fulani people after settling in North Cameroon following their three waves of migration into the region were eventually imposed an authority based in Yola.<sup>91</sup> This new authority established by Uthman Dan Fodio who made Modibo Adama his flag bearer in North Cameroon was to later set up a strong web of domination and injustice which did not leave the Fulani indifferent.

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<sup>88</sup>These are subsets of identity categories in which membership is determined by attributes associated with or believed to be associated with descent. See, Kanchan Chandra, What is Ethnic Identity And Does it Matter?, in *Annual Reviews of Political Science*, No.9, Pp. 397-424

<sup>89</sup> V. Miller, "Political Consciousness: A Perpetual Quest", in <https://Justosociales.Org>, May 31<sup>ST</sup> 2002.

<sup>90</sup> E. Mohamadou, *Histoire De Tibati ; Chefferie Fulbé Du Cameroun*, Editions Abbia et Cle, Yaounde, 1965,p.4.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*,p.8.



Immediately, Modibo-He and Hamman Sambo founders of Tibati had to reject such domination and thus took action to preserve their dignity. The result of this was war which led to the founding of Tibati, which throughout its history before colonial domination had remained unsubdued by the authorities of *Yola*<sup>92</sup>. The case presented above is a clear demonstration of a peoples will to uphold their dignity and preserve power, as their action show a good understanding of power and inequality in social, economic and political systems. This therefore portrays the level of political consciousness grounded in Cameroon even before colonisation.

Just as the history of Tibati exemplifies and portray political consciousness in Cameroon before colonialism, the Bali *Chamba* History in the Grassfield equally showcased a politically volatile society where the quest for fulfilment, social justice, and power plunged several ethnic polities into incessant battles. The primary justification for such battles was the need to control space resource and above all power vis-à-vis other polities.

The Bali *Chamba* in their southward movement from *Faro-deo* under the leadership of *Gawolbe* had a major challenge which was that of the absence of free space.<sup>93</sup> Thus the struggle to obtain and control space had to be attained through war and diplomacy<sup>94</sup>. This therefore explains the many battles fought by the Bali *Chamba* as well as the several alliances they entered with other kingdoms from *Kontcha* till *Bafu-fondong* where *Gawolbe* was killed in the battle of *Kom*<sup>95</sup>. In this whole history of warfare, one thing comes out clear; which is the strong desire by ethnic polities to either fight for the affirmation of their authority over others or defend their integrity and power vis-à-vis others, hence a clear expression of political consciousness.

More interesting here was the political vacancy created by the death of *Gawolbe* which provoked political strife within the *Chamba* polities, hence leading to competition for power among the various princes of the kingdom. Having acquired a good understanding of the notion of power and its importance in the control of land and resources, The Bali princes all developed a strong thirst for power and since all could not exercise such power within the same kingdom, the result was the eventual disintegration of the *Chamba* kingdom with each prince and the lone princes taking along with them their militants and supporters with whom they found new

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<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, p.12.

<sup>93</sup> Ndifontah B. Nyamndi, *The Bali Chamba of Cameroon: A Political History*, CAPE, Paris, 1984, p.3.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p.15.

independent kingdoms. The outcome of this was the creation of seven Bali kingdoms (Bali *Gansin*, Bali *Gham*, Bali *Gasho*, Bali *Kumbat*, Bali *Nyonga*, Bali *Muti*, and Bali *Kontan*)<sup>96</sup>

The sequence of events as recounted in the history of the Bali is a revelation of a strong and politically conscious traditional society that existed in Cameroon prior to western colonisation. This therefore corroborates Albert Doutreloux's assertion which says « *on ne peut s'étonner de ce que L'Afrique d'aujourd'hui est plus encore que L'Afrique d'hier passionné politique* »<sup>97</sup>

Aside the centralised polities of the North and Western Grassfield, political consciousness was also well developed and manifested among the ethnic polities of the Forest Zones. Unlike the centralised polities of the North and Grassfield, these societies had no strong central political power. Rather, power in these societies was shared among lineage heads who exercised their authority within the confines of the family.<sup>98</sup> Persons living in these societies had a very strong sense of equality, individuality and independence. Thus they did not tolerate any form of concentration of power by a single individual<sup>99</sup>. It is therefore in this regards that we found political consciousness in the forest communities to appear more glaring as portrayed in the *Beti* and *Ejagham* ethnic polities of the Forest Zone of Cameroon.

The case of the *Beti* which are a large Bantu Ethnic group of the *Pahouins* migration which settled in Southern forest, had to split up into several clans amongst which we have the *Ewondo* and *Béné*<sup>100</sup> among others. These two *Fang Beti* groups who successfully crossed the Sanaga river to settle in Yaoundé and its environs, manifested strong values of freedom, liberty and individualism vis-à-vis each other, a tendency which easily ignited conflict each time one of them infringed on the liberties of the other, or even when a lineage head or chief abused his authority by infringing on individual liberties of the people. The outcome was usually an outburst of revolt by the people of the clan which often led to war.<sup>101</sup> This was the case with the *imboumboun* who after entering an alliance with the *Ewondo* revolted against Owono

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, p.27.

<sup>97</sup> M. Aletum Tabuwe, *Political Conflict within the Traditional and the Modern Institutions: the case of the Bafut, Cameroon*, Vander, London; 1973, p.2.

<sup>98</sup> R. K. Kpwang and Walters T. Samah "Invention of Tradition.: Chieftaincy, Adaptation and Change in the Forest Region of Cameroon" in *La Chefferie Traditionnelle dans les Societe de la Grand Zone Forestiere du Sud Cameroun, 1850-2010*, ( Sd ) kpwang R., Harmattan, Paris, 2011, p.73.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, p.74.

<sup>100</sup> T. Claude Bene Bene, « Les Relations Entre Les Ewondo Et Les Béné Aux Xix Et Xx Siecles », MA Dissertation, University of Yaoundé I, 2008. p.8.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, p, 17.

Metogo chief of the *Mvog owondzouli* a sub clan of the *Béné*<sup>102</sup>. The strong urge and readiness with which these people were willing to fight and defend their liberties as well as affirm the supremacy of their power and space is a strong proof of their political consciousness which they manifested till the advent of imperialism.

Besides the *Beti*, was another forest ethnic polity known as *Ejagham* which occupies the equatorial rain forest of the South-Western regions of Cameroon in what is called today Manyu Division.<sup>103</sup> The *Ejagham* like any other stateless society of the forest which was conscious of its freedom and power, manifested a strong sense of individualism, egalitarianism and independence. This greatly contributed in the escalation of disputes, and such disputes usually provoked migrations hence the spread of the *Ejagham* people throughout Manyu.<sup>104</sup> For instance, the *Engeme* group made of *Eyumojoek*, *Nsanakang* and *Nsanaragati* all of the *Ejagham* polity, was bound to disintegrate simply because equity which the people uphold was not respected in the sharing of a crocodile caught in a hunting expedition by three sons of Ojong. Due to this disagreement over the sharing a crocodile the three sons chose to separate and migrated with their followers to a new destination where they could have independence and total control over power and resources. The outcome of this migration was the founding of *Nsanaragati*, *Nsanankang* and *Eyumojoek* along the Cross River<sup>105</sup> This goes further to strengthen the argument that political consciousness in Cameroon dates back to the early migration and implantation of ethnic polities in the territory.

## ii. Resistance to Colonial Incursions and Domination: The Struggle for Power.

Man in his essential existence has always exhibited and bravely defended a core value which is Freedom. The ability to freely move, exploit and domesticate the environment greatly determined the survival of man, reason why Man systematically organised structures around him with laydown principles which preserved and upheld freedom. A picture of the African society before colonisation clearly depicts the aforementioned affirmation, that is, not only did Africans set up organised communities or ethnic polities, they went further to put in place systems, institutions, and mechanisms to permit them freely pursue their common interest and affirm their power. At the same time African societies were nurturing and developing their

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<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*, p, 46.

<sup>103</sup> S. Tarkang Bessong , “*EJAGHAM Migration, Settlement, And Resettlement : A Cultural History*”, MA, Dissertation, University of Yaoundé I, 1986, p.1.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, p. 37.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid*, p.41.

political institutions western societies were also nursing ambitions and strategizing on how to freely pursue their political and commercial interests within the already structured and developed African societies.

It was therefore in this prevailing circumstance that political competition sparked up in Cameroon in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, putting at the forefront two Parties; on one end we had western colonial powers propagating and enforcing the colonial manifesto by the use of power and domination, while on the other end we had Ethnic polities/Communities propagating freedom and manifesting their readiness to defend and uphold their freedom and power through resistance.<sup>106</sup> This struggle for power between western colonial forces and Ethnic polities in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Cameroon greatly enhanced political awareness and consciousness among the Cameroonian people who in different periods and places valiantly rose up in resistance against western colonial incursion and domination with the ultimate aim of affirming their freedom and power.<sup>107</sup>

**PLATE I: Rudolf Douala Manga Bell and Martin Paul Samba: Symbols of Cameroonian Power and Resistance**



**Source:** adapted from *Almanac of the 50<sup>TH</sup> Anniversaries of Independence and Reunification of Cameroon*, p, 26.

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<sup>106</sup> L. Fru Awah and N. Mafani, “Nationalism Or Power-Politics: Understanding The Dynamics Of Militancy In British Southern Cameroons, 1953-1961” in *Common Wealth Journal Of Academic Research (CJAR.EU)*, vol.2, issue:8,2021 pp,13-33

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

The Fulani of Adamaoua now North Cameroon were among those organised polities in Cameroon who showcased political consciousness and independence as they outstandingly imposed their hegemony over vast stretches of land with an established common determination to protect, defend and uphold the freedom and sovereignty of the Fulani as well as their sacred religion Islam.<sup>108</sup> Their ability to systematically instrumentalise Islam and extend their sovereignty and power did not only apply to non-Muslim communities of North Cameroon but as well to the western imperialist whom they all qualified as “*Infidels*”.<sup>109</sup> It was therefore out of place for the Fulani, considered as Muslim faithful to submit to *infidels*.<sup>110</sup> Thus the political consciousness among Fulani and their determination to promote Islam as well as defend their territory from western invaders clearly explains the heavy mobilisation of a huge Fulani army from *Tibati, Ngaoundere, Banyo, Garoua, Rey boubou, and Maroua* all united in a common purpose to defend their sovereignty and power while projecting a religious cause.

It was for this reason that A. P. Temgoua described German colonial conquest in Adamaoua as the meeting or better still the confrontation of two forms of domination. That is; the advancing Fulani domination towards the South and the penetrating German invasion towards North Cameroon.<sup>111</sup> The zeal and passion with which Fulani defended the cause of freedom and sovereignty vis-à-vis the German conquerors revealed in them true militants at the service of freedom and power, hence demonstrating a strong sense of political awareness within the pre-colonial Cameroon. This was further confirmed in the testimony of Major Hans Dominik during the battle of Maroua 1902 where he expressed great admiration for the Fulani and their political consciousness which he qualified as Admirable Fanatism.

*Le fanatisme de certains soldats ennemis fut admirable. Au fur et à mesure que la mitrailleuse fauchait un rang, un autre s'en reformait pour le remplacer. Ils se précipitaient sur nous en brandissant leurs lances pour ne tombe que quel que pas devant la ligne de tirailleurs ...Le combat livre a un semblable adversaire dans une plaine aux étendues aussi vaste et ouverte était quelque chose de tout à fait nouveaux pour les tirailleurs allemand venue du sud Cameroun.*<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> A. Pascal Temgoua, *Le Cameroun à l'époque des Allemands 1884-1916*, Paris, Harmattan, 2014, p.54.

<sup>109</sup> Infidels or *Kuffār* in Islamic theology could be likened to those David Bukay calls the people of error; the instigators and aggressors who must be subjugated to Islamic rule, see; David Bukay; *Islam and the Infidels: the Politics of the Jihad Da'wah and Hijrah*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London, 2016, p, 42.

<sup>110</sup> See M. Crowder, *West African Resistance, the military response to colonial occupation*, London, Hutchinson, 1971, p.17.

<sup>111</sup> A. P. Temgoua, *Cameroun à l'époque des Allemands*. p. 55.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*, p.75.

Besides the Fulani resistance movement against German incursion in the Adamaoua, there were several other movements in the *Grassfield* and other parts of Cameroon where the different ethnic communities, conscious of their sovereignty and the benefits of controlling power, had to put up strong resistances against Western domination in their territory. Prominent among these polities were the *Mankon* and *Bafut* who in 1891 and 1901 respectively staged open war against the German expeditions in their land all for the sake of preserving their sovereignty which is a determining factor for power and freedom. The early victory of the *Mankon* on Zintgraff's expedition, sent strong signals to Berlin on the degree of power and determination demonstrated by the people which in turn revealed their level of political awareness. It therefore took the German administration several years of strategizing before launching another repost in 1901 under the command of Col. Curt Pavel.<sup>113</sup> This new expedition saw the successful conquest of the *Mankon* and the *Bafut* allies by the German, a conquest which in no way killed the spirit of awareness and the urge to be free.

Just as the centralised polities of the *Grassfield* manifested great attachment to power and sovereignty by challenging German imperialism in Cameroon, the decentralised polities of the coast and forested part of Cameroon also had to rise up against the Germans. This was especially when strong elements of their freedom, power and sovereignty were threatened. The *Ewondo* people in 1894 under *Mvog-beti* clan led by Omgba Bisogo did not hesitate to rise up against the Germans they had earlier welcomed simply because the Germans abused of their sovereignty and commercial interest.<sup>114</sup> Though this strong act of political consciousness and bravery cost Omgba Bisogo and his followers to face the heavy arm of German fury and riposte, it never the less demonstrated to the German colonisers the peoples level of political consciousness and their determination to uphold their sovereignty and power.

In the same way the Duala people on the Cameroon coast who had earlier opened the doors of Cameroon to German colonisation, did not also hesitate to resist these same Germans when the foundations of their freedom and sovereignty were threatened. In February 1903, one of such foundations of the people's sovereignty and power (land) was threatened with expropriation by the German government.<sup>115</sup> This expropriation project which was highly contested by Duala kings and their subjects, was strongly condemned as expressed in Douala

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<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*, p, 92.

<sup>114</sup> Abwa, *Cameroon : Histoire d'un Nationalisme...* p.99.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, p.100.

Manga Bell's letter to the German Reichstag in 1911<sup>116</sup>. After every peaceful and legal means were exploited to bring Germany to recognise the people's sovereignty by abandoning the expropriation project, Germany rather resorted to intimidation. This therefore pushed a people conscious of their political power and sovereignty on their land to challenge all forms of German intimidation. It was from this moment that Manga Bell emerged as the mouthpiece of the Duala people and started underground works for the mobilisation of support towards the setting up of a grand resistant movement that would put an end to German power in Cameroon<sup>117</sup>. Though this initiative was to cost him execution by hanging it inscribed a strong fact in the annals of history and that fact is that; imperialist could well go about their activities on African soil but as soon as these activities became a threat to the peoples sovereignty and power it provoked an immediate response from the people in the form of resistance, thus a clear indication of the strong level of political consciousness prevailing in the territory.

### **iii. The First World War and War time Propaganda in Cameroon**

Having experienced 30 years of German colonial rule characterised by a constant struggle for power between ethnic polities and German colonisers, the year 1914 and the outbreak of a global conflagration opened great prospects of freedom for many Cameroonian people. This prospect of liberation and freedom as was vehiculated by war time propaganda, enticed a multitude of Cameroonians who had seen their sovereignty seized by the Germans and thus saw the war as an effective opportunity to regain freedom and affirm their power. Unfortunately, this was not the case as the defeat and end of German power in Cameroon rather opened doors to new imperialist whose actions and policies rather provoked the reawakening of political consciousness which before now was pressed down by German colonial domination.

Considering that the First World War in Cameroon saw the heavy participation of natives in various capacities and most especially as soldiers, one is compelled to question the rationale of this heavy participation of natives in the war. Two plausible arguments so far have been advanced to answer the above interrogation; first, the fear and loyalty to German conquerors and secondly the hope of seeing the triumph of freedom and liberty at the end of the

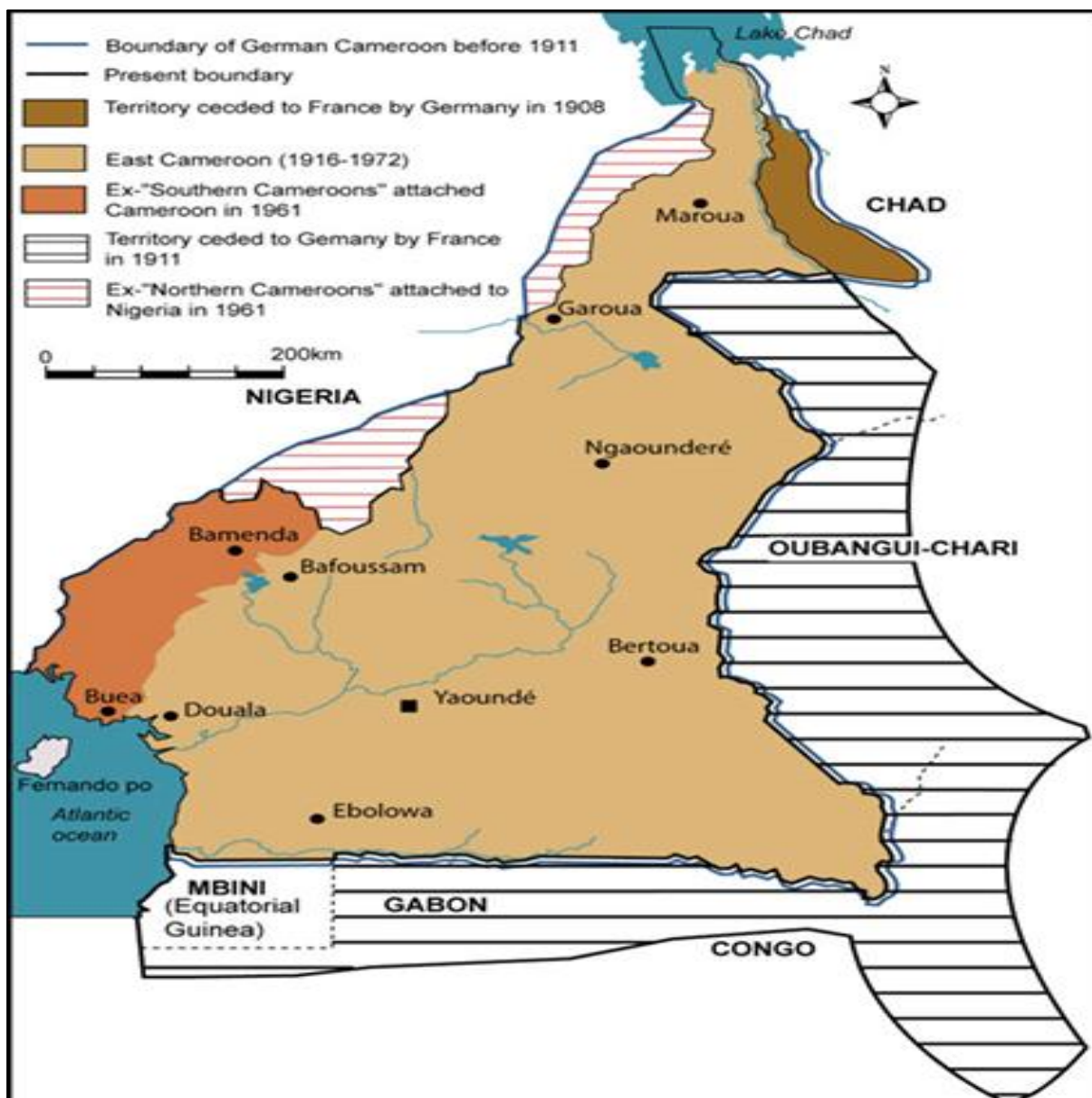
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<sup>116</sup> R. Joseph, "The Royal Pretender : Prince Douala Manga Bell in Paris, 1919-1922", in *Cahiers D'études Africaines*, No.54,XIV, Pp, 339-358

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

war when Germany is totally defeated and expelled out of Cameroon.<sup>118</sup> Thus, while some natives valiantly fought in defence of Germany, others bravely enlisted with the allied forces to fight for their freedom from German oppression.

**MAP I: Showing German Territorial claims and domination in Cameroon 1884-1916**



**Source:** W. Dze-Ngwa, “The First World War and its Aftermath in Cameroon, A Historical Evaluation of a Centenary, 1914-2014”, In *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, Vol. 3 N<sup>o</sup> 2. February 2015. p, 80.

<sup>118</sup> C. Tsala Tsala, J. Germain Otabela, « Première Guerre Mondiale Et Effritement Du Prestige De L’homme Blanc Au Cameroun » in *Cameroun and the Great War (1914 – 1916) First National Colloquium On Military History*, Douala, 05 – 08<sup>th</sup> August, 2014, p.315



All this was the result of a powerful war time propaganda disseminated by the belligerent forces which eventually gained firmament on African soil and Cameroon in particular thanks to cable lines and the metropolitan press.<sup>119</sup> The outcome of this was the propagation of written and verbal arguments aimed at painting a bleak picture of the opponent. In this war of propaganda, the British and French Press in West Africa came on limelight following the Anglo-French invasion of Togo and Cameroon. These newspapers intensified on an anti-German propaganda with emphasis on the German colonial atrocities in Africa expressed using the Hun metaphor and supposed German lust for blood and appetite for destruction.<sup>120</sup> In doing so, the Anglo-French war time propaganda in Cameroon aimed at convincing the natives to know that an allied victory will bring about restoration of their humanity and the setting up of humane principles while a German victory will only lead to savagery and brutality.<sup>121</sup> The prosperity of such propaganda won the hearts of the many oppressed people of German Cameroon who saw their humanity, freedom and sovereignty completely lost. Thus joining the Allied camp represented great hope for these people as it would give them a new opportunity to regain their sovereignty and affirm their freedom and power.

Unfortunately with the end of the War and the defeat of Germany in 1916, the workings of Anglo-French diplomacy brought about the expulsion of Germany from Cameroon and its eventual partition into British and French Cameroon. This act was endorsed by the League of Nations in 1919 and as a result a new status was given to Cameroon as a Mandate “B” territory of the League of Nations placed under British and French rule.<sup>122</sup> This eventually ushered in a new era of domination and imperialism, this time under French and British rule, a situation which in no way guaranteed the expected freedom and liberation long promised to the natives through war time propaganda.

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<sup>119</sup> K. J. Orosz, “Propaganda in the Colonies ( Africa)” in *International Encyclopaedia of First World War*, February 21, 2017, p.2.

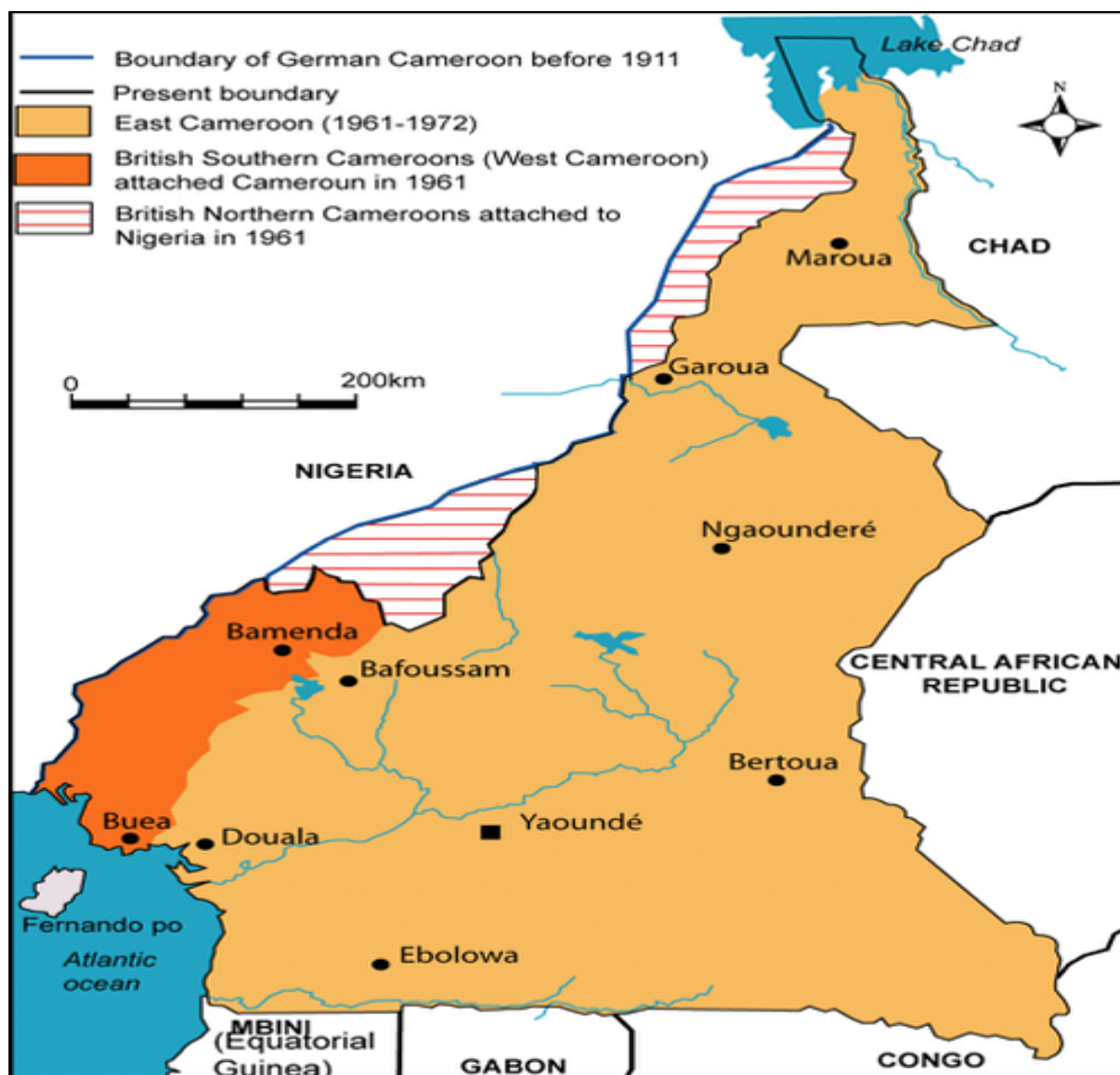
<sup>120</sup> **The Hun Metaphor** is a term that takes its origins from Attila the Hun a barbarian leader of the Hunic Empire that terrified Rome in the 5<sup>th</sup> century and who became symbol of the dark ages that followed the collapse of the Roman civilisation. The concept became applied to Germany after the notorious speech by Wilhelm II in 1900 When he bade farewell to German soldiers sailing to china to put down the boxer uprising and urged them to be ruthless and take no prisoner

<sup>121</sup> K. J. Orosz, “Propaganda in the colonies... p.2.

<sup>122</sup> L. Fru Awah, “The Dynamics of Political Engagement and Militancy in British Southern Cameroon, 1953-1961: A Strength or Weakness in the Peoples Struggle for Self-Determination and Independence” in W. Dze-Ngwa (Eds), *Boundaries and Power Dynamics in Africa: Selected Essays in the Social and Human Sciences*, ANICHR Publications, Yaoundé, 2021, pp., 174-210.

Disappointed with the British and French imperialist moves, Cameroonians had no other choice but to appeal to the consciousness of their fellow compatriots that they have been duped and thus have no other option but to re appropriate their freedom and sovereignty. A glaring case in point was the call made by Prince Alexander Ndoumbe Douala Manga Bell in 1919 calling on Cameroonians to rise up against Anglo-French imperialism<sup>123</sup>.

**MAP II: Showing the partitioned Cameroon under British and French Power 1916-1960**



**Source:** W. Dze-Ngwa, “The First world War and its Aftermath in Cameroon, A Historical Evaluation of a centenary, 1914-2014”, In *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, Vol. 3 N<sup>o</sup> 2. February 2015. p, 83.

<sup>123</sup> <sup>123</sup> R. Joseph, “The Royal Pretender, p, 354

This call was first adhered to by a group of Douala people in August 1919 who decided to petition the Paris Peace Conference contesting the Anglo- French partition of Cameroon and thus advocated for a Cameroon for Cameroonians and an Africa for Africans.<sup>124</sup> With this, a new phase of political awareness was inaugurated in Cameroon this time with a weak ethnic base and strong national base, reason why many have referred to political consciousness during this period as Nationalism<sup>125</sup>

## II. The Emergence of Interest Groups: The Genesis of Militant Politics in Cameroon

Political consciousness already inherent in the minds of Cameroonians all over the different corners of the territory took a new dimension in the post-world war one era. This period which many Cameroonians waited with great expectation as the era of liberation, turned out to be the era of great deception as the promises of freedom propagated in the war time period by Britain and France never came to materialisation. In this context of great deception and disappointment the new occupational forces (Britain and France) technically introduced policies with the aim of containing the highly aggrieved Cameroonians and effectively administer and exploit their territory. The already conscious Cameroonian population did not remain docile in the face of such great injustice and deception forced on them by the mandatory powers. Thus in spite of the repressive and constraining measures put in place by these occupying powers to limit the expression of their political freedom and power, the Cameroonians through protest and resistance succeeded to twist the arm of the imperialists by adopting clandestine measures which paved the way for the emergence of several interest groups across the territory hence marking the effective beginning of militant politics in Cameroon.

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<sup>124</sup> W. Dze-Ngwa, “The First World War and Its Aftermath in Cameroon: A Historical Evaluation of a Centenary, 1914-2014”, In *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, Vol. 3 N<sup>o</sup> 2. February 2015.

<sup>125</sup> **Nationalism**; derived from the word nation, Nationalism has variously been defined and explained in different context and periods. It is believed to be a spirit of political consciousness developed by a people of their specific identity at a parti cular time. The Cameroonian Historian Abwa says it is a doctrine or better still a movement that upholds the predominance of a particular identity (nation) in all aspects of society. Independence fighters in the early 1940’s in Africa referred to it as the wind of change that blew across Africa bringing forth liberation and independence of the African people from colonial subjugation.

**i. The British and French Mandate: A Constraining Political Environment for the Expression of Political Freedom.**

The effective kick off of the Anglo-French mandate in Cameroon in 1922 was marked by the codification of laws and principles also called colonial policies which to a greater extent restricted fundamental political liberties of Cameroonians. These policies which the French termed Assimilation and the British; Indirect rule, greatly shaped political developments in Cameroon as their application often provoked adverse reactions from the politically conscious Cameroonians who at this time were determined to affirm their political liberty.

Under the French mandate, an elaborate centralised or direct system of administration was set up with the high commissioner as the supreme authority.<sup>126</sup> With this direct system put in place several repressive and constraining laws were elaborated with the principal aim of compelling Cameroonian natives to pay allegiance to France. They even went as far as categorising the natives into two distinct classes; that is the “*Assimilé*” and “the *Sujet*.”<sup>127</sup> Such a discriminatory system was well fashioned to single out all those who still proved unreceptive vis-à-vis French presence and values, by so doing treat them with the greatest cruelty as defined by the *Code d’indigénat*<sup>128</sup> fashioned principally to advance and impose French colonial interest in Cameroon. Hence throughout the French mandate in Cameroon repressive laws were highly propagated which at the end completely deprived the people of political expression and freedom.<sup>129</sup>

Trapped therefore in this constraining political environment, the people of French Cameroon especially those of the coast who had been exposed to western education, started multiplying efforts with the aim of making their political right and freedom prevail on their land. The Douala chiefs in the first place had already taken a giant move in 1921 contesting and questioning the League of Nations’s decision endorsing the Anglo-French partition of Cameroon and placing them under French rule. As if that was not enough they went further in 1926 through a petition to call on the League of Nations to out rightly terminate their mandate system in Cameroon as this move was totally unacceptable and incompatible with the Germano-

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<sup>126</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun : Histoire d’un Nationalisme*. p.

<sup>127</sup> P. Gaillard, *Le Cameroun* Tom I, Paris, Harmattan, 1989, p.123.

<sup>128</sup> Code de L’indigénat or Le Régime de l’indigénat was a set of diverse and fluctuating laws characterised by arbitrariness which in essence established an inferior legal status for natives or indigenes of French colonies; see, Isabelle Merle & Adrian Muckle, *L’indigénat: Geneses dans l’empire Française, Pratique en Nouvelle Calédonie*, Editions CNRS, 2019

<sup>129</sup> P. Gaillard, *Le Cameroun*. p. 126

Douala treaty of 1884.<sup>130</sup> According to the Douala chiefs, as pointed out in another text to the League of Nations they called on this organisation to restore their statehood and avoid placing them under further domination.<sup>131</sup>

Receiving no positive feedback from all these moves, some Douala elites led by Gaston Kingue-jong who had earlier been prevented from publishing a newspaper in Douala called “*Mballe*” proceeded to Paris where together with Joseph Ebele Ngoto decided to launch a Pro-German organisation; *Kamerun Eingentborenen Deutsch Gesinttenverein (KEDGV)*<sup>132</sup> whose echoes had profound impact in Germany as it coincided with the campaign for the restitution of German colonies. While the French administration was exploring measures on how to counter this Pro- German movement which had started spreading among Cameroonians, another veritable political movement was launched in October 1936 by Leopold Moume Ettia, Mandessi Bell, and Gottfried Chan in Paris called *Comité Nationale De Defense Des Interest Du Cameroon*.<sup>133</sup> One year later this movement was transformed into a pressure group under the leadership of Mandessi Bell and Ettia. This movement had as objectives to Press for the amelioration of living conditions in Cameroon under French rule, to ask for a mandate “A” status for Cameroon which will enable the people affirm their sovereignty through independence.<sup>134</sup>

The fact that all the above movements first started in Paris and not Cameroon is a glaring proof that the political plat form in Cameroon at the time was not open to allow the free expression of liberties especially as this could put to question the legitimacy of the French. Leon Kaptué confirms the above assertion in his Thesis when he says; «*Les camerounais désireux de s'associer ou de se constituée en syndicat ne pouvait le faire que dans l'illégalité* ».<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, p. 127.

<sup>131</sup> See, P. Hibbeln, *Supervising Imperialism: Petitions to the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission, 1920-1939*, p, 24 in [www.Ohioacademyofhistory.org](http://www.Ohioacademyofhistory.org) accessed on 21/08/2020. See also, Ralph A. Austen, “Metamorphoses of Middlemen: The Duala, Europeans, and the Cameroon Hinterland, ca. 1800-ca.1960”, in *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol.6, No. 1, 1983, Pp., 1-24

<sup>132</sup> *Kamerun Eingentborenen Deutsch Gesinttenverein* whose meaning in ungrammatical German stands for “The Kamerun Natives’ German-Thinking Union was clandestinely formed by Douala elites, but was uncovered by French authorities between 1933 & 1934, thus decided to launch a counter offensive against such initiatives. See, Jonathan Derick & Jonathan Derricic, Free French and Africans in Douala, 1940-1944, in *Journal of the Historical society of Nigeria*, Vol, 10, No.2, June 1980, p., 53-70.

<sup>133</sup> P. Gaillard, *Le Cameroun*, p.128.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>135</sup> L. Kaptué, « L’expérience Syndicale Au Cameroun Des Origine A 1960 », Thèse De Doctorat 3<sup>e</sup> Cycle Université de Yaoundé, 1988, p, 97

He further adds that ;

*Les associations de plus de vingt personnes ne pouvaient se former, nulle section ne pouvait s'agréger a une association de plus de vingt personnes qu'avec l'agrément du gouvernement français et sous les conditions qu'il plaisait à l'autorité publique de lui imposer.*<sup>136</sup>

Under such conditions it was very difficult for political rights and freedom to be expressed in French Cameroon talk less of political movements. Thus if the Pro-German movement (*KEDGV*) succeeded to prosper in Cameroon it was only through clandestine means, as the French authorities in Cameroon had not authorised any such movement in Cameroon<sup>137</sup>. Faced therefore with the growth of this movement and its political implication on French Cameroon, the French government had to retaliate immediately by assigning Antoine Lorenzi to French Cameroon with the special task of setting up an Anti-German movement which had as principal mission the suppression of the *KEDGV* and of course promote the love for French values among the people of French Cameroon.

It was in this light that Soppo Priso according to Lorenzi appeared as the best person to help France accomplish the aforementioned mission of Lorenzi. Thus, having accepted to perform the task, Soppo Priso was given the green light to create a Pro-French movement in French Cameroon which bore the name *Jeunesse Camerounaise Française (JEUCAFRA)*.<sup>138</sup> From the facts mentioned above, it is evident that French Cameroon under the mandate was a territory deprived of all forms of political freedom and rights. The need therefore to be free and sovereign pushed many Cameroonians especially the Douala elite to clandestinely initiate anti-colonial movements. Though some of these movements took the form of Pro-German organisation, they were in every sense of the word Interest groups engaged in militancy against French social, economic and political domination in Cameroon, thus advocating total freedom and sovereignty for their people and territory.<sup>139</sup> The retaliation of French authorities' vis-à-vis these movement by adopting repressive policies rather sowed the seeds of competitive politics and militancy in French Cameroon as the French laws prohibiting rights to political freedom and expression rather spur up French Cameroon's elites back in the diaspora to

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<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> J. Derick & J. Derricic, "Free French and Africans in Douala, 1940-1944", in *Journal of the Historical society of Nigeria*, Vol, 10, No.2, June 1980, p., 57.

<sup>138</sup> E. Tchoumtchoua, *De la JEUCAFRA a L'UPC : L'éclosion du Nationalisme Camerounais*, éditions CLE, Yaoundé, 2006, p.57.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid*, p.45.

constitute themselves in movements and clandestinely propagate anti-imperialist ideal in Cameroon.

With time this anti-imperialist propaganda became so popular in French Cameroon to the extent that French authorities had no other option but to fight back using the enemy's strategy. It was therefore in this light that French authorities launched the JEUCAFRA movement in Cameroon which had as mission to counter anti-imperialist propaganda with a propaganda of the virtues and benefits of French colonisation<sup>140</sup>. This therefore set the pace for political activism in French Cameroon and of course levelled the ground for politics and militancy in French Cameroon.

Coming to the British Cameroons which had also become a British mandate in 1922, the situation was not different. Though the British through indirect rule made it relatively easier for the people of British Cameroons to express their political rights and liberties, the association of British Cameroon to Nigeria provoked serious problems that had to put to question the political right and sovereignty of the people of British Cameroon.<sup>141</sup>

One principal problem caused as a result of the British attachment of British Cameroon to Nigeria was the problem of Nigerian/Igbo domination. The association of British Cameroon to Nigeria gave a free leverage for Nigerians to easily trample on the people of British Cameroon thereby curtailing their political rights and freedom. Their growing influence on British Cameroon was so strong that one could say "British Cameroon was technically colonised by Nigeria"<sup>142</sup>

In 1922 following the promulgation of the Clifford's constitution, British Southern Cameroons was officially made an administrative unit of Nigeria, and also a legislative council for both territories was created and presided by the governor. This council was constituted of 30 official members, 3 elected non official members representing the municipal area of Lagos and Calabar with 15 nominated unofficial. The constitution equally created an executive council which served as advisory body to the governor and was superior to the legislative council.<sup>143</sup> This constitution in all its provisions gave no room for British Southern Cameroons

<sup>140</sup> See, E. Tchoumtchoua, *De la JEUCAFRA a L'UPC...* p.57.

<sup>141</sup> L. F. Awah, *Party-Politics and the Dynamics of Militancy in British Southern Cameroons: 1953-1961*, MA Dissertation, History, University of Yaoundé I, 2015, p.31.

<sup>142</sup> <sup>142</sup> V. B. Amazee, "The Underdevelopment of the British Southern Cameroons, 1916-196" in *AFRICA ZAAMANI Journal of African History*, N<sup>o</sup> 4, 1996, pp.55P.94.

<sup>143</sup> V. J. Ngoh, *Southern Cameroons 1922-1961: a Constitutional History*, Ashgate, Burlington, 2001, p.11.

representation of which British Cameroon was administratively attached to Nigeria and not completely annexed. Also striking was the fact that by the provision of the constitution the legislative council was to legislate for the colony of Lagos, the protectorate of Nigeria and the Cameroons under British mandate, but surprisingly out of its 19 African members none came from the British Cameroons. A sign that the people of British Cameroons had completely lost their fundamental political right to decide who they are and what they shall want to become.<sup>144</sup>

Mindful of the fact that many people from Southern Cameroons fought for freedom alongside the British during the First World War, the eventual Nigerian colonisation of the Cameroons masterminded by Britain raised serious problems and questioning especially among the educated elite. Faced with such domination, these elite could not in any way stay indifferent. Evidently the only means through which they could make known their frustrations to the British administration was through the chiefs but unfortunately the British administrative system had made elites appear to be staunch enemies of traditional rulers.<sup>145</sup> Thus the chiefs made sure they had nothing to do with educated elite. Under such conditions the elites had no other choice than to appeal to the conscience of the masses which according to them the masses had the capacity to influence the British policies better than even the chiefs. In this light therefore the elites went out and started bringing the masses together in associations and groupings wherein they exposed and shared their frustrations *vis-a-vis* the British administration as the principal cause of all their frustration.

As many identified with these frustrations exposed by the educated elites, the results was their massive adherence to small ethno-political groups and associations in all the major towns of the territory<sup>146</sup>. The creation of groups and associations by educated elites to express their fundamental political rights is a clear proof that the British administration, though relatively open to freedom of expression, did not advance and enhance the fundamental political rights of the people. Thus ethno-political associations and groups became the only available medium through which they could easily make their voices heard, hence they mobilised and created many of such groups and associations which recruited many British Cameroonians in their ranks as such introducing the people to political activism which eventually set the pace for militant politics.

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<sup>144</sup> Awah, "Party-Politics. p. 55.

<sup>145</sup> V. B. Amazee, *Traditional Rulers (chiefs) and Politics in Cameroon History*, Yaoundé, P.U.Y, 2002, p.38.

<sup>146</sup> See, Ebune, *The Growth of Political Parties*, Pp.105-109



## ii. Socio-Economic Upheavals as Springboard for Militant Politics in Cameroon

British and French Cameroon under the League of Nations mandate from 1922-1945 was a territory that experienced great upheavals provoked essentially by the adverse social and economic climate introduced in Cameroon by the British and French just after they took control of the territory as new occupants. In their mission to administer Cameroon as a mandate prescribed by the League of Nations, Britain and France on several occasions were carried away by exploitative colonial ambitions which were very much expressed in their respective “colonial” policies. The implementation of such policies on several occasions clashed with the social and economic interest of the Cameroonian people thus necessitating a prompt response on their part to effectively safeguard their interest. Since the native response was not in any way tolerated by the “colonial” powers considering the restrictions of freedom they imposed on the territory, they therefore multiplied repressive measures to silence these natives. The Cameroonians on their part determined to fully express their political, social and economic rights amidst “colonial” repression and exploitation, resorted to mass mobilisation which took the form of trade unions, tribal associations, pressure groups and political movements. This therefore prepared the ground for militant politics in the territory. It should however be noted that though mass mobilisation easily probed up in British Cameroon it operated in total clandestinity in French Cameroon.

### Socio-Economic Malaise in French Cameroon

In the elaboration of its socio economic vision for Cameroon, the French “colonial” administration opted for a development theory based on what was called *La Mise en valeur*<sup>147</sup>. Introduced by Albert Sarraut, this theory aimed at deriving maximum economic benefits for France before serving the interest of the administered people.<sup>148</sup> With the putting in place of such a philosophy of development, it was very certain that the special status of Cameroon as a mandate would not exempt it from the colonial exploitation of France. This therefore explains why between 1920 and 1945 serious economic reforms were introduced in French Cameroon by France but the question often asked is: to who exactly were these reforms to benefit? The obvious answer is France<sup>149</sup>. Looking at the inhuman and ruthlessness that characterised socio-

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<sup>147</sup> G. Camille, « la Mise en Valeur des Colonies Françaises », in *Annales de Géographie*, t 32, No.177, 1923, pp, 265-271

<sup>148</sup> Ngoh, *History of Cameroon Since 1800*, p.137.

<sup>149</sup> See, G. Camille, « la Mise en Valeur des Colonies Françaises », in *Annales de Géographie*, t 32, No.177, 1923, pp, 265-271.

economic development in French Cameroon, their rational automatically had to be put to question. For you can't pretend to invest for the welfare of a people by killing the same people.

Throughout French Cameroon a rapid level of development was registered especially in the domains of agriculture and communication infrastructure. All this was thanks to the important land, labour and tax reforms introduced in the territory by France. Unfortunately the benefits of this rapid development were not reflected in the wellbeing of the population as many still worked under inhuman conditions, *Prestation* was still the order of the day and many continued to die in forced labour projects as was the case along the *Njock-Makak* rail road project.<sup>150</sup> The deteriorating socio-economic condition in French Cameroon got even worst by October 1929 with the outbreak of the economic crisis in Europe which provoked in Cameroon; increase in head tax, fall in prices of agricultural products, and general economic malaise.

This phenomenon forced many in French Cameroon to abandon the rural areas for urban centres others even went as far as British Cameroon in search of better life. This difficult conditions that persisted until 1939 with the outbreak of Second World War rendered the socio-economic environment of French Cameroon very deplorable and thus exposed the people to worst forms of exploitation. Dissatisfied with these conditions of hardship and continues exploitation, the people of French Cameroon started pondering on possible means through which they could express their dissatisfaction and advocate for a better life. Unfortunately for them the repressive French laws and policies in the land did not give any room for mass mobilisation (Unionism/Association) not to talk of revandications. Under such conditions the people in their determination to speak out their plight and seek reparation or amelioration had no other choice than to adopt what Leon Kaptué calls *L'illegalité*<sup>151</sup>

In as much as the French laws did not tolerate any form of association, trade unionism or public revandications, it occasionally permitted "harmless" gathering which had no links with cooperate and political revandications. Among such gatherings we had Musical Clubs, Sporting Clubs, and Cooperative Societies. These "harmless" associations which the French administration permitted to operate in French Cameroon eventually turned out to be a strategic hide out for trade unionist and political activist. In the testimony of a one time member of a musical club in French Cameroon as recounted by Leon Katué, he says; whenever members of the musical club met for rehearsals, music was relegated to the second position because they all

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<sup>150</sup> Ngoh, *Hundred Years of History*, p. 42.

<sup>151</sup> Kaptue, *L'expérience syndicale au Cameroun*, p. 97.

seized the opportunity to discuss their poor conditions of work, low salaries and even politics which were topics they could not freely meet to discuss out of the club.<sup>152</sup>

The same thing applied also to sports clubs where in different sport association met on playgrounds for exercise and competitions but once in the vestiaries (dressing rooms) one thing occupied their minds and was at the centre of their discussions. This thing was their day to day misery experienced at work and how they could jointly find a better way to express their plight and seek better conditions.<sup>153</sup> Even in cooperative societies where indigenes met regularly for social contributions and savings for social security, avenues were often created for cooperate and political discussions. Hence the promotion of trade unionism and political activism.<sup>154</sup>

From the aforementioned, it is crystal clear that the socio-economic malaise suffered by the people of French Cameroon to a greater extent were the results of the exploitative economic policies introduced in the territory which were a deliberate mechanism to ensure the development of France at the detriment of the welfare of the impoverished Cameroonians. Heavily exploited and dehumanised by these French economic policies, the people of French Cameroon were left with no option than to exploit any existing avenue or opportunity to make known their sufferings and frustrations. Good enough clubs and associations generally considered as harmless gatherings served the peoples cause as they were systematically transformed into nurseries and incubators of strong vibrant trade unions which sowed the seed of politics and militancy in French Cameroon.

### **Socio-Economic Malaise In British Cameroons**

The British Cameroon compared to French Cameroon appeared more liberal and this was evident in the easy proliferation between 1920 and 1940 of several interest groups (associations) pressure groups, and even trade unions<sup>155</sup>. The rapid growth of these groupings in Southern Cameroons was heavily prompted by early socio-economic frustrations British rule and policies brought to the people of the British Cameroons.

From 1922 to the end of Second World War, British Southern Cameroons was trapped in a closet of generalised underdevelopment with the entire blame pushed to Britain for the outright and complete neglect of the development of British Cameroons. It should be recalled

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<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, p.101.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid*, p.105.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid*, p.104.

<sup>155</sup> See, Ebune, *The Growth of Political Parties*, p.121.

that until 1945 Britain had envisaged no development policy for British Cameroons, and even after the second world war when the development and welfare policy for colonies as prescribed in the colonial development and welfare act of 1940 was instituted, British Southern Cameroons was still not to benefit from this act since the territory was administered as part of Nigeria<sup>156</sup>. Thus no budgetary allocation for Southern Cameroons was previewed, and by so doing any expenditure allotted to Southern Cameroon was not made on the basis of its needs rather on the general needs of the Nigerian region to which it was attached.<sup>157</sup> Under such conditions it was clear that the development of Southern Cameroons was surrendered to the benevolence and good will of Eastern Nigeria to whom Britain had abandoned the development fate of Southern Cameroons.

This development vacuum created by Britain in Southern Cameroons therefore opened doors to Nigerian domination as the latter in their entrepreneurial spirit completely took hostage the economy of Southern Cameroon. The failure of Britain to provide roads, hospitals, and schools in British Cameroons forced the people to depend on Nigeria for all these basic amenities.<sup>158</sup> Having received a blank cheque from Britain to operate in Cameroon at their convenience, Nigerians institutionalised a strong web of domination within the Southern Cameroons which produced great frustrations among the people of the territory. Hence orchestrating socio-economic upheavals.

Faced with the excesses of Nigerian domination the people of the territory especially those in the major cities like Victoria, Kumba, Bamenda, Mamfe, decided to come together into well-structured ethnic based associations like the Bakweri cultural Organisation (BCO) created by Mbene in 1939, the Bamenda Improvement Union (BaIU), the Bayangi Savings Association (BSA)<sup>159</sup>. Though rooted in traditional values, these associations addressed the ills of British colonial rule and policies with the aim of effecting social change through a strong bond of unity characterised by concerted action among its members. These associations were to become nurseries for future political leaders in Southern Cameroons as its activities promoted militancy and by so doing setting the pace for militant politics. From the ethnic associations emerged trade unions and later pressure groups as was the case with the Bakweri Cultural Organisation

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<sup>156</sup> V. B. Amazeé, *Underdevelopment in British Southern Cameroons*. p.69.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> J. Ebune, *The Growth of Political Parties in British Southern Cameroons*, p.105.

(BCO) which was later transformed into the Cameroon Welfare Union (CWU)<sup>160</sup>. This often happened after the associations experienced an increase in their influence and membership. As more Southern Cameroonians took consciousness of their socio-economic frustrations a strong determination to bring them to an end became a common preoccupation of all. Thus in 1947 the people came together under the leadership of EML Endeley and as one man under the banner of the Cameroon Development Cooperation Welfare Union (CDCWU) they staged a remarkable industrial protest which set the pace for active unionism in the territory<sup>161</sup>. With the break through achieved by Trade Unions the ground was therefore levelled for militant politics.

### **iii. Militancy in Transition from Cooperate Activism to Political Activism**

The politisation of the Cameroonian population and the effective kick-off of militant politics in the territory has been a long process nursed by several Historical antecedents, but which gained stronger impetus and exposure throughout the period spanning the First and Second World war. Enhanced by unpopular “colonial” administration introduced in the territory after the First World War and sustained by their exploitative socio-economic policies, militancy in Cameroon has been on a consistent and permanent growth. Its appropriation by the educated elites and the working class in British and French Cameroon produced exponential political repercussions fundamental amongst these repercussions was the birth of political parties. Thus the materialisation of a clear transition from Micro-Nationalism to Macro-Nationalism which effectively set in motion party-politics in the territory.

The transition from cooperate activism (associations and trade unions) to political activism (party-politics) in French Cameroon was a very difficult one considering that France in its exploitative agenda and heavy dependence on her African colonies had no intention of ever tolerating any form of emancipation of it colonised people. Thus in the formulation of its colonial policies France did everything to prevent an eventual political emancipation of the indigenes in her colonies if not by law then by repression. Unfortunately in their efforts to prevent all forms of political emancipation in French Cameroon France instead sowed the seeds of political emancipation through her cruel and repressive policies. The indigenes already exposed to political ideas and conscious of their right to power in their territory, seized the opportunity that was presented to them by the Brazzaville conference of 1944<sup>162</sup>. This

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p.70.

<sup>162</sup> See, J. François Muracciole, « la conférence de Brazzaville et la décolonisation : le mythe et la réalité », in *Espoir*, No.152, Juin, 2017.

conference which opened doors to significant political and socio-economic reforms in French African colonies as was prescribed by Charles de Gaulle himself who in opening the conference said;

*En Afrique française comme dans tous les autres territoires ou des hommes vivent sous notre drapeau, il n'y aurait aucun progrès qui soit un progrès si les homes sur leur natale n'en profitaient pas matériellement et moralement, s'ils ne pouvaient s'élevé peu à peut jusqu'au niveau ou ils seront capable de participer chez eux à la gestion de leur propre affaire. C'est le devoir de la France de faire en sorte qu'il en soit ainsi.*<sup>163</sup>

Favoured some degree of freedom of association and trade unionism which automatically legitimised mass movements in French Cameroon as elites and workers in particular started directing all their energy and resources in the putting in place of cooperate organisations (trade unions) which later became a veritable school for political education and the bedrock of militancy and competitive politics in French Cameroon.

The first indigenous trade union to see the light of day in French Cameroon was the *Union des Syndicat Confédérés du Cameroun* (USCC). Founded in August 1944, it was led by Reuben Um Nyobe and Charles Assale its Secretary General.<sup>164</sup> This trade union had as principal aim the fight for better working conditions for all its members.<sup>165</sup> The first public manifestation of the USCC in a general strike action was successfully organised on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 1945, a manifestation which pulled a huge crowd of over 3000 workers.<sup>166</sup>

Though brutally suppressed by the French occupying forces, the impact this public manifestation left in the minds of the Cameroonians could not be undermined. Evidence of this was the sporadic emergence of several other trade unions like the *Forces Ouvrière* (FO), the *Confédération Francaise des travailleurs Croyant* (CFTC), the *Confederation Camerounaise des Syndicat Croyant* (CCSC), the *Union Camerounaise des Travailleurs Croyant* (UCTC) and the *Union des Syndicat Autonome du Cameroun* (USAC).<sup>167</sup> With this spontaneous growth and affluence of trade unions in French Cameroon it became very clear that the spirit of militancy had taken hold of the people. Thus besides addressing work related issues and problems the people started using trade union platforms to make political revandications,

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<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> T. Mimbama Evina, « La Transhumance Politique Au Cameroun Sous Administration De La France 1949-1960 », Mémoire Master en Histoire, Université de Yaoundé I, 2017. p.31.

<sup>165</sup> Ngoh, *History of Cameroon since 1800*, p. 153.

<sup>166</sup> Kaptué, « l'expérience syndicale... » p.198.

<sup>167</sup> Ngoh, *History of Cameroon since 1800*, p.154.

address human rights issues and condemn imperialism.<sup>168</sup> The waves produced by the vibrations of trade unions in French Cameroon in the 1940's were to effectively meet and combine with the already growing political waves emitted by the (*Jeunesse Camerounaise Française*) JEUCAFRA movement to produce a strong signal of political growth and emancipation throughout French Cameroon.

Placed under the leadership of Paul Soppo Priso, the JEUCAFRA was a political movement created by the French administration to rehabilitate the dying image and prestige of French values while protecting French colonial interest<sup>169</sup>. This double standard game in which Cameroonian elites were recruited to play was easily identified and castigated by the already emancipated French Cameroon society thus making it practically impossible for JEUCAFRA to attain its goal in the territory. Faced with this new reality of a strong and politically emancipated French Cameroon, the French authorities had no option but to dissolve the JEUCAFRA and transform it in 1945 to UNICAFRA with new objectives.<sup>170</sup>

Adopting a new stance, UNICAFRA was to serve as the mouth piece of the Cameroonian people before the French administration relating to the latter all its plights and frustration with the aim of pressing for better conditions for the indigenous population.<sup>171</sup> The incestuous link existing between this movement and the French administration made it very difficult for it to independently pursue its goals thus in 1947 the members of UNICAFRA decided to summon a grand conference inviting all other smaller movements in the territory. In their collective desire to completely emancipate themselves from French "colonial" domination, they all resolved to create an exclusively Cameroonian political movement which was named *Rassemblement Camerounais* (RACAM).<sup>172</sup> It should be noted that this movement was short-lived because of its nationalist posture which was not tolerated by the French administration and worst still majority of its members were all radical trade unionist, thus it was not a surprise when France out rightly banned the RACAM from operating in French Cameroon even without it being legalised in the first place.

Now greatly attached to the nationalist ideals, the members of the RACAM after failing to have their movement authorised decided to put up a new strategy which consisted of

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<sup>168</sup> Evina, « Transhumance politique, p.32.

<sup>169</sup> E. Tchoumtchoua, *De la JEUCAFRA a L'UPC...* p.152

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun Histoire D'un Nationalisme...*p.205.

demobilising the radical unionist and raising new and neutral persons at the head of the movement. This, was purposely to reassure the French authorities and convinced them to authorise their movement. With the strategy fully put in place the new and neutral persons led by Leonard Bouli met in Douala in 1948 and drafted the statutes of a new political movement which became approved as the first political party in French Cameroon called *Union des Populations du Cameroon* (UPC).<sup>173</sup>

It should be recalled that with the explosion of trade unions in French Cameroon in 1945, the monopoly enjoyed by JEUCAFRA as the lone political movement at the time was broken as the impressive presence of trade unions inspired and favoured the emergence a succession of pressure groups starting with the UNICAFRA which later gave way for the emergence of RACAM which after being outlawed inspired the creation of the first indigenous political party in French Cameroon by name UPC. Thus the coming to scene of political parties in French Cameroon was greatly the result of the aggressive and active unionist militant activities which made it clear through their actions that the time for French manipulation was over and a new dawn had come for the free manifestation of indigenous nationalist ideas. Hence marking the complete transition from corporate militancy to militant politics in French Cameroon.

Unlike in French Cameroon where mass movements and militancy was seriously repressed, in the British Cameroons militancy was rather enhanced by a smooth constitutional development process. The dissatisfaction that followed the Clifford Constitution of 1922 which openly marginalised the British Southern Cameroons within the Nigerian framework, pushed G. J. Mbene in 1939 to create the Bakweri Cultural Organisation. This was a platform to appeal to the political consciousness of the Bakweri and defend their interest<sup>174</sup>. This was therefore the beginning of latent militancy which was later appropriated and given wider exposure by the working class in 1946. The appropriation of militancy in Southern Cameroons by the urban elites and workers who were exposed to unemployment, poor working conditions, and low wages permitted these elite to give a new touch to militancy by diverting it away from an ethnic based to a corporate based activism and militancy<sup>175</sup>. It was in this light that the first trade union in British Southern Cameroon saw the light of day and went by the name CDCWU. Created in 1947 by EML Endeley, the CDCWU was the first movement in the territory to call for a public

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<sup>173</sup> Tchoumtchoua, *De la JEUCAFRA a L'UPC...*p.219.

<sup>174</sup> Aletum, *Political Sociology*, Patoh Publishers, Yaoundé, 2001, p.69.

<sup>175</sup> See, Awah, "Party-politics, Pp, 58-59



manifestation which saw the active manifestation of militancy in Southern Cameroons with the people strongly determined to defend their rights as workers<sup>176</sup>. This public strike action led by the CDCWU had a tremendous impact on political consciousness as many gained political emancipation during this public strike action and became determined to press for greater political freedom and self-determination.

The accompanying effects of this was the up shoot of several interest groups in the territory who in 1949 decided to federate their diverse interest into a powerful political movement called the Cameroon National Federation (CNF). Immediately it was launched this political movement became the first political organisation to raise the question of Unification and reunification of the Cameroons as an important element in its objectives.<sup>177</sup> As part of its strategy to address the above question, the CNF petitioned the UN Visiting Mission of 1949 in which they made an important request asking for the termination of the British administration of Southern Cameroons as part of Nigeria as well as the total end of the British trusteeship thus paving way for appropriate conditions that will bring about the unification of British Northern and Southern Cameroons as well as the eventual reunification of British Cameroon with French Cameroon<sup>178</sup>.

Of all the request they made to the visiting mission, unification and reunification greatly divided opinion within CNF. Unable to speak in one voice the UN visiting mission decided to dismiss their request asking them to re-examine their claim before an appropriate decision on the autonomy of the territory could be taken. Unfortunately this divergence in opinion within the CNF over the questions of Unification and Reunification was to further divide the political class of Southern Cameroons and of course lay the foundation for militant politics as in their division, several diverse ideologies emerged, with each rallying a good number of supporters and militants.

Unable to maintain unity within the CNF, EML Endeley the leader of the group openly took side by rejecting Reunification, thus antagonising a cross section of the movement leading to a split within the CNF as some of its key militants like R.J.K Dibongue, N.N Mbile, and J.N Foncha who were pro-Reunificationist decided to abandon the movement.<sup>179</sup> The result of this was the creation of the Kamerun United National Congress (KUNC) in 1951 by Mbile and

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<sup>176</sup> See, Ebune, *The Growth of Political Parties*, p,70.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>178</sup> See, NAB, File No.Vc./a1951/2, Cameroon National Federation Petition to the UN visiting Mission.

<sup>179</sup> See, Awah, "Party-Politics, p, 43.

Dibongue<sup>180</sup>. With the birth of the KUNC as the second powerful political movement in the Southern Cameroons it became clear that the sparks produced by trade unionism in 1947 carried in them a consuming fire of political emancipation and nationalism thus justifying the total shift from work-related problems by these early politicians to address issues of nationalism and self-determination. With the eventual promulgation of the MacPherson Constitution which raised Southern Cameroons representation in the Eastern Regional assembly from 2 to 13, elections had to be organised in the territory in order to choose these 13 representatives. The presence therefore of two vibrant political organisations in the territory made things very easy as elections were eventually going to be determined by the ideologies of these political organisations, as well as the ability of each party to effectively sell its ideology to the masses now very much aware and conscious of the political stakes of the time.<sup>181</sup>

### **III. Nationalism through Political Competition: The Way forward For Effective Decolonisation in Cameroon.**

With the final appropriation of the nationalist movement by Cameroonian nationalist, it became clear that the path to freedom could no longer be curtailed by the invaders. Having exploited all channels and mechanisms to express their thirst for liberation from colonial domination, Cameroonian nationalists all came to the common conclusion that only active political activism and militancy could best project their struggle for freedom as well as the re-appropriation of the destiny of their nation as a free and independent people. To this effect, nothing could henceforth deter their determination to overrule colonialism through well-articulated ideas expressed in well-structured indigenous political parties. How then could political parties brake the yoke of domination and bring about independence to Cameroon? Knowing so well that at the time these parties emerged with the ideas of liberation, contradictory ones equally sprang up, some of which were even sponsored by the colonial authorities (*les parti administratifs*)<sup>182</sup> with a totally different perception of the question of independence. This in essence was the puzzle which political competition in pre-independence Cameroon was to provide answers to, so as to bring to materialisation the nationalist dream of self-determination and independence.

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<sup>180</sup> Ngoh, *Southern Cameroons: 1922-1961*, p. 63.

<sup>181</sup> See, Mbile, *Cameroon political Story*: p.39.

<sup>182</sup> See, Abwa, *Cameroon: Histoire d'un Nationalisme*. p,216.

### i. **Competitive Politics and the Independence Struggle in French Cameroon.**

In the French colonial manifesto, independence was never envisaged for the dominated people or colonies. Even Cameroon which by virtue of its special status as a trust territory of the UN that was supposed to be prepared for independence by France, did not receive such from France. In effect, France remained very adamant and repulsive to all ideas that projected independence for French African colonies and Cameroon in particular. It was therefore under these circumstances that the nationalist outburst which provoked the birth of the first indigenous political party in French Cameroon (UPC) was to be placed under serious checks. To effectively check the growth and spread of nationalism throughout French Cameroon as was propagated by the UPC, France opted for the **Divide and Rule** formula of Lyauty<sup>183</sup>.

This consisted of raising contradictory ideologies to that which was already being propagated by the UPC and its militants. The best way to go about this was to sponsor and create new political parties that were to rival the UPC party and of course destroy its popularity that was rising at a geometric rate. It was on this premise therefore, that political competition was strongly established in French Cameroon giving way for ideological confrontations, political manoeuvring and intrigues all of which characterised competitive politics and militancy in French Cameroon.

With the nationalist ideal of independence and reunification already rooted all over the major towns of the territory, the raising of parties with opposing and contradictory views to these ideals did not in any way stop the growth and influence of the UPC and its ideals, rather these parties indirectly served the nationalist cause as their actions gave more visibility to the UPC which French authorities by 1959 quickly realised and came to the conclusion that independence in Cameroon was inevitable.

To better appreciate competitive politics in French Cameroon and how it served the nationalist/independence struggle, it would be appropriate to identify and know some of the frontline political parties in French Cameroon before 1957 and their political ideologies.

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<sup>183</sup> The theory of divide and rule as a principle in French colonial administration was propounded by Lyauty a former French colonial administrator in Indochina, Madagascar and Morocco. According to Lyauty, if there are values and customs to be respected, there are also rivalries to be studied and used for our advantage by opposing conflicting parties against each other thereby relying on one to better conquer the others. See David Mokam, « Les Associations Régionales et le Nationalisme Camerounais 1945-1961 », Université de Yaoundé I, 2006, p. 185.

### 1. *Union des Populations du Cameroun. (UPC)*

Created on the 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1948 in Douala by a group of 12 Unionist commonly referred by some authors as *Les Douze de chez Sierra* In the neighbourhoods of Ndog-pasi precisely in a café spot bearing the name *Chez Seirra*<sup>184</sup>. These founding fathers of the UPC according to Abel Eyinga<sup>185</sup>, could possibly be the following; Charles Assale. Bagal Guillaume, Moume-Ettia, Ngom Jacques, Bouli Leonard, Etoundi Joseph, Hondt Guillaume, Manga Mado H-R, Ngosso Theodore, Biboum Jacques Rene, Yap Emmanuelle, And Yemi Georges.<sup>186</sup> The UPC was the first indigenous political party in French Cameroon and at creation made clear its political agenda which could be summarised in one statement; “To Unite all Cameroonians irrespective of their ideas, or religion so as to effectively fight against colonialism”<sup>187</sup> As the party gained roots in the territory with many Cameroonians taking membership as militants and supporters of the party it became clear to all that its principal goal was to bring about the independence and reunification of Cameroon.

### 2. *Evolution Sociale Camerounaise (ESOCAM)*

It was the first French-sponsored political party in French Cameroon created in June 1949 shortly before the arrival of the UN visiting mission. It was placed under the leadership of Pierre DIMALA, and its program or agenda like that of the UPC, advocated “The unity of all Cameroonians so as to favour rapid political development and improve their living standards”. It of course attacked the UPC programme of independence and Reunification on accounts that this UPC ideology was communist inclined and by so doing all Cameroonians were to avoid any links with such ideas.<sup>188</sup>

### 3. *Renaissance Camerounaise (RENAICAM)*

Born under the leadership of Ndounokon Alphonse with headquarters in Abong bang, the RENAICAM was a party that was created under the same conditions like

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<sup>184</sup> Abwa, *Histoire d'un Nationalisme...* p.210.

<sup>185</sup> Eyinga, *L'UPC Une Révolution Manquée*, p.24.

<sup>186</sup> It should however be noted that the twelve names sited above are just a suggestion of Abel Eyinga gathered from oral accounts considering that the meeting that led to creation of the UPC was not documented. Thus the extent to which these names may be established as fact will vary between 75 to 80 Percent margin of truth; See *L'UPC Une Révolution Manquée*, p.25

<sup>187</sup> Eyinga, *L'UPC Une Révolution Manquée*, p.24.

<sup>188</sup> Abwa, *Histoire D'un Nationalisme* p.213.

ESOCAM. According to the UN visiting mission of 1952, the political program of RENAICAM was the same as that of ESOCAM.<sup>189</sup>

#### **4. *Independent Camerounais (INDECAM)***

Created in 1952, INDECAM was based in Edea, and like RENAICAM, it operated with the same agenda ESOCAM had already put in place. Hence like ESOCAM it had the mandate to fight the UPC ideology and prevent its continuous spread across the territory<sup>190</sup>.

#### **5. *Bloc Democats Camerounais (BDC)***

Founded in 1951 the BDC was among the first political parties in French Cameroon to have successfully mobilised broad based support to effectively fight the UPC. The party was founded by Louis Paul Aujoulat. And to effectively rival the UPC, it adopted the same ideals the UPC militated for, that is; Independence and Reunification. Though put in place a different approach which completely differed from the UPC approach.<sup>191</sup>

#### **6. *Union Sociale Camerounaise (USC)***

Founded in 1954 by Rene Guy OKALA, the USC was another very influential party in the French Cameroon political landscape that put up a strong opposition against the UPC. According to Richard Joseph the BDC and USC were the only 2 opposition parties that successfully theorised a contradictory ideology to oppose the UPC and independence in French Cameroon.<sup>192</sup>

#### **7. *Mouvement d'Action National Camerounais (MANC)***

Created in 1956 by Paul Soppo Priso shortly after the UPC was outlawed in French Cameroon, the MANC was to become the only political party in French Cameroon since all the other parties stopped operating as a result of the banning of the UPC.<sup>193</sup> Thus realising the

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<sup>189</sup> R. Joseph, *Le Mouvement Nationaliste*. p.192.

<sup>190</sup> All these parties created after the UPC in French Cameroon had no clear political agenda but for the fact that they all focused on fighting the UPC and prevent it from spreading all over the territory. These parties carried different names of which in essence they were one and a same party the only difference being their zone of operation.

<sup>191</sup> R. Joseph, *le Mouvement Nationaliste*. p. 192.

<sup>192</sup> Eyinga, *l'UPC une Révolution Manquée ?* p. 58.

<sup>193</sup> The UPC was the main target of ESOCAM, RENAICAM and other administrative parties. Their political agenda had just one focus attacking the UPC discrediting its ideology and preventing its spread across the territory. Thus with the banning of the UPC in 1955, it became practically impossible for these parties to continue operating. Hence they automatically died naturally creating what Abwa has called *Le Vide Politique*. see Abwa, *Histoire d'un Nationalisme*.p.227

political vacuum created by the banning of the UPC, Paul Soppo Priso decided to launch the MANC as a means to fill up the existing political vacuum in the territory.<sup>194</sup>

From all what precedes, one thing remains a puzzle and it is the fact that of the seven parties listed above six of them made one their common adversary and this was the UPC. This therefore raises the question to know of what influence were these political parties in the political landscape of French Cameroon and how did their activities foster the nationalist ideal, political competition and militancy in French Cameroon?

In 1948 when the UPC was created, most of its influential members working in the colonial administration were systematically transferred from the city centres into the suburbs of the far ends of the territory.<sup>195</sup> (See, **Plate: II**) Among the victims of this colonial measure we had: Singap Martin, and Felix Roland Moumie who were deployed to the North, Leonard Bouli to East precisely at AbongBang, not forgetting Reuben UmNyobe, Kamsi Inocent, Abel Kingue, Ernest Ouandie, Mathew Tagny and Owono Mimboe whose deployment into the interior successfully implanted the UPC in the littoral, West, centre, and South respectively.<sup>196</sup> This punitive measure intended to weaken the party rather worked to its advantage as it was thanks to such measure that the ideals of the UPC were easily carried to the four corners and extreme ends of the territory of French Cameroon. With this, the party gained considerable influence across the territory as well as huge crowd of militants which according to *le Combat* Newspaper in 1955 stood at 80,000 militants.<sup>197</sup> All these are elements that made the French administration to devise new measures so as to effectively check the growth and continuous spread of the UPC party all over French Cameroon.

Failing to achieve the above goal through punitive transfer of UPC leaders, the French authorities resorted to Divide and Rule. To this effect in 1949 Pierre Dimala a Native from Bassa land just like Um Nyobe was to serve French authorities as their first card of divide and rule. Thus, called up by the French authorities, Pierre Dimala was chosen to lead a French sponsored party named ESOCAM. His principal mission was to oppose the UPC, rival Um

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<sup>194</sup> See J. B Norodom Kiari , « Paul Soppo Priso de la JEUCAFRA au MANC 1938-1960 » Mémoire De Maitrise Histoire, Université de Yaoundé I, 1994., E. Feukeng, « le mouvement d'action nationale du Cameroun (MANC et la loi cadre : 1956-1961 » Mémoire De Maitrise Histoire , Université de Yaoundé 1991 ;

<sup>195</sup> This was a punitive measure designed by the French administration to separate and scatter the brains behind the creation of the UPC so as to frustrate coordination of their activities and thus weaken the party from its birth

<sup>196</sup> Abwa, *Histoire d'un Nationalisme*.p.211

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid*, p.215.

Nyobe in Bassa land, contradict the UPC independence agenda and militate for the integration of French Cameroon into the French Union<sup>198</sup>.

**PLATE II: Frontline UPC Leaders and Militants galvanising Mass Adherence into the Party Amidst French Opposition Manoeuvres**



UPC Leaders (L-R) front row: Castor Osende Afana, Abel Kingue, Reuben Um Nyobe, Felix Moumie & Ernest Ouandie

**Source:** Almanac of the 50<sup>TH</sup> Anniversaries of Independence, p, 44.

The birth of ESOCAM in June 20<sup>th</sup> 1949 at Eseka<sup>199</sup> therefore opened doors to political competition in French Cameroon which in turn enhanced militancy which greatly fostered the nationalist ideal in French Cameroon.

Unable to curtail the spread and growing popularity of the UPC party in Bassa land, as both ESOCAM and INDECAM operating in Eseka and Edea respectively could do nothing to override the UPC, French authorities decided to divert the fight against UPC elsewhere; this time in *Ewondo* land abandoning INDECAM and the ESOCAM to naturally die giving way for the emergence of RENAICAM<sup>200</sup>. Placed in the hands of Ndounokon Alphonse, RENAICAM pursued the same political agenda of ESOCAM but this time in a different environment. From its headquarters in Abong Bang, RENAICAM launched a serious Anti-UPC campaign which

<sup>198</sup> Eyinga, *l'UPC une Révolution manquée*, p.56

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> ANY APA. 12405, ESOCAM INDECAM RENAICAM CHARFRANCAM 1950- 1954., see Abel Eyinga, *L'UPC une Révolution Manquée?*, p.56

gathered great steam but like ESOCAM did not yield any fruits. UPC propaganda kept on spreading winning more supporters and militants thus creating an atmosphere of political competition which sustained active militancy in French Cameroon. Not giving up, French authorities extended their scheme this time around in Northern Cameroon using *Médiation Franco-Camerounaise* (MEDIAFRANCAM), *Rassemblement du Peuple Camerounais* (RAPECA), *Union d'action France-Cameroon* (UAFAC), and *Front Nationale Camerounais* (FNC)<sup>201</sup> .

Still not able to make impact in their main objective of opposing the UPC ideology and stopping the spread and growth of the party, French authorities decided to improve on their tactics by putting an end to the multiplication of regional parties and invested this time in the creation of parties with a strong national base. It was under these circumstances that the *Bloc Démocratique Camerounais* BDC and *Union Sociale Camerounaise* USC were created. These two Political parties in their new approach succeeded to elaborate an effective and strong opposition to the UPC ideology and proposed a convincing contradiction to the UPC independence platform. Unlike the previous political parties which attacked the UPC on ethnic and regional lines, the BDC and USC launched a national and even international campaign against the UPC independence agenda using the same objectives and arguments of the UPC to prove that their quest for independence was unrealistic<sup>202</sup>.

Founded by Louis Paul Aujulat a Franco-Cameroonian, the *Bloc Démocrates Camerounais* was greatly adhere to by Cameroonians and within its politbureau Cameroonian elites in the likes of Ahmadou Ahidjo, Andre Marie Mbida, Bindzi Benoit, Fouda Andre, Abega Martin, Sakouna Philemon, Ndomo Joseph, Mbah Ephrem etc<sup>203</sup> could be identified. These elites drawn from all parts of Cameroon, greatly contributed in giving the party a national base, hence facilitated the propagation of ant-UPC ideals throughout. Having succeeded to take full control of the Territorial Assembly (ATCAM), the BDC under the chairmanship of L.P. Aujulat in October 24<sup>th</sup> 1952 decided to carry the Anti-UPC campaign at the international scene by petitioning the president of the UNO General Assembly against the granting of audience to the UPC emissary R. Um Nyobe in the UN General Assembly.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> *Ibid*, p. 58.

<sup>202</sup> See J.M.Zang Atangana, *Les Forces Politiques, au Cameroun Réunifié* Tom I, Paris, Harmattan, 1989, p. 179. See Abwa, *Cameroun Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, Yaoundé Editions CLE, 2010, p.219.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid*, p. 224.

<sup>204</sup> Eyinga, *l'UPC une Revolution manquee*, p.65.



Besides the BDC, was the USC led by Charles Rene Guy OKALA that equally played its role effectively in combatting the UPC independence agenda. One of its landmark achievements in combatting the UPC was recorded in December 1952 when the USC in the voice of OKALA brilliantly presented a counter version of Um Nyobe's exposé at the UN in which he made it clear that political development in French Cameroon had been on a good rise and that talking of independence in French Cameroon at the time was nothing else than a means of pulling the territory several decades backward.<sup>205</sup>

With all this drama display at the UN general assembly, it was very evident that the French administrative authorities were at work manoeuvring every single effort to ridicule, reduce and even kill completely the UPC independence agenda both at national and international level. Unfortunately after all these schemes had been applied, the UPC kept on growing and gaining more and more influence nationally and internationally with many more adherents to its independence programme. It should be noted that the creation and sponsoring of rival parties by French authorities in Cameroon was not just to contradict the UPC and reduce its influence. It was also principally to ensure that the party wins no election that will give it access to the assemblies of the territory which could become a golden opportunity for the UPC to materialise its nationalist agenda. Thus to French authorities the injunction was clear "*il faut éviter que les Upécistes entrent dans cette assemblée*"<sup>206</sup> It was therefore in line with the above mentioned injunction that the UPC, from the institution of ARCAM in 1945 to the putting in place of ALCAM in 1956 did not succeed to win any of the elections into these assemblies. Despite its well established popularity it was unimaginable that the UPC failed at every organised elections in the territory. Even its emblematic leader Um Nyobe who incarnated the strong values and ideals of the UPC could not even secure a win in his own native land successively in 1951 and 1952 elections in ARCAM and ATCAM respectively.<sup>207</sup>

All this was made possible thanks to the divide and rule tactics of French authorities who continuously privileged and favoured the administrative parties they had created to rival the UPC. In spite of all these measures taken to bar the way for the UPC and its independence programme, the party kept growing in size and popularity. It was for this reason that the French administration had to assign Roland Pré on the 29<sup>th</sup> December 1954 as High Commissioner to

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<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.* p. 73.

<sup>206</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p.312.

<sup>207</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon: a Hundred Years of History*, p. 142.

French Cameroon with a specific task which was to bar the way for the UPC party at all cost.<sup>208</sup> Barely seven months following his arrival in Cameroon, had Roland Pré attained his main goal as he succeeded to Ban the UPC in 1955 pushing its militants into a revolt that degenerated into what became known as the Cameroon war of independence.<sup>209</sup>

With the banning of the UPC all the rival French sponsored parties also ceased to exist but for the MANC of Paul Soppo Priso created in 1956 to fill-up what had been termed *Le Vide Politique* in Cameroon under French administration. Forced into clandestinity, and the complete refusal of French authorities to grant amnesty to the UPC militants made the party to abstain from taking part in the 1956 elections which followed the reforms of the *loi cadre* instituting ALCAM.<sup>210</sup> With the UPC refusal to take part in the 1956 elections, opportunity was opened for a new set of political parties to emerge amongst which we had the *Union Camerounaise* (UC) led by Ahmadou Ahidjo, the *Démocrate Camerounais* (DC) led by Andre Marie Mbida , the *Paysans Indépendant* led by Mathias Djoumessi and the *Mouvement d'Action Nationale du Cameroun*.(MANC) led by Soppo Priso This mainline political parties which emerged in 1956 to decide on the future of French Cameroon successfully participated in the 23rd December 1956 elections into ALCAM and at end of it all the UC came out with 31 seats, followed by DC with 21 seats then came the *Paysans Indépendant* with 9 seats and the MANC totalising just 8 seats<sup>211</sup>.

As none of the above parties was able to score an absolute majority, it became difficult to apply the *loi cadre* in granting internal autonomy to the territory as none of the parties recorded a considerable majority to form a government. To solve this problem, the UC and DC entered into a coalition which permitted them to obtain the necessary majority and as a result they formed the first government of French Cameroon in 1957 with André Marie Mbida as the first Prime Minister.<sup>212</sup>

While intensifying crack down measures on the UPC independentist and applying tact in the handling of the question of independence of French Cameroon, the French authorities having evaluated the cost of war so far in Cameroon, and the reminders of the Algerian

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<sup>208</sup> Eyinga, *L'UPC une Révolution Manquée ?* p.79.

<sup>209</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun Histoire d'un Nationalisme* p.227. For a better understanding of the period and events leading to the banning of the UPC and outbreak of Cameroon war of independence see ; Eyinga, *L'UPC*, pp77-84; Abwa, *Commissaires*, pp.356-373; R. Joseph, *Le Mouvement*, pp.257-302

<sup>210</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon: a Hundred Years*.p.149.

<sup>211</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p. 68.

<sup>212</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon: a Hundred Years*.p.149

experience, decided to take a firm position in favour of the Independence of French Cameroon by enacting the ALCAM resolution of 24<sup>th</sup> October 1958.<sup>213</sup> Not approving of this resolution the leader of the *Démocrates Camerounais* André M. Mbida who in his firm stands against independence had ordered the French government to provide him more troops to neutralise all UPC independence fighters equally made clear in his numerous propaganda tours that independence for French Cameroon could only be envisaged after a period of 10 years.<sup>214</sup>

Realising that Mbida was adamant to change his position and had even started plotting new alliances by extending a hand to the UPC *Maquisards*, the French government decided to appoint Jean Ramadier on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1958 as new High commissioner to French Cameroon with a clear mission to bring about the fall of Mbida.<sup>215</sup> Taking office on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1958, Ramadier immediately pursued his mission of dropping Mbida which he finally attained on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 1958 following the appointment of Ahidjo as new Prime Minister of French Cameroon<sup>216</sup>.

Being the right person to pursue the French independence agenda in Cameroon, Ahidjo was invested with full support from Paris to materialise the independence of French Cameroon under the French Union in 1960. To do this Ahidjo appropriated the UPC nationalist agenda of independence and reunification which he successfully realised the first in 1960 but on totally different terms which did not in any way reflect the nationalist aspirations of the people. This was simply and categorically term as Fake Independence by the UPC militants.<sup>217</sup> In effect, competitive politics in French Cameroon which resulted from the creation of the UPC party in 1948, enhanced militancy in the territory which was very much sustained by the contradictory debates over the question of independence raised by the UPC. France being against the idea explored all available measures to stop its spread, but unfortunately these measures produced no results as the UPC kept gaining popularity with many more adherents.

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<sup>213</sup> This resolution expressed the wished of the people of French Cameroon to see their territory become fully independent by January 1960, see Abwa, *Cameroun: histoire*. Pp.330-335. *Journal Officiel des Débats* ALCAM, Tome II session de 1957-1958.

<sup>214</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.68.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid* p. 83.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>217</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon: a Hundred Years*.p.150.

**TABLE I: LIST OF FRONTLINE POLITICAL PARTIES IN FRENCH CAMEROON BEFORE 1960**

No	Political party	Leader	Creation
1	Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC)	Leonard Boulli	1948
2	Evolution Social Camerounais (ESOCAM)	Piere Dimala	1949
3	Renaissance Camerounais (RENAICAM)	Alphonse Ndounokon	1952
4	Bloc Democats Camerounais (BDC)	Louis Paul Aujulat	1951
5	Union Social Camerounais (USC)	Rene Guy Okala	1954
6	Mouvement D'Action National Camerounais	Paul Soppo Priso	1956
7	UNION CAMEROUNAISE (UC)	Ahmadou Ahidjo	1957
8	Démocrate Camerounais (DC)	Andre Marie Mbida	1957
9	Paysan independants (PI)	Mathias Djoumessi	1957

**Source:** compiled by author from field data

Realising the determination of the UPC to attain its nationalist ideal even after it was banned, the French government changed its approach to independence and it was in this light that Ahidjo appeared privileged in 1958 to be the one to lead Cameroon to independence in 1960. An independence which the UPC contested and is still contested for the fact it plunged the territory into another form of French colonialism instead of liberating the people.

## ii. Competitive Politics and Independence Struggle in British Cameroons

The emergence of political parties in British Southern Cameroons was a function of two elements; that is Nationalism and Political evolution. While nationalism as preached by the urban elites galvanised the people to federate their ideas around interest groups and political organisation, constitutional developments created appropriate platforms for the expression of political ideas created and emitted by the various political organisations. Unable therefore to make their voice heard within the frame work of the 1951 Constitutional reform<sup>218</sup> that gave British Southern Cameroons 13 seats in the Eastern Regional House of Assembly in Nigeria, the various political organisations that had sent in the 13 representatives decided in a majority of 9 to step out of the Nigerian political framework to federate their ideas on a new found Kamerun Nationalism and launch the first ever political party in the territory in 1953 called the Kamerun National Congress (KNC). In the same way the 9 who had step out of the Eastern

<sup>218</sup> See, Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p, 187.

Regional Assembly as Benevolent Neutrals created the KNC, the remaining 4 also decided to come together under a common nationalist ideal directly opposed to the KNC and launched their own party in 1953 Called the Kamerun Peoples Party (KPP). Why couldn't the 13 representative adopt a common stance on how to pursue their nationalist ideologies? This remained the principal interrogation on which competitive politics in the British Southern Cameroons took effect.

In their continuous failure to agree on a common nationalist ideology, the elites of British Southern Cameroons in their struggle for independence, had to confront the British occupying powers in dispersed rang with divergent political ideologies upheld by several political parties thus setting the pace for political competition in the territory. To effectively showcase the development of political competition in British Cameroons and its role in the independence struggle of the territory it will be appropriate to first identify the mainline political parties that animated the political life and militancy in the territory.

### **1. The Kamerun National Congress (KNC)**

The KNC was created in June 1953. It was the first indigenous political party in the territory and emerged as a result of the fusion between the CNF and the KUNC from where it got a bulk of its supporters. The party had as motto “toward self-government”<sup>219</sup> and was led by Dr. E.M.L Endeley. The aims of the party were as follows; to advocate for the unification of the two Kamerun, press for the revision of the trusteeship agreement so as to determine a set date for the attainment of self-government and to cancel the clause giving powers to the administering authorities to erect custom and fiscal union between the two sections of Kamerun<sup>220</sup>. Generally, the party favored constitutional advancement and militated for a separate regional status for the Cameroons with a separate house of assembly and the respect of the people's right to self-determination.

### **2. The Kamerun Peoples Party (KPP)**

The KPP was created in June 1953<sup>221</sup> by N.N Mbile just the same month after the KNC was founded. Its president was PM Kale a post he was attributed in recognition of his age and his influence in the growth of politics and political consciousness in the Cameroons<sup>222</sup>. The

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<sup>219</sup> Ebune, *Growth of Political Parties*, p.143.

<sup>220</sup> Kale, *Political Evolution*, p.56.

<sup>221</sup> Ebune, *Growth of Political Parties*. , p.146.

<sup>222</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, pp. 65-66.

ideology which the KPP militated for was that of achieving regional autonomy for the Cameroons and secession from Nigeria when it became independent. The party also pursued a policy of alliance and partnership with Nigeria and other African nationalist parties. It should however be noted that the KPP did not envisage an autonomous Southern Cameroons out of the wider united states of Africa.<sup>223</sup> Thus to the KPP severing relations with Nigerian politics will be contradicting the very fundamental basis of all African nationalist struggles, which all aims at ultimate emancipation of the African continent from the yoke of imperialism thereby securing a position of power for Africa in the concert of nations.

### **3. The Kamerun Labour Party (KLP)**

The KLP was also founded in 1953 and could be considered as the third political party in the Southern Cameroons, but unfortunately this party was not very present on the political scene as it failed to create an impact for itself by not partaking in the 1953 general elections. The party was led by Prince Walter Mbong Wilson, and the ideology for which it militated was; the acquisition of a separate region for Cameroons and to revive between Northern and Southern Cameroons that national relationship which had been dislocated through unscrupulous politics<sup>224</sup>. It was equally concerned with the amelioration of working conditions and the reorganization of the Cameroon society on the basis of socialism so as to bring to the common man “a life more abundant and self-government”<sup>225</sup>

### **4. The Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP)**

The KNDP was founded in 1955 and was the result of a split within the KNC. It was led by J.N Foncha who accused Dr. Endeley of deviating from the original program they all shared in 1953 which was the unification and reunification of the Cameroons. The party’s motto was “Truth shall prevail”<sup>226</sup> and its political program as clearly outlined in the KNDP secession charter of 1958 emphasised on two principal elements, that is; complete secession from Nigeria and the attainment of full autonomy for the Cameroons which will provide a platform to work out the principles on which future reunification of the Cameroons will be achieved<sup>227</sup>. In his early pronouncements following the formation of the KNDP, Foncha made it clear that the reunification of the Cameroons was consequential to secession. Thus the KNDP pursued

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<sup>223</sup> Kale, *Political Evolution*, p.58.

<sup>224</sup> NAB Vb/b.1959/4. Kamerun Labour Party.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>226</sup> Interview with Anna Foncha 90years, Farmer, Nkwen Bamenda, 6<sup>th</sup> /01/2014

<sup>227</sup> See KNDP Secession charter in Ebune, *The growth of political parties in Southern Cameroons*(appendix)

an ideology based on independence for the Cameroon before unification hence strengthening the political foundation of the Cameroons and building up economic and social institutions which will preserve the cultural identity of the Southern Cameroons<sup>228</sup>

### 5. The Kamerun United Commoners Party (KUCP)

The KUCP party was also created in 1955 and was led by E.A. Anjeh who was the president of the party. Like the KLP, this party did not make any significant impact on the political landscape of the Southern Cameroons but to an extent, it enhanced militancy in the territory through the political program and ideology it disseminated across the territory. It had as motto; “Service, Truth, Vigilance”<sup>229</sup> and among its main objectives the party projected the idea of unification and reunification of the Cameroons. In its 1956 publication “*A Discussion of Reality*” E .A .Anjeh stated clearly that:

Just like the able Abraham Lincoln ... naturally wanted to see that the people of the North and South America ... Work together towards the building of one great nation...I am writing under the canopy of the KUCP to point out that our Kamerun population...whose boundaries were carved out by the Germans in consultation with France and England at the Berlin conference of 1885, make it clear without any apology and fear that the two sectors of the Kamerun should now be as one country.<sup>230</sup>

Added to this was its engagement in pressing for equality for all people, defending the interest of the common man, and of course bringing about balance development throughout the territory<sup>231</sup>.

### 6. The Kamerun Socialist Party (KSP)

The KSP better known as the Socialist Benevolent Party was founded in 1956 by E.R.Robinson Tembu a man from Meta in the S.W. Federation in the Bamenda Division. He was a worker within the public works department in the Southern Cameroons and was attached to the water works gang.<sup>232</sup> Though the party was not very popular it propagated a very sensitive political program which opposed the unification and immediate independence of the Cameroons. Thus the socialist benevolent party militated for a five year period of association of the Cameroons to the federation of Nigeria<sup>233</sup>. The inability for this party to gain popularity

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<sup>228</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p.214.

<sup>229</sup> NAB. file N°P.310/S.6 Vb/b.1959.3 Kamerun United Commoners Party

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>232</sup> NAB. File N° P.310/S.5, Vb/b.1959.2 Socialist Benevolent Party

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*

in the Southern Cameroons could partly be attributed to the ideology it propagated: that of association with Nigeria, and to show his commitment to this ideology E.R.Robinson Tembu cautioned Endeley in a letter addressed on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1957 in which he noted:

I am warning you that if you support unification you must be ready to face courage sweat, bloodthirst, tear, and failure. You must be ready to go to the communist orbit...and purchase your modern arms, train troops and then fight out the French men out of the French Cameroons<sup>234</sup>

Considering that by 1957 continuous association with Nigeria had become very unpopular as an ideology, the KSP (Socialist Benevolent Party) could not make any significant impact on the political landscape of the territory.

### **7. The One Kamerun (OK)**

The OK party was another very outstanding political party in the Southern Cameroons. It was created in 1957 soon after the UPC was outlawed in the Southern Cameroons following the unlawful society order of 1957<sup>235</sup>. The One Kamerun party therefore, was founded by Nde Ntumazah, born in 1926 in the then Bamenda Division of the Southern Cameroons. His first encounter with western imperialism was in the French Cameroon precisely at Ambam where he had migrated to join his brother who was a butcher. Being so critical of the French unfamiliar policies, Ntumazah openly challenged the authority of a French settler who had sent the servant to purchase meat when Ntumazah had closed activities for the day. His refusal to do so exposed him to serious problems which necessitated an immediate escape out of French Cameroon. In the course of living French Cameroon, Ntumazah passed through Douala where he was captivated by the activities of UPC militants and decided to join in their anti-imperialist propaganda and most especially their ideology of immediate independence and reunification of the Cameroons.<sup>236</sup>

This was how Ntumazah joined the UPC and eventually continued with its activities in the Southern Cameroons under the patronage of people like Um Nyobe, Moumie, and Ouandie. Thus with the banning of the UPC in the Southern Cameroons he launched the O.K party with its motto being; “United we Stand Divided we Fall.”<sup>237</sup> It perpetuated the ideals of the UPC in the Southern Cameroons, thus its principal ideology just as that of the UPC was immediate

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<sup>234</sup>NAB., File N° /S.5.Vb/b. 1959.2, letter to Dr. Endeley by E.R.R Tembu, 5/2/1957, p.310

<sup>235</sup> NW/od1957 Sothern Cameroons Official Gazette

<sup>236</sup> Interview, with L. Chi Nyamngoh 62years, MINCOM. Yaoundé, 7/05/2014

<sup>237</sup> NWA File N° B.3204./Vb/1955/1Political parties in the Southern Cameroon,



independence and reunification of Kamerun. Added to this was its commitment to the African nationalist and anti-imperialist struggle which it pursued alongside other nationalist parties across Africa with the aim of liberating the continent from colonial oppression. The OK greatly influenced politics in the Southern Cameroons, though it was unable to win a seat in the parliamentary elections in the Southern Cameroons, its reunification program greatly divided the political class in the Cameroons hence enhanced militancy in the territory.

### **8. The Kamerun United Party (KUP)**

The KUP was created in 1959 soon after the elections into the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly. The party was founded by PM Kale following a disagreement within the KPP. In his justification for creating the KUP, P.M Kale in a correspondence to the Commissioner and the Premier, noted that the emergence of his party was simply the result of a faction within the KPP caused by Endeley's idea of completely fusing the KPP into the KNC with himself as the leader. While Mbile and Woleta were in favour of the idea, Kale and other members of the party who had enjoyed his leadership opposed the idea and as a result there was a faction within the KPP which pushed Kale and his supporters to resign and create the KUP<sup>238</sup>. Its motto was "Unity, Freedom, and Happiness"<sup>239</sup> and the political program of the KUP was centered on the creation of an independent Southern Cameroons nation within the British commonwealth.

### **9. The Cameroon Commoners Congress (CCC)**

The CCC was founded by Chief Nyenti Stephen on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1959.<sup>240</sup> Outstanding among its objectives was the struggle to see that Southern Cameroons became self-governing at a definite time, and also to lead the territory forward to liberty. That was possibly why it adopted the motto "No Domination"<sup>241</sup>. In spite of all its propaganda, the CCC like the other parties did not succeed to secure independence for Southern Cameroon, but all the same its ideas and supporters greatly enhanced militancy in the British Southern Cameroons between 1959 and 1961.

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<sup>238</sup> NAB. Vb/b.1959/5.Kamerun United Party, file n° P310/S.8

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>240</sup> J. Tabe Takor, Chief Nyenti Stephen Eyong of Bachountai: A Traditional ruler and politician 1925-1999, M.A dissertation, History, University of Yaoundé I, 2005, p.54.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*

## 10. The Muslim Congress Party (MCP)

The MCP was created on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 1960 in Kumbo during a representative meeting of Muslims. It was founded by Mallam Sale who was made leader of the party. The motto of the M.C.P was “For God and the People”<sup>242</sup> and its political program centered on the association of the Cameroons to the federation of Nigeria. The party’s popular slogan was “unity of Nigeria and the Cameroons”. Its main objectives were “To consolidate all Muslims for the service of God and the people, to take part in the shaping of Southern Cameroons into a full region within the federation of Nigeria by prayers, and imparting of information and ideas relating to the wellbeing of the federation of Nigeria and the Cameroons”.<sup>243</sup>

## 11. The Cameroon Indigenes Party (CIP)

The CIP was also a prominent party founded in October 1960 soon after the UN gave its ruling on the plebiscite in the Cameroons.<sup>244</sup> At its second executive meeting of November 25<sup>th</sup> 1960, Jesco Manga Williams was elected leader of the CIP. The political program for which this party militated was not very much different from that of the KUP that is; To seek by constitutional means the attainment of independence for the Southern Cameroons<sup>245</sup> In one of its news relay n°23 of January 1961 which it used to mobilise support, the CIP transmitted messages such as “independence to a colony or a trust territory is like food to a hungry man everyone in the Southern Cameroons is hungry for independence. Independence is time for rejoicing...”<sup>246</sup>

Before the independence of British Southern Cameroons in 1961, a total of 12 Political parties could be identified in the territory. Unlike in the French Cameroon where the multiplication of political parties was directly connected to the French divide and rule manoeuvres aimed at destabilising the UPC and frustrating its independence agenda, the multiplication of political parties in the British Southern Cameroons was the product of intense political and parliamentary debates on the political future of the territory with each party scheming out ideologies and strategies on how to determine the path through which independence for the Southern Cameroons would be attained.

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<sup>242</sup> NW.File N° B.3204/Vb/1955/1Political parties in the Southern Cameroon

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons...* p, 233.

<sup>245</sup> NAB. file n° PLEB.84Vc/a.1960/7.Political Manifestos

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

**TABLE II: LIST OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE BRITISH SOUTHERN CAMEROON BEFORE 1961**

N°	Political party	Creation	Initial Ideology	Leader
1	KNC	1953	Separate regional status for the Cameroon and the respect of the people's right to self Determination.	E.M.L. Endeley
2	KPP	1953	Regional autonomy and secession from Nigeria when it became Independent.	P.M.Kale
3	KLP	1953	Separate region for Cameroons.	Prince Walter Mbong Wilson,
4	KNDP	1955	Secession from Nigeria and the attainment of full autonomy for the Cameroons.	John Ngu Foncha
5	KUCP	1955	Unification and reunification of the Cameroons.	E.A. Anjeh
6	KSBP	1956	Five year period of association of the Cameroons to the federation of Nigeria.	E.R.Robinson Tembu
7	OK	1957	Immediate independence and reunification	Nde Ntumazah
8	KUP	1959	Independence for the Southern Cameroon.	P.M.Kale
9	CCC	1959	Independence for the Southern Cameroon.	Nyenti Stephen
10	MCP	1960	Association of the Cameroons to the federation of Nigeria.	Mallam Sale
11	CIP	1960	Independence for the Southern Cameroon	J. Manga Williams
12	CPNC	1960	Association of the Cameroons with Nigeria.	E.M.L Endeley

**Source:** Conceived by author during field work.

The outcome of this was the emergence of a plethora of political parties and in this plethora of parties three (3) great ideologies dominated political discourse. These ideologies included amongst others: **Integrationism**, **Secessionism**, and **Reunificationism**.<sup>247</sup> Political competition in the British Southern Cameroons was heavily sustained by these 3 great ideologies, and independence for British Southern Cameroon was to be determined by only one of these 3 ideologies. It was therefore in line with the above statement that an ideological war

<sup>247</sup> Dze-Ngwa, *Anglophone Problem*, p. 55.

manifested in political competition became the basis of the struggle for independence in British Southern Cameroon.

With the early achievements recorded in the Southern Cameroons nationalist movement as was seen in the massive mobilisation of elites around a common Kamerun Idea which provoked the creation of the first political party KNC, it became clear to many Southern Cameroonians that the dream of self-determination was no longer far from being realised. Unfortunately this dream which had been perceived as short-lived ended up taking too long to be realised, and this was because of division and divergence of ideas among the nationalist on the question of self-determination which ended up creating factions and division of the nationalist movement along several party lines thereby erecting a platform for competitive politics and militancy<sup>248</sup>. All this greatly contributed in bringing about the independence of British Southern Cameroons in 1961.

The birth of the KNC in 1953<sup>249</sup> which harboured within its party organisation persons with divergent aspirations regarding the future of Southern Cameroons was an indication that the party could not firmly affirm itself vis-à-vis the KPP which had equally emerged immediately the KNC was created to oppose its stand point on benevolent neutrality. The failure of the KNC to speak in one voice against the opposition KPP greatly fragelised the party from birth, and worst still its leader EML. Endeley, instead of reconciling the diverging tendencies within the party rather chose to take side with the Pro-KPP ideology (integrationist) that had emerged within the KNC party. This situation caused a split within the KNC which forced the disgruntle militants to batch out of the KNC creating their own party Called the KNDP.

With the emergence of the KNDP which rejected integrationism and took up the struggle for self-government (secessionism) in the British Southern Cameroon, division still broke out within its rang. Contrary to the KNC which was divided between Integrationism and Secessionism, in the KNDP, the contest was between Secessionism and Reunificationism. Probably it was the failure of the KNDP to articulate clearly its position on secession and reunification that caused it to loss the 1957 election to the KNC which had gradually joined the KPP in its integrationist's ideology. As a consequence of this KNC victory, Southern Cameroons was granted a semi-autonomous status within the Nigerian framework and Endeley

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<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>249</sup> Ebune, *Growth of Political Parties*, p.143.

was raised to the post of Leader of government business (Prime Minister). At the end of this election that brought Endeley to power, two ideological blocs were clearly distinguished within the Southern Cameroon political landscape. They included; the bloc of Integrationists and the bloc of autonomists (secessionism). As it became urgent to know which of these two blocs effectively represented the wish of the people in terms of democratic majority, general elections were again convened in the territory in 1959.

**PLATE III: John N. Foncha in Campaign for Mass Adherence to the KNDP platform**



Source: *Almanac of the 50<sup>TH</sup> Anniversaries of Independence*, p,92.

This election that greatly displayed political competition, militancy and the power of electioneering in British Southern Cameroons as exhibited in the organisation of Political campaign rallies (**See Plate: III above**), and power broking through alliances (KNC/KPP vs KNDP/OK) greatly influenced the conduct and practice of militancy in political competition<sup>250</sup>.

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<sup>250</sup> The impact of the 1959 election in the political landscape of Southern Cameroons can be perceived in a two dimensional perspective. First on the conduct and practice of politics it showcased the principal role occupied by ideology in politics and demonstrated the careful manipulation of ideology and interest all in the game of power. On a second dimension this election exhibited the power of Democracy in an electoral process, wherein the will of the people is sacred and no individual or institution can stand against this sacred will of the people. The understanding of this democratic principle was clearly demonstrated by Endeley who peacefully accepted defeat and submitted to the will of the people by transferring power to the KNDP candidate J.N.Foncha in 1959. See, Awah, "Party-Politics, pp.76-109.

The results of the election gave victory to the KNDP ideology. Totalising altogether 14sits against 12sits won by the KNC/KPP alliance, the KNC/KPP opposition considered the KNDP majority as being relative and so could not be the base on which the United Nations through its trusteeship council could stand to determine the future of the people of British Southern Cameroons. (See Table III) These views were expressed by the KNC/KPP opposition during the first parliamentary session after the 1959 elections through the voice of N.N Mbile wherein they said clearly;

this honourable house mandates the premier and leader of opposition in this house to present to the trusteeship council of the UNO the opinion of this house that there can be no better future for the Southern Cameroons than in its continued association with Nigeria and to request the United Nations to explore other and more effective means of ascertaining the wishes of the people of Southern Cameroons about their future relationship with Nigeria in view of the fact that the last general elections cannot be accepted as a decisive indication of the wishes of the people<sup>251</sup>

Prof. Ngoh further sustains this argument with factual evidence showing that KNDP victory was simply the result of a tactical error committed by the KNC/KPP alliance who filed-in two candidates in the same constituency thus sharing their votes to the advantage of Mbua Monono of the KNDP. Every thing being equal if the KNC/KPP had effectively put in place their alliance KNDP victory in 1959 could have been reversed.<sup>252</sup> In this difficult situation, a consultative conference was called by the British administrator Sir Sydney Phillipson in Mamfe on the 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> August 1959<sup>253</sup> to help reconcile the political class of Southern Cameroon and bring up a common ideological platform on which the territory's independence will be attained. Failing to agree on a common platform for the attainment Southern Cameroon's independence, the Mamfe conference ended without achieving its aim. After several high level consultative meetings in London and New York the competing parties in the British Southern Cameroons finally settled for a plebiscite as a measure through which the future of the territory and wish of the people could be determined<sup>254</sup>.

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<sup>251</sup> Aka, *Southern Cameroons*, p.221.

<sup>252</sup> See; V.J.Ngoh, "The Southern Cameroon KNDP led Government had a raw deal by excluding legal experts in the various constitutional talks" in *Summit Magazine* N° 22, September, 2013, pp, 14-17.

<sup>253</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p.223.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid*.

**TABLE III: THE 1959 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS IN SOUTHERN CAMEROONS**

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Party with majority</b>	<b>Elected MP</b>
Victoria North West	KNC	EML. Endeley
Victoria South West	KPP	PM. Motomby Woleta
Victoria North East	KNDP	M.N. Ndoke
Victoria South East	KNDP	Mbua Monono
Kumba North West	KPP	N.N. Mbile
Kumba SouthWest	KPP	J.N. Nasuko
Kumba East	KNC	E. N. Ajebe-Sone
Kumba West	KNDP	J. M. Bokwe
Kumba Central	KNDP	J.E. Sona
Mamfe North	KPP	S.E. Neba
Mamfe West	KNDP	W.N.O. Effiom
Mamfe East	KNDP	P.M. Kamcha
Mamfe South	KNDP	D. Frambo
Bamenda East	KNDP	J. N. Foncha
Bamenda West	KNDP	S. T. Muna
Bamenda North	KNC	V. T. Lainjo
Bamenda Ndop West	KNDP	J. H. Nganje
Bamenda South	KNDP	W. S. Fonyonga
Wum East	KNDP	A.N. Jua
Wum West	KNDP	J.M.Boja
Wum Central	KNC	Rev. J.C. Kangsen
Wum North	KNDP	S.N. Nji
Nkambe North	KNC	Rev. Ando She
Nkambe South	KNC	J. Nsame
Nkambe Central	KNC	S.N. Tamfu
Nkambe East	KNC	Rev. Nyanganji

**Source:** N.N.Mbile, *Cameroon Political story*, p., 118.

Though they all agreed on the plebiscite, they held diverse opinion as to the questions that were to be asked to the people of Southern Cameroons. To the KNDP, the future of the territory could best be determine through the following plebiscite questions

Do you wish the Southern Cameroons to remain a permanent part of independent Nigeria or do you want Southern Cameroons to separate from the federation of Nigeria and continue as a UN trusteeship to determine its future later<sup>255</sup>

Surprisingly, reunification which had been the music of the KNDP at a certain moment was simply kept aside by Foncha and the reason for this was that; Reunification was not part of the UN trusteeship agreement, thus could not in any way be an alternative in the UN organized plebiscite.<sup>256</sup> This, being an element of political calculation by Foncha, it is evident that he could not talk of reunification at the time because a bulk of his militants and supporters were in favour of secessionism. Thus to avoid antagonizing his potential electorate that greatly determined his victory in elections, Foncha and the KNDP chose to compromise Reunification which according to Chem-Langeé was not a direct function of the emergence of the KNDP.<sup>257</sup>

The KNC/KPP alliance on its part proposed that the plebiscite questions should rather be

Do you wish to continue association with the federation of Nigeria or do you want to secede and seek reunification with French Cameroon<sup>258</sup>

By insisting on association and reunification, the KNC/KPP alliance was simply trying to put the KNDP into difficulties so as to maximise chances of victory for the association option since they knew Reunification was dreaded by the electorate of the time. Besides the questions on association and reunification there was also the question on secession that was seriously articulated by the KUP and CCC of P.M Kale and M Williams respectively<sup>259</sup>. All this still sent strong signals of a divided Southern Cameroons and a clear indication that political parties and political actors of the British Southern Cameroons could not agree on the question of self-determination for their territory as each time the question was raised it instead divided the political class the more than it united them. For this reason therefore, the United Nations General Assembly in October 1959 passed the resolution 1352(XIV) of 16<sup>th</sup> October 1959

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<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>256</sup> Chem-Langhèe, Southern Kamerun Crowned Princes and the Nationalist Movement:1953-1961, in *HABARU Journal of the History department of the University of Yaoundé I*, Vol. III, No. 1 January 1980, p,63

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid*, p,64

<sup>258</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p, 224.

<sup>259</sup> See, L.F. Awah, "Party politics, p.50.



fixing the plebiscite date in British Cameroons between 30<sup>th</sup> September 1960 and March 1961<sup>260</sup> With the questions for the plebiscite being;

Do you want to be independent by joining the federation of Nigeria or do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroon<sup>261</sup>

With the imposition of the above questions on the Southern Cameroons which out rightly put aside the question of secession, and violated their right to self-determination the political parties still went ahead to prepare for the polls on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 1961. While the KNDP campaigned for independence by joining the republic of Cameroon, the KPP/KNC alliance which had been transformed into the CPNC campaigned for integration with Nigeria. The outcome of the plebiscite gave victory to the KNDP with a score of 233,571 votes for Reunification (KNDP) against 97,741 votes for Integration (CPNC)<sup>262</sup>. With this landslide victory obtained by the KNDP, the independence of Southern Cameroons was automatically linked to that of French Cameroon through reunification.

**TABLE IV: THE 1961 PLEBISCITE RESULTS IN THE BRITISH SOUTHERN CAMEROONS**

Administrative Division and plebiscite district	N <sup>o</sup> of Votes for Nigeria	N <sup>o</sup> of Votes for Cameroon
<b><u>Nkambe Division</u></b>		
Nkambe North	5.962	1.917
Nkambe East	3.845	5.896
Nkambe Central	5.095	4.288
Nkambe South	7.051	2.921
Total	<b>21.917</b>	<b>15.022</b>
<b><u>Wum Division</u></b>		
Wum North	1.485	7.322
Wum Central	1.644	3.211
Wum East	1.518	13.133

<sup>260</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun: Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, 361.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> V.J. Ngoh, "The Political Evolution of Cameroon, 1884-1961", MA Dissertation, Portland University, May 1979, p, 95;

Wum West	2.137	3.449
Total	<b>8.784</b>	<b>27.115</b>
<b><u>Bamenda Division</u></b>		
Bamenda North	8.073	18.839
Bamenda East	1.822	17.856
Bamenda Central West	1.230	18.027
Bamenda Cental East	529	18.193
Bamenda West	467	16.142
Bamenda South	220	19.426
Total	<b>12.341</b>	<b>108.485</b>
<b><u>Mamfe Division</u></b>		
Mamfe West	2.039	8.505
Mamfe North	5.432	6.410
Mamfe South	685	8.175
Mamfe East	1.894	10.177
Total	<b>10.070</b>	<b>33.267</b>
<b><u>Kumba Division</u></b>		
Kumba North East	9.466	11.991
Kumba North West	14.738	555
Kumba South East	6.105	12.827
Kumba South West	2.424	12.227
Total	<b>32.733</b>	<b>27.600</b>
<b><u>Victoria Division</u></b>		
Victoria South West	2.552	3.756
Victoria South East	1.329	4.870
Victoria NorthWest	4.744	4.205
Victoria North East	3.291	9.251
Total	<b>11.916</b>	<b>22.082</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>97.741</b>	<b>233.571</b>

**Source:** N.N. Mbile, Cameroon Political Story. pp. 151-152.

This British Southern Cameroons failed independence attained in 1961<sup>263</sup> was the end of a very long struggle that started to gain popularity in 1953 with the emergence of the first political parties (KNC & KPP). In their strong political zeal and passion to liberate their territory from domination, these political parties often disagreed in matters of policy on how to liberate their people. The outcome of such disagreement was the multiplication of parties which at the end of the day projected three great ideologies which competed each other and became the basis on which the independence struggle for the Southern Cameroons was to depend on. These ideologies were; Integrationism, Secessionism, and reunificationism<sup>264</sup>. Unable to agree on a common ideological platform for the effective attainment of the independence of the territory, the various parties remained in a permanent political competition till 1961 when the UN decided to impose on them a plebiscite with two questions.

Compelled to decide their future through a plebiscite, room was again given for further political competition and militancy as this appeared to be the only objective platform on which independence for the British Southern Cameroon could be realised. Confirmation of the above statement is the fact that on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 1961, British Cameroonians went to the polls as militants and supporters of two main line political parties to vote for independence either by joining Nigeria or by joining French Cameroon. Though their fundamental right to self-determination was violated by discarding secession as part of the plebiscite options, they still voted massively to acquire independence by reunifying with French Cameroon where they saw better prospects of exercising power.

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<sup>263</sup> See, Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p.55

<sup>264</sup> See, Dze-Ngwa, "The Anglophone Problem, Pp,211-232.

## CONCLUSION

Constrained by the natural instinct of survival in a hostile and aggressive era characterised by mass movements of persons throughout the territory that was to become Cameroon, the quest for power to consolidate development and prosperity pushed many communities into incessant conflicts all in the name of power. The transformational effects of such conflicts which greatly provoked political consciousness and reaffirmed the strong determination and zeal among the various communities to freely exercise their power, gave a solid foundation to political awareness in Cameroon. The manifestation of this zeal and quest for power was not only seen during colonial incursion, it was as well exhibited even with the eventual consolidation of imperialism in the territory. Having to deal with Westerners in their supremacist mentality that denigrated and underestimated black power, Cameroonian communities by all possible means had to oppose such supremacy in their dissidence thus inaugurating a long lasting tussle for power or political competition in Cameroon which effectively laid the foundation of politics and militancy in the territory. Coming to terms with black political consciousness and power that challenged western supremacy in the early 1960's, the West, not ready to concede defeat, had to substitute themselves in other Cameroonian native through neo-colonial pacts, thus opposing Cameroonians against each other ideologically in an incessant struggle for power and political supremacy as seen in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### COMPETITIVE POLITICS IN CAMEROON 1961-1982: THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM AND POWER

#### INTRODUCTION

“*Camerounais, Camerounaise, le Cameroun est libre et indépendant...*”<sup>265</sup> These were the words of Ahmadou Ahidjo on the 1st January 1960 that re-echoed sounds of freedom producing ecstasy and jubilation that transmitted a feeling of great joy and relief for a people who had known decades of colonial and foreign domination. (See **Plate: IV below**) Amidst this explosion of ecstasy and jubilation was a silent resounding rhetoric bearing serious interrogations as; to which Cameroon did he refer to? What independence? And to who was it destined? These were three critical questions raised by Cameroonian nationalist who in 1960 felt betrayed by Ahidjo who had become the imperial substitute of western colonisation, thus to them, there was no independence nor freedom as colonialism was still very much present in the person of Ahidjo and had to be affronted with all energy and determination. The appropriation of these questions by political movements both in British and French Cameroon led to the explosion of a wave of contestant political ideas in 1961 federated around three principal ideologies which were; Anti-imperialism, Ant-Annexationism, and Anti-conformism. This chapter therefore brings to the limelight competitive politics and the praxis of partisan politics in a post-colonial African context characterised by the emergence of a new political class who in the exercise of their newly acquired sovereignty got trapped in-between the exigencies of Western neo-colonialism/democracy and urgency of institutionalising an effective state with power and authority.

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<sup>265</sup> See, A. Foka, « Extrait de l’allocution d’Ahmadou Ahidjo 1<sup>er</sup> Janvier 1960 » in *Archives D’Afrique, Radio France International (RFI) Documentaire*.

## I. Politics and Political Ideologies In Post-Independent Cameroon

When Ahmadou Ahidjo on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1960 proclaimed Cameroon free and independent, (**See Plate: IV**) it should be noted that the Cameroon in question did not in any way involve the British Cameroons which was still under British trusteeship. This declaration provoked an immediate response in French Cameroon especially from among UPC militants who out rightly rejected this independence proclaimed by Ahidjo on the basis that it was fake, did not take into consideration the Pan-Kamerun aspiration and carried within it the seeds of Neo-colonialism. To clear off these allegations attributed to the Ahidjo proclaimed independence, President Ahmadou Ahidjo immediately decided to take drastic measures aimed at contradicting and proving wrong his major political opponents the UPCist. He proceeded first by ensuring the voting of a constitutional framework that guarantees the exercise and use of exceptional powers by the president of the republic as he had already expressed the wish in his policy speech delivered at the ALCAM where he made it clear that;

*Nous somme places par la forces des choses dans une situation exceptionnelle qui exige des solutions exceptionnelles...vos ministres et moi-même sommes en effet convaincus que seul un gouvernement responsable **dote de pleins pouvoirs** mais inspires de l'esprit démocratique qui vous anime et soucieux des seul intérêts supérieures du pays pourra résoudre les problèmes de l'heure...*<sup>266</sup>

Thus ensuring the suppression of Parliamentary Democracy<sup>267</sup> to institutionalise Presidentialist Democracy.<sup>268</sup> As a second measure, Ahidjo went ahead to hasten talks with the government of Foncha in British Southern Cameroons on the 14<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> July 1960.<sup>269</sup> This, in a bit to make ground works that will facilitate the eventual reunification of both British and French Cameroon; thus guaranteeing the realisation of the Pan-Kamerun aspiration which was continuously revandicated by the UPC in its political agenda for the independence of Cameroon<sup>270</sup>. All these measures put in place permitted Ahidjo not only to hijack reunification (Pan-Kamerun Aspiration) from the UPC, but equally enabled him to launched a muscular crack down on all UPC militants and supporters who did not conform to or acknowledge the

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<sup>266</sup> *Journal Des Débats*, ALCAM Session 1959-1960, p. 14, cited by Abwa, *Cameroun*, pp. 334-335, **emphasis of the author**, see P. Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, pp. 103-111.

<sup>267</sup> Parliamentary Democracy is a governance system or practice which allows for a greater influence and control of the executive by the legislative. Here the people's power exercised through representation greatly determines and influences political power and decision.

<sup>268</sup> Presidentialism or Presidentialist democracy unlike parliamentary democracy is the practice in governance that allows for a stronger influence and control of the legislative by the executive. Here, the executive rule supreme over the people or legislative institutions from which it derives its legitimacy and power

<sup>269</sup> A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, p.200

<sup>270</sup> Eyinga, *L'UPC une Révolution*, pp.43-44.

legitimacy of the new independent state and its president. Within this framework of serious politicking and the use of exceptional power to legitimise state power, emerged a highly contestant form of militancy which greatly shaped politics and political interactions in post independent Cameroon.

**PLATE IV: Ahmadou Ahidjo Proclaiming the Independence of Cameroun on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1960**



**Source:** *Almanac of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence*. p, 57.

**i. The Trilogy of Contestant Ideologies in Post-Independent Cameroon**

Taking over the destiny of Cameroon in 1961 as president, Ahidjo according to many French newspaper commentaries was a state's man at the helm of a fragile state which was at the verge of disintegration<sup>271</sup>. Such commentaries were sustained by the boiling state of uncertainty and insecurity provoked by the UPC factions that continuously challenged the 1960 independence status of Cameroun, and even more serious and complex was the added

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<sup>271</sup> See. Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.114.

reunification with Southern Cameroons in 1961 which raised the challenging issue of National unity and integration that became Ahmadou Ahidjo's obsession of the First order.

In order to salvage this new state at the verge of collapse and disintegration, Ahidjo who incarnated this state resorted to a highly autocratic system of rule with one principal objective which was; the restoration of state authority and power as well as the consolidation of National Unity among Cameroonians on both ends of the Mungo. This became a great obsession for president Ahidjo that their attainment became very capital and necessary at all cost even if it meant compromising the sovereignty of the federated states of West and East Cameroon. This autocratic style enforced and practiced by Ahidjo as president of the Federal Republic of Cameroon, rekindled within the two states of the Federal Republic of Cameroon a kind of Fundamentalist Nationalism<sup>272</sup> which provoked the rise of Three contestant ideological platforms which were; anti-conformists, anti-annexationist and anti-imperialist.

### **Anti-Conformism in Post-independent Cameroon Politics**

Derived from the word conformism which is a social principle by which an individual is expected to adopt and adapt to established social norms by making them part and parcel of his/her personality as well as an essential element of his/her social identity without being compelled to do so.<sup>273</sup> Anti-conformism is the direct contrary of conformism as it exhibits the tendency of non-adherence to established social norms by taking a defensive posture that places the individual on the rang of dissidents. Anti-conformism as a political principle gained grounds in Cameroon as from 1960 following the voting and promulgation of the obnoxious laws of February 12<sup>TH</sup> 1960 by ALCAM to legitimise and attribute exceptional powers to Ahidjo that was to permit him centralise state power around him and the UC party. This ambitious plan of Ahidjo which he enforced through his project of the *Grand Partie Nationale*<sup>274</sup> saw the massive influx of militants from other parties into the UC. Realising at the time that policy, power and authority could only be exercised through the UC party, many political leaders and parties decided to adhere to the UC but for the democrats of Mbida and the UPC who categorically

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<sup>272</sup> Fundamentalist nationalism will simply refer here to the resuscitation of empirical interrogations on the Cameroon identity which was seemingly confiscated and taken hostage by a single individual called Ahidjo, thus provoking a long-lasting struggle for freedom and the affirmation of the Cameroonian personality in total sovereignty.

<sup>273</sup> Grand Dictionnaire encyclopédique Larousse, *Larousse*, Paris, 1993, p.2509

<sup>274</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.116. Emphases mine



contested such a status-quo which was to later become a unifying factor within the East Cameroon opposition in 1961.

Having successfully institutionalised a very strong and centralised presidential regime in the federal framework of the Federal Republic of Cameroon, Ahidjo eventually went ahead to take another step in his ambitious programme of elevating himself and the UC party above all other institutions and political organisations by putting in place this time the project of a *Grand Partie Nationale Unifié*. This project which aimed at uniting all political parties in the Federal Republic of Cameroon around a common political programme which he claimed was to help blend efficiency with democracy and freedom of thought,<sup>275</sup> was to bring together all political leaders and parties into a State-Party that was to become the unique platform for the exercise of democracy and freedom. Expecting all parties and political leaders to automatically conform to this new order that was gradually taking space in the territory, Ahidjo noticed with great surprise that all the opposition rose up against this new project which to them was a deliberate attempt to completely kill democracy and erect a one-party dictatorial state.

To this effect a strong opposition front was put in place against this Ahidjo plan and it was comprised of Charlse Assale leader of MANC, Mayi Matip of UPC Okala Rene-guy of PSC and *Démocrates Camerounais* of Mbida. Realising that in disperse rang they could not easily counter this Ahidjo plan, as the UPC attempt to re-mobilise it militant during this challenging period was simply disrupted by police troops who on Ahidjo's order dispersed the militants even before the close of the congress.<sup>276</sup> These four mainline opposition parties chose to unite their efforts in June 1962 by creating a single opposition bloc against Ahidjo's UC which they named *le Front Nationale Unifié*. In its manifesto published on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1962, they unanimously took a firm stand against the One-Party state system which according to them was a clear plan to institutionalise a dictatorial regime in Cameroon.<sup>277</sup>

Hearing of this, Ahidjo who had earlier made it clear that anyone who is not with the UC was against him and the regime; that is to say opposing the UC was equal to opposing Ahidjo and that was tantamount to subversion<sup>278</sup> decided to arrest all the 4 leaders of the FNU who were eventually slammed 2 and a half year jail sentence.

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<sup>275</sup> *Ibid*, p.128

<sup>276</sup> ANY., *La Presse du Cameroun* No. 3520 ,16 Janvier 1962, « Ouverture du 3eme congrès de l'UPC.

<sup>277</sup> . Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.130.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid*, p.129.

In their strong determination to uphold democracy and balance the ever growing power of Ahidjo and the UC party, the frontline leaders of the FNU alongside the editor in chief of the catholic daily *L'effort Camerounais* who in 1962 challenged the Ahidjo tyranny by publishing the train incident that popularly became known as the "Train Affair"<sup>279</sup>, constituted the first wave of Anti-conformist political actors in post independent Cameroon. Rising firmly against the dictates of the UC party and Ahidjo's tyranny, Mbida, Okala, Matip and Assale challenged what had become a social norm in Post-independent Cameroon. In their anti-conformist militancy, they successfully shaped and influence political development in Cameroon from 1961-1982.

Anti-conformism as an ideological principle in militant politics did not end with the leaders of the FNU. The unexpected resignation of Ahidjo in 1982 and the swearing in of Paul Biya signalled the beginning of a new era in the political development of Cameroon which like the first era created an enabling environment for anti-conformism as the ideology was again resuscitated by a new breed of political actors who had great concern for freedom and democratic practices.

In his obsession for power and the need to continuously be at the centre of all political affairs in Cameroon, Ahidjo did not in any way see the future of Cameroon without him. On this basis therefore, Ahidjo, having resigned as president of the republic continuously poured his weight of influence and autocracy on all political matters of the state using the UC now CNU party as his new found sphere of influence. To officialise and give legitimacy to his actions, Ahidjo successfully used the CNU majority to adopt the 19<sup>th</sup> June 1983 bill which institutionalised the one party system, established the pre-eminence of the party over the state, and elevated the prime minister to the rang of head of government. With all this put in place it was very much evident that Ahidjo even after resigning from power was still the one ruling the united republic of Cameroon. Refusing to submit to the dictats of Ahidjo and the CNU party which had completely suppressed constitutional order and democratic practices, Paul Biya joined the anti-conformist ideological movement to reject tyranny and project freedom.

To take the bull by the horn Biya started by reshuffling his cabinet without prior notice or consultation with Ahidjo the Chairman of the ruling CNU party. Not only did Biya bi-passed the party and its chairman, he equally went as far as dropping from government all confidants

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<sup>279</sup> See, P. Konings, "Church-State relations in Cameroon's Postcolony: the Case of the Roman Catholic Church" in *Journal for the Study of Religion*, Vol.20, No.2, 2007, pp, 45-64.

and close collaborators of Ahidjo in the likes of Sadou Daudou.<sup>280</sup> This was a strong blow and challenge to Ahidjo and the ruling majority CNU party. Receiving this shocking news, Ahidjo emphatically declared that “*Biya à ouvert les hostilités*”<sup>281</sup>. Determine to fight back Biya and sanctioning him for defiling the party chairman’s authority, Ahidjo mobilised a strong team of CNU militants strictly on Ethno-religious affinity to organise a strong riposte against Biya. This was a political miscalculation on Ahidjo’s part which Ibrahim Mbombo Njoya was quick to identify during their close door meeting convened at Ahidjo’s resident the same day of the cabinet reshuffle. There he made it clear that he could not be part of a scheme according to which all Muslims/Northern ministers were asked to resign from Biya’s government because in his opinion that was an Ethno-religious response with no convincing political argument which could provoke very serious adverse repercussions.<sup>282</sup> Supporting Njoya’s opinion, Sadou Daoudou made it clear to Ahidjo in the following words<sup>283</sup>; “*Vous avez toujours demandez aux camerounais de S’unir, vous ne pouvez pas maintenant apparaitre comme cherchant à les diviser... »*

Though he did not accept the idea of a joint resignation of all Muslim/Northerners from the Biya government as instigated by Ahidjo, Sadou daoudou ended up signing the joint resignation letter. Putting aside Abdoulay Maikano, Yousofa Daouada, Ayang Luc, Abdoulay Babale, and Mohamadou labarang who were not touched by the cabinet reshuffle, Ibrahim Mbombo Njoya being a close confidant and collaborator of Ahidjo decided not to sign the joint resignation letter. This was a clear indication that Njoya had taken the side of the anti-conformist against Ahidjo’s imposed social order. His courageous rejection of Ahidjo’s autocratic influence over the United Republic placed him just like Biya on the side of Ahidjo’s enemies (the anti-conformist). Like Biya he had decided irrespective of the dangers involved to break Ahidjo’s long reign of tyranny and influence by not conforming to his dictats. Motivated still by the anti-conformist ideology, Biya in 1985 convened the CNU Bamenda congress where he completely dealt away with the CNU legacy by transforming the party into Cameroon People Democratic Movement (CPDM). This was to send across a strong signal that the era of terror was over and nobody whatsoever was to again conform to the old order because a new order of freedom and democracy had come.

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<sup>280</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.221.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.* (Emphasis mine).

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*, p .222.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*

Having successfully replaced Ahidjo at the helm of a state with a very brilliant legacy in centralisation of power, autocracy and the violation of fundamental laws, Paul Biya prescribed as guiding principles for his new mandate three words which were **Rigor, Moralisation and Democratisation**<sup>284</sup>. This slogan which gave great popularity and fame to Biya only ended up in effect to be a smoke screen behind which was a well consolidated continuity in the construction of a Neo-Patrimonial state<sup>285</sup> on firm pillars of Clientelism.<sup>286</sup> This new era which projected great optimism as manifested in public euphoria, was nothing more than the beginning of a new episode in a general drama of dictatorship. Thus the Biya regime like Ahidjo remained highly contested especially among advocates of freedom and democracy. Proof of this was Biya's excessive use of power and violence which in the long run produced another wave of anti-conformist this time against the Biya regime.

Among the first wave of anti-conformist to have emerged in the political landscape of Cameroon under the Biya regime we had the Members of the *Comité de Coordination pour le multipartisme et la démocratie* led by Barrister Yondo Black. Exasperated by the dictats of the one party system which in every sense of the word curtailed basic political rights, freedom and democracy, Yondo Black and the *comité* decided to engage in actions which were directly not in conformity with the prevailing status quo. Their principal aim was to challenge the one-party state and press for the reintroduction of multi-party democracy in Cameroon. This courageous action of Yondo black like most anti-conformist cost him his freedom as he was immediately arrested alongside members of the *Comité de coordination* on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 1990.

This case which was appropriated by the Cameroon Bar Association under the leadership of Barrister Bernard Muna was to produce serious political agitations within the united republic of Cameroon which greatly influenced the practice of politics and democracy in Cameroon. As if to say inspired by the political situation at the time, a courageous book seller

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<sup>284</sup> F. Ebousi Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit au Cameroun*, p.34. Emphases Mine.

<sup>285</sup> Neo-patrimonial state or Neopatrimonialism is a mixture of two co-existing partly interwoven types of domination namely patrimonial and legal rational bureaucratic domination. Specifically Neopatrimonialism connotes that a patron in a certain social and political order bestows gifts from private resources on followers to obtain and strengthen their loyalty thus making them his clients. These clients in turn obtain material benefits and protection in exchange for their support and loyalty. In other words it is the vertical distribution that gives rise to a Patron-Client network based around a powerful individual or party. In a Neopatrimonialism state, the institutional rational-legal organisation of the state is undermined by the patrimonial-Clientelist organisation which thus produces a high tendency for the conversion or use of public office for private Clientelist relations.

<sup>286</sup> Clientelism suggest a kind of imbalance relationship between two persons that is one with greater power and authority while the other with little or no power and authority but are both linked by ties of interest constantly manipulated to meet their ends. See Political Clientelism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Theory and Practice & S. C. Stokes, "Political Clientelism", in *Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, July 2011.

and activist in the name of John Fru Ndi, decided to join the anti-conformist ideological platform by defiling the existing state injunction that prohibited the existence of any party in Cameroon other than the ruling CPDM party and launched a new party on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 1990 called the Social Democratic Front (SDF).<sup>287</sup> Despite all the repressive measures taken at the time to foil the launching of this new party, the massive adherence of the Cameroonian population to it testified of the huge thirst for freedom looming in the territory. All this was to mark a significant turning point in the conduct and practice of militant politics in Cameroon, a turning point which was least expected at the time by the Biya regime.

Joining the growing wagon of anti-conformist was the president of the Cameroon Episcopal Conference cardinal Christian Tumi. In his moral authority he openly called the regime to order, an unusual practice which had never been done by any one at the time and so kept all Cameroonians in great surprise. In its contagious effect, the private media exasperated by dictatorship, censorship and the violation of fundamental freedom, decided to also join the anti-conformist ideology to contest the Biya regime. This was championed by Celestin Monga and Pius Njawe who were later joined by artist and writers like Lapiro de Mbanga, Mongo Beti and Bate Bissong.

In a very strong solidarity they all took a firm stand against the Biya regime in their writings and songs which defiled the cannons of censorship imposed by the regime. Their actions like the others was reprimanded through arrest and imprisonment but significantly influenced post-independent politics and militancy in Cameroon under the Biya regime.

Evidently from the above discussions, post-independent politics in Cameroon from 1961-1990 was greatly animated by militancy inspired and sustained by the anti-conformist ideology. This ideology stood in direct opposition to the neo-patrimonial state and despite all schemes to completely destroy and prohibit the growing adherence of Cameroonians to such an ideological principle that challenged state order, the ideology persistently gained steam and matured to the point of laying a strong foundation for the return to multi-party politics in 1990.

### **Anti-Annexationism in Post-independent Politics.**

Annexationism is political idea and principle by which a state systematically extends its sovereignty over one or more states initially independent.<sup>288</sup> The concept is drawn from the

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<sup>287</sup> <sup>287</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie*, p.64.

<sup>288</sup> See Academic American Encyclopaedia

word annexation which is the ability of a state to violate the sovereignty of another state by imposing its influence and domination on it.<sup>289</sup> According to Ahmad, Annexationism could be likened to a process in natural science called grafting whereby young and strong organisms easily influence the ecosystem than old and weaker ones. When this process is adapted to the functioning of states it becomes what he calls the biological metaphor which stipulates that great democracies keen to eye, strong of hand, firm of will, resolute to purpose, ready to seize and liable to defend, belongs the gift that providence reserves not for decrepit and debauched tyrannies.<sup>290</sup> Just as this natural process justifies annexation and Annexationism, the same process lays the foundation of a natural struggle which castigates Annexationism giving birth to what is now termed Ant-Annexationism.

Being the complete rejection of the annexationist idea, Anti-Annexationism has persistently remained a strong political and ideological force to contain in the History of Cameroon since the reunification of the British Southern Cameroons with the Republic of Cameroon in 1961. Anti-Annexationism as a strong political ideology in the History of Cameroon, emerged in 1961. It was conceived and developed in the British Southern Cameroons prior to its reunification with the Republic of Cameroun. This idea that dominated negotiations leading to the setting up of the Federal Republic of Cameroon in 1961, persisted throughout the political evolution of the territory and was constantly evoked by political parties and movements to secure the sovereignty of Southern Cameroons which was feared completely Annexed in the framework of the Republic of Cameroon. The bearers of this ideological principle were simply referred to by Ahidjo as Autonomist<sup>291</sup>. It should be noted that anti-Annexationism greatly influenced and even dictated the conduct and actions of political parties as well as their militants in the entire Southern/ West Cameroon.

Conscious of their Anglo-Saxon heritage which gave them a distinct identity within the reunified Cameroon, political parties and especially their leaders always emitted a high degree of scepticism over the genuineness of Ahidjo and the Republic of Cameroon to respect their Autonomy as a state within the Federal framework. Evidence of this was Ahidjo's continuous re-iteration to the people of West Cameroon as a means to reassure them of his good faith, he

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<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>290</sup> Hammad Ahmed, *Grafting Cuba onto the American body Politics: The Intersection of Natural Science and Foreign Policy in the Annexationist Era*, Nd.

<sup>291</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.139.

persistently reminded them that “our desire is **unification** not **annexation**”<sup>292</sup> Having been guaranteed of equality, the Southern Cameroons leaders and most especially the KNDP authorities decided to finalise with Ahidjo the October 1960 communiqué which highlighted the terms of a constitutional draft that was to eventually structure the future reunified Cameroon. In this draft, it was well stated that

The territories shall be unified as a Federal sovereign state outside the British Commonwealth and the French community... The majority that is the bigger of the Federated states shall not impose on any state a measure which would be contrary to its interest.<sup>293</sup>

This joint statement to which Foncha became so much attached to the point of under mining the UN and British intervention in constitutional negotiations with the Republic of Cameroon, was to become his fundamental argument to his militants and people of Southern Cameroons throughout the 1961 plebiscite campaigns and post plebiscite negotiations<sup>294</sup>. From Bamenda to the Fouban and Yaoundé Tripartite talks, Foncha continuously trusted his French Cameroon counterpart based on the 1960 Joint communiqué. The end of all this was the final consolidation of a compromise on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1961 which according to the Southern/West Cameroon mainline opposition party (CPNC) and even some diehard KNDP militants was a great betrayal to the people of Southern Cameroons.<sup>295</sup> Just few months after the October 1961 compromise, Ahidjo surprisingly issued a decree<sup>296</sup> that violated in every aspect the terms of the Federal constitution which was approved by both territories. This decree that divided the Two federated states into 6 administrative units or inspectorates with each placed under a Federal Inspector appointed by Ahidjo and invested with exceptional powers was interpreted by many Southern/West Cameroonians as the official beginning of the annexation of Southern Cameroons. This therefore provoked in 1961 the emergence of the first wave of anti-annexationist in the political land scape of west Cameroon whose activities had serious bearing on politics and militancy throughout the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

This first wave of Anti- Annexationist emerged within the CPNC party with front line militants being EML.Endeley, NN.Mbile, HN.Elangwe, JC.Kangsen, and Andoh-Seh. To these CPNC stronghold could be added some diehard KNDP militants who in their various political

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<sup>292</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon* Vol. II, p.129. *Emphasis Mine*

<sup>293</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p. 244.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid*, p.245. See also, Fanso, “Ahidjo’s secret plan behind the plebiscite was the eventual annexation of southern cameroons in *Summit Magazine*, N°22, September 2013, pp, 24-27.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid*, p.263.

<sup>296</sup> See Decree N° 61-DF-15-Dec/20/1961. Cited in Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon*, Vol. II, p.133.

outings, always stood in firm support of anti-Annexationism and preached Autonomy for West Cameroon. They included amongst others; AN. Jua and PM.Kemcha.<sup>297</sup> These anti-annexationist which Ahidjo commonly called the Autonomist, constituted a strong Force of opposition to all federal reforms initiated by Ahidjo which compromised the autonomy and identity of Southern Cameroons. This was very much perceived in their persistent rejection of the authority of the federal inspector for West Cameroon Jean Claude Ngoh a situation which pitched them in constant conflict with Ahidjo.<sup>298</sup>

To further push forward their resistance against Ahidjo's Annexationist policy, the CPNC leadership proposed a merger of their party with the KNDP so as to form a single united West Cameroon party that will constitute a common bloc uniting all Southern Cameroonians and politicians against the obnoxious policies of Ahidjo aiming the total annexation of Southern Cameroons.<sup>299</sup> Foncha leader of the KNDP and Vice president of the Federal Republic of Cameroon interpreted this proposal within the prism of Realpolitik<sup>300</sup> which pushed him to rather give a deaf ear to the proposal and instead advised Endeley to dissolve the "dying" CPNC party and the doors of the KNDP will be open for him to join<sup>301</sup>. Taken out of the prism of realpolitik Endeley's proposal was simply a measure to strengthen the West Cameroon front so as to better militate against Annexationism which was gradually being implemented in West Cameroon by Ahidjo.

Few years afterward that is in August 1963, Anti-Annexationism was now manifested within Foncha's party the KNDP. During its Bamenda Congress of 1963, A. N. Jua and other frontline KNDP militants threw blames on Foncha and his ministers in the Federal government that is; S.T. Muna and E.T. Egbe for assisting Ahidjo in his plan to completely Annex Southern Cameroons in the Republic of Cameroon.<sup>302</sup> To further express their frustrations; they seized the opportunity that was offered by the joint UC-KNDP meeting convened in Yaoundé on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1964 where the Anti-annexationists in the Voice of Bernard Fonlon

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<sup>297</sup> Aka, *Southern Cameroons*, p.263.

<sup>298</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.138, see Aka, *Southern Cameroons* p.265.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid*, p. 136.

<sup>300</sup> The expression Realpolitik was first used in Germany to describe the policies put in place by Bismarck to materialize German unification in 1870. By extension the Expression Realpolitik as used today in international politics refers to all foreign policies that are carved out based on the principle of calculation, power parity and national interest. Thus to Foncha the proposal of Endeley was a well calculated scheme of the CPNC party to re-invent itself by infiltrating the KNDP and repositioning itself at the center of policy making and decision taking within the federal framework.

<sup>301</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, pp.136-137.

<sup>302</sup> See, Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, p, 192-193. See also, Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p, 138-139.



exposed to Ahidjo the West Cameroon/Anglophone grievances and castigated all the policies implemented by Ahidjo in West Cameroon of being completely aimed at eradicating the Southern Cameroons identity and its repercussions could be very devastating<sup>303</sup>

As Anti-Annexationism gained approval and popularity among the people of West Cameroon, it provoked serious political adjustments within the political landscape of the territory as some political parties used it as an opportunity to enter new alliances, while others like the KNDP instead witnessed a sudden power tussle and disintegration of their party in 1965 all because of the influence of Anti-annexationists that had grown up within the party. This ideology which pressed for equality between English and French Cameroon so as to avoid what Dze-ngwa calls the “Anglophone Problem”,<sup>304</sup> was instead exploited by Ahidjo to cause division within the West Cameroon political class by 1966 hence projecting the CNU party as the only way out to put an end to their differences. Succeeding in this malicious scheme, Ahidjo finally institutionalised the CNU as the unique political party in the entire Federal Republic of Cameroon as all political parties in both West and East Cameroon dissolved themselves and joined the CNU. To hit the final nail on the coffin of Anti-Annexationism, Ahidjo issued the 1972 Communiqué organising what has been generally termed the 20<sup>th</sup> May peaceful revolution. This revolution that instituted the Unitary State, transforming the Federal Republic of Cameroon into the United Republic of Cameroon, completely silenced all Anti-Annexationist propaganda as all the Autonomist were absorbed in the United Republic.

From 1972-1982 when Ahidjo decided to quit power and entrusted the management of the United Republic in the hands of Paul Biya, Anti-Annexationism as a political ideology had completely disappeared though not dead. It took just the unilateral decision of Paul Biya in 1984 dissolving through a decree the United Republic of Cameroon and re-creating the Republic of Cameroon, for Anti-Annexationism to resurface and this time with great steam.

With the complete abrogation of the Federal Republic of Cameroon, as well as the United Republic of Cameroon to resuscitate the Republic of Cameroon which in every sense of the word makes allusion to the initially independent *La Republic du Cameroon* of 1960. Southern Cameroonians now called Anglophones in the voice of J.N. Foncha simply described Biya’s action as “**Bad fate of our francophone brothers**”<sup>305</sup> This was the statement that set in motion

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<sup>303</sup> *Ibid*, p.139.

<sup>304</sup> See, Dze-Ngwa, “The Anglophone problem. See also, P. Konings and F. B. Nyamjoh, “The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon”, in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1997, pp., 207-229.

<sup>305</sup> A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon*, p.157. (Emphasis mine).

the second wave of Anti-Annexationists and the Anti-Annexation propaganda in the political evolution of Cameroon since 1961. The ideology this time around was championed and propagated by pressure groups since political parties were all dissolved into the CNU/CPDM. Among the pressure groups which emerged and fully appropriated the Anti-Annexationist ideology we had the Anglophone Patriotic Alliance (APA) The Ambazonia Movement (AM) The Free West Cameroon Movement (FWCM) and The Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM).<sup>306</sup> These groups were manned by Anglophone elites with very strong Southern Cameroons nationalist sentiments and amongst them we could identified figures like Fon Gorji Dinka, J.N Foncha, Albert Mukong, John Fru Ndi, Carlson Anyangwe, Simon Munzu etc.

Anti-Annexationism as from 1984, became a strong rallying ideology especially in major big cities of the Republic of Cameroon. It brought together Anglophone communities in these cities and organised them around small organisations and movements within which Anglophone nationalism and militancy was strongly upheld<sup>307</sup>. In 1985 Anglophone elites in the littoral province of Cameroon met and collectively petitioned the president of the republic Paul Biya, reminding him of the humiliating and revolting colonial status that the annexation of Southern Cameroon has gradually and systematically forced on the English speaking Cameroonians<sup>308</sup>. Responding to their petitions with intimidation, violence and arrest, the Anti-Annexationists campaign automatically gained steam thus radicalising a good number of Anglophone organisations in the territory bringing about the birth of the Anglophone Patriotic Alliance (APA), emerging as one of the pronounced Anglophone pressure groups in the territory, the APA in its resolute determination to fight Anglophone marginalisation strongly militated for the restoration of the state of West Cameroon.<sup>309</sup>

To the APA, the restoration of the state of west Cameroon was a matter of urgency and no obstacle towards the achievement of this goal was to be tolerated. Just in the same philosophy of the APA, emerged another group called the Free West Cameroon Movement (FWCM). The FWCM militated strongly for the return to Federalism as the only way that can guarantee equity for the Anglophones within the republic of Cameroon. According to the FWCM any unity that is based on the complete Annexation of the Anglophones will be very

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<sup>306</sup> See, W. Dze-Ngwa, "National Unity National Integration in Cameroon 1916- 2000: Dreams and Realities", PhD Thesis, University of Yaoundé 1, 2005. See also, Piet Konings and Francis B. Nyamjoh, "The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon" pp. 216-217

<sup>307</sup> Dze-Ngwa, "National Unity. p.176.

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, p.177

harmful to the nation as such unity could describe nothing else than a potential explosive.<sup>310</sup> While the APA and the FWCM went about their advocacy and militancy, another group was created still to fight against the Annexation of the Southern Cameroons by the Republic of Cameroon; this other group was called the Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM). The CAM unlike the others who were concentrating their activities within Cameroon to roll back the Annexationist agenda of the Biya regime, the CAM went on a diplomatic offensive by carrying the Anglophone problem to United Nations, Organisation of African Unity, the Common Wealth, The European Economic Commission and other strategic international partners to whom they exposed the Anglophone grievances in Cameroon and even threatened to adopt what they called the “**Zero Option**”<sup>311</sup> if the plight of Anglophones in the Republic of Cameroon was not given appropriate attention<sup>312</sup>. Besides the joint actions of the various Anglophone pressure groups and movements whose activities created great influence and support for the Anglophone cause within and out of Cameroon, there were equally some individual actions posed by some Anglophone personalities which officially distinguished and portrayed themselves as symbols of Anti-Annexationism in Anglophone Cameroon post-independent politics. Amongst them was;

Dr. Bernard Fonlon; who since 1964 had officially taken his position against any form of Annexationism which at the time was gradually and systematically been implemented by Ahidjo. During the joint UC-KNDP consultations of September 1964, Dr. Fonlon made it clear while talking for the KNDP that Southern Cameroonians were not satisfied with the poor treatment reserved for them and even their KNDP ministers within the Union of the **TWO** Cameroons<sup>313</sup> symbolised by the two stars on the national flag of the Federal Republic of Cameroon as seen in (**Figure I below**).

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<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>311</sup> The Zero Option was originally conceptualised in 1979 by the Social Democratic Party of West Germany emphasising the first albeit more symbolic than substantive nuclear disarmament treaty between the USA and the Soviet Union. It implied the complete and total withdrawal of intermediate-range nuclear missiles from the European continent. See, [www.Encyclopaedia.Com](http://www.Encyclopaedia.Com), in the context of the Anglophone problem in Cameroon, the Zero option implied the complete withdrawal of *La Republic du Cameroun* from Southern Cameroon, thus restoring the total independence of the British Southern Cameroons. See Christopher Ambe Shu’s interview with Barrister Ekontang Elad in *The Horizon Newspaper* of Monday November 6<sup>th</sup> 2017. See also, Tanguie Fonchingong, “The Quest for Autonomy: The Case of Anglophone Cameroon”, in *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, Vol.7, No.5, 2013, pp. 224-236.

<sup>312</sup> See, Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p. 320. See also, T. Fonchingong, “The Quest for Autonomy. p. 229.

<sup>313</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.139

**FIGURE I: Flag of the Federal Republic of Cameroon 1961- 1975 with “TWO” Stars symbolising the two Cameroons**



**Source:** Almanach of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the independence and Reunification of

Receiving no positive amelioration of the situation, Dr. Fonlon personally wrote to Ahidjo decrying the systematic Annexation of the people of West Cameroon into the Unified Cameroon<sup>314</sup>. These personal efforts of the man distinguished and placed him among the first frontline militants of the Anti-Annexationist ideology in Cameroon. **(See Plate V below)**

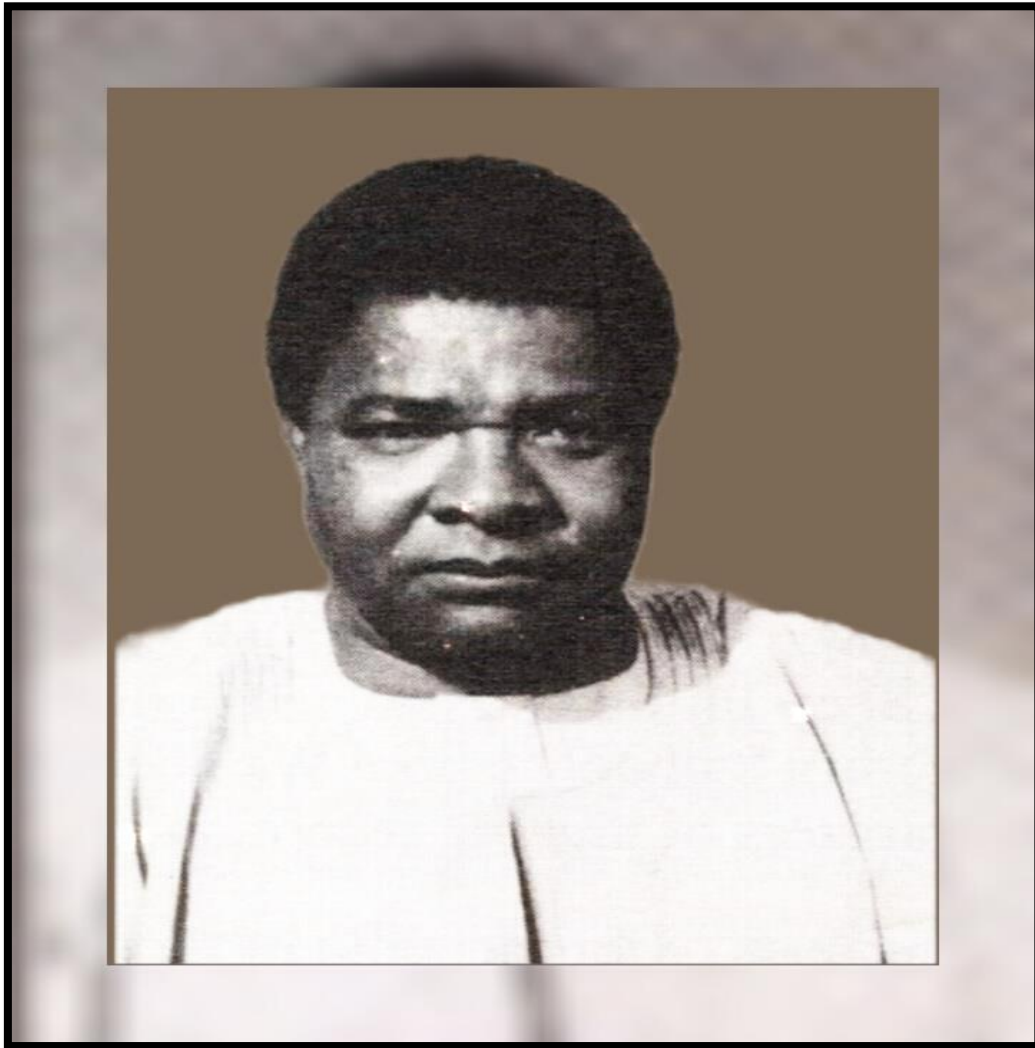
Following in the foot steps of Dr. Fonlon emerged in 1985 another courageous Anti-Annexationist called Fon Gorji-Dinka **(See Plate VI)**. He was one of those courageous West Cameroonians who officially reacted against the Biya constitutional reform of 1984 that changed the United Republic of Cameroon of Cameroon to the Republic of Cameroon as if to say Annexing Southern Cameroons into La Republic du Cameroun as it was in 1960.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Dze-Ngwa, National, p.174

<sup>315</sup> See, Fonchingong, “The Quest for Autonomy. p, 228.

**PLATE III: Dr. Benard N. Fonlon, Precursor of Anti-Annexationism in Post-independent Cameroon Politics**



**Source:** Lawrence chi Nyamngoh's Picture Archives

To Gorji-Dinka, the time had come to put an end to the systematic Annexation of Southern Cameroons which over the years had continuously gone unpunished. On a personal Bases, Dinka appealed to all Southern/West Cameroonians to arise and fight the Annexation they have been subjected to using all possible means at their disposal.<sup>316</sup> To show his seriousness and determination to push through his Anti-Annexationist ideology in Cameroon he immediately called for the restoration of the independence of Southern Cameroons which re-baptised as the Republic of Ambazonia.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>317</sup> See, Ngoh, *Cameroon*, p. 320. See also, T. Fonchingong, "The Quest for Autonomy. p. 228.

**PLATE IVI: HRH. Fon Gorji Dinka Anti-Annexationist and Precursor of Ambazonia**



**Source:** adapted from, [www.mimimefoinfos.com](http://www.mimimefoinfos.com)

Still in the same struggle to free Southern Cameroons from the Annexationist policy of French Cameroon, emerged another Anti-Annexationist in the name of Albert Mukong (**See Plate VII**) whose individual actions greatly influenced politics and militancy in Cameroon. Like Dinka, Albert Mukong took an outspoken and very radical position against the systematic Annexation of Southern Cameroons. Not only did he qualify the union between British Southern Cameroons and French Cameroon in 1961 as baseless due to the fact that it produced no accord, he went further to file in a case to the United Nations in 1990<sup>318</sup> and called for rapid UN mediation in the affaire so as to avert War.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> P. Konings and F. B. Nyamjoh, "The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon" p. 221.

<sup>319</sup> Dze-Ngwa, "National Unity, p.172.



**PLATE VI: Albert W. Mukong, Militant of Anti-Annexationism**



**Source:** Adapted from Lawrence Chi Nyamngoh's Picture Archives

Also taking an outstanding and determining step against Annexationism in Cameroon was John Ngu Foncha. Having tolerated all along the Ahidjo and later Biya Annexationist policies with the hope of changing the situation with time, Foncha out of deep frustration and disappointment with the government of the republic of Cameroon decided to reconvert himself to anti-Annexationism. One of the first imposing steps taken by Foncha after his reconversion was his official resignation from the CPDM party in 1990. In his resignation letter he made it clear that; "The Anglophone Cameroonians whom I brought into the union have been ridiculed, and referred to as "*les Biafrais*", "*les enemies dans la maison*", "*les traître*."..<sup>320</sup>

These were expressions of great frustration, discontentment and disappointment which Foncha in his new Anti-Annexationist posture was determined to fight against and militate for the restoration of the dignity of the people of former Southern Cameroons. This bold step taken by Foncha which reconciled him back with the people of former Southern Cameroons now

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<sup>320</sup> See, J.N Foncha's 1990 Resignation Letter From the ruling CPDM Party.

called Anglophones was to mark the beginning of an intense Anti-Annexationist campaign which became the foundation of Anglophone Nationalism and militancy in Post-independent Cameroon. It should be however noted that these Anti-Annexationists did not have it easy with the government of the Republic of Cameroon as most of them suffered great repression, torture and imprisonment. Some were even compelled to go on self-exile just to escape the ruthless and repressive measure put in place by the government to crack down on all Anglophone activist and Anti-Annexationists<sup>321</sup>. Unfortunately none of these repressive measures could deter them from pursuing their goal of giving back dignity to the Anglophones, as their imprisonment and exile further inspired new breeds of Anglophone activist of the anti-annexationist ideology.

### **Anti-Imperialism in Post Independent Politics**

Described by Amical Cabral as “Piracy on dry land”<sup>322</sup>, imperialism is an age-old phenomenon involving the accapuration and extension of power and domination by stronger nations over weaker ones. Africa and Cameroon in particular which became victims of this phenomenon in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, bravely multiplied efforts to come out of it. These efforts, unfortunately were swallowed up in another deep misfortune called Neo-Colonialism. Described as the last stage of imperialism, neo-colonialism is an advanced and worst stage of imperialism that projects an illusionary independence as smoke screen behind which its victims are severely crushed, dominated and exploited by imperial predators. Nkrumah while exposing the philosophy behind the concept made it clear that;

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the state which is subject to it is in theory independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty but in reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside<sup>323</sup>

Thus a state in the grip of Neo-colonialism is not a master of its own destiny. This exactly was the UPC position statement with regards to the independence of French Cameroon in 1960 which the party out rightly rejected on the basis that such independence was nothing more than the consolidation of Neo-colonialism by France in Cameroon. In their determination therefore

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<sup>321</sup> Konings and Nyamjoh, “The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon” p. 217.

<sup>322</sup> H. Campbell, “Imperialism and Ant-imperialism in Africa” in *Monthly Review The Independent Socialist Magazine*, July 1, 2015.pp.1

<sup>323</sup> K. Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: the last stage of imperialism*,. .p. ix



to reverse the hand of the clock and bring about a dignifying independence for Cameroon, the UPC adopted Anti-imperialism as the ideological premise on which their party doctrine and militancy in post independent Cameroon was to depend on so as to bring about a more free and sovereign Cameroon Republic.

Anti-imperialism as a political principle and ideology in post-independent Cameroon was developed by the UPC party and enforced to the latter by its exiled wing which had become very radical following the ruthless and repressive policies put in place by the government to crack down its militants who had continuously challenged the independence of Cameroon. Founded on the principle of national liberation, socio-economic welfare and total independence of the Cameroonian people from colonial dependence, Anti-imperialism became a formidable weapon in the hands of the UPC party and its militants who did not accept the neo-colonial status imposed on them by the Cameroon government since 1960<sup>324</sup>.

These militants of the UPC party who decided to distant themselves from all links with the neo-colonial regime erected in 1960, equally went ahead to dissociate themselves from the moderate UPC militants who had decided to work with the Ahidjo regime. In their strong determination to roll back the colonial order in Cameroon, the radical/exiled wing of the UPC party remained in clandestinity where they intensified their militancy through guerrilla activities which had as primary aim the restoration of the Nationalists ideal sacrificed in 1960 in what they called fake independence. Among the frontline defenders of this Anti-imperialist ideology within the UPC were; Felix Roland Moumie, Abel Kingue, Ndeh Ntumaza, Ernest Ouandie. **(See Plate VIII)**

This frontline militants who became the principal target of the post independent Cameroon regimes after experiencing the assassination of Um nyobe in 1958 had no other option than going on exile. While on exile where they continuously pooled international attraction and recognition, they still benefited the support and loyalty of a large pool of militants back at home who in their underground activities continued to engage the Yaoundé and French army in what they called the war of liberation or first war of independence in Cameroon<sup>325</sup>. While Moumie, Abel Kingue and Ntumaza were on the diplomatic offensive against the Yaoundé regime, Ernest Ouandie was on a military offensive on the ground (Marquise). Their determination to fight imperialism and the government's resolve to defend its independence

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<sup>324</sup> Abwa, *Cameroon : Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p, 211.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid*, p, 210.

was to eventually provoke in post independent Cameroon what has been termed the Second War of Independence in Cameroon 1961-1972<sup>326</sup>

**PLATE VII: Frontline Militants and Flag bearers of Anti-Imperialism in Post Independent Cameroon**



President Felix Roland Moumie, surrounded by Vice President Abel Kingue to the left and Ernest Ouandie to the right

**Source:** Adapted from Almanac of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the independence.. p,45.

As the Anti-imperialists ideology as preached by the UPC exile wing gained steam, the Yaoundé regime under the patronage of France left no stone unturned to make sure that the activities of these UPC militants be brought to null even if it meant executing them physically. On the 15<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1960 thanks to French intelligence services Moumie was tracked and poisoned in Geneva where he later died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1960.<sup>327</sup> Recorded in Yaoundé as a significant victory against the Anti-imperialist, Ahidjo went ahead with the support of the French army to launch a scorch earth policy in the Bamileke regions of the Republic of Cameroon which was considered one of the strongholds of the UPC Anti-imperialist forces. Reports by the French pilot Max Badet who participated in the scorched earth operations in the

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid*, p.316.

<sup>327</sup> Eyinga, *l'UPC une Révolution*;, p.129.

Bamileke regions revealed that between 1962 and 1964 they successfully exterminated 300 to 400,000 people in Bamileke land<sup>328</sup>. While a serious man-hunt was launched against Ouandie who had returned to the bushes in 1961, the exile wing of the UPC remained mobilised and multiplied efforts to combat the Yaoundé regime and restore genuine independence for the people of Cameroon.

With the integration of the exiled wing by a group of students members of section de France who had been expelled from France by the French government the UPC headquarters in Accra Ghana witnessed great transformations as the coordination of the party systematically left the hands of the pioneer militants into the hands of the young vibrant students from France after they successfully staged in Ghana what they called the *coup du comité révolutionnaire*<sup>329</sup>. As a revolutionary organ the *comité révolutionnaire* with the coming of young militants from France was to become victim of internal politics which led to its eventual faction into two groups.<sup>330</sup> One of these groups was led by Osende Afana called the Pro-Chinese group and the other group was led by Woungly Masaga called the Pro-Soviet group<sup>331</sup>. Failing to coordinate their actions and work in synergy, Osende Afana prepared and led a military offensive into the South East of Cameroon passing through Congo. The goal was to seize power from the Yaoundé regime but unfortunately this mission could never be accomplished as Osende Afana was brutally neutralised in March 1966 by the forces of the Yaoundé regime. His tragic end at the fore front of the fight against imperialism earned him martyrdom for anti-imperialism. (See **Plate IX**) One year after, the other faction of the *comité révolutionnaire* ( the Soviet Group) led by Woungly Masaga and Michel Doh prepared and launched another military offensive still using Congo as their main entry point forgetting it was from there that Osende Afana was neutralised.

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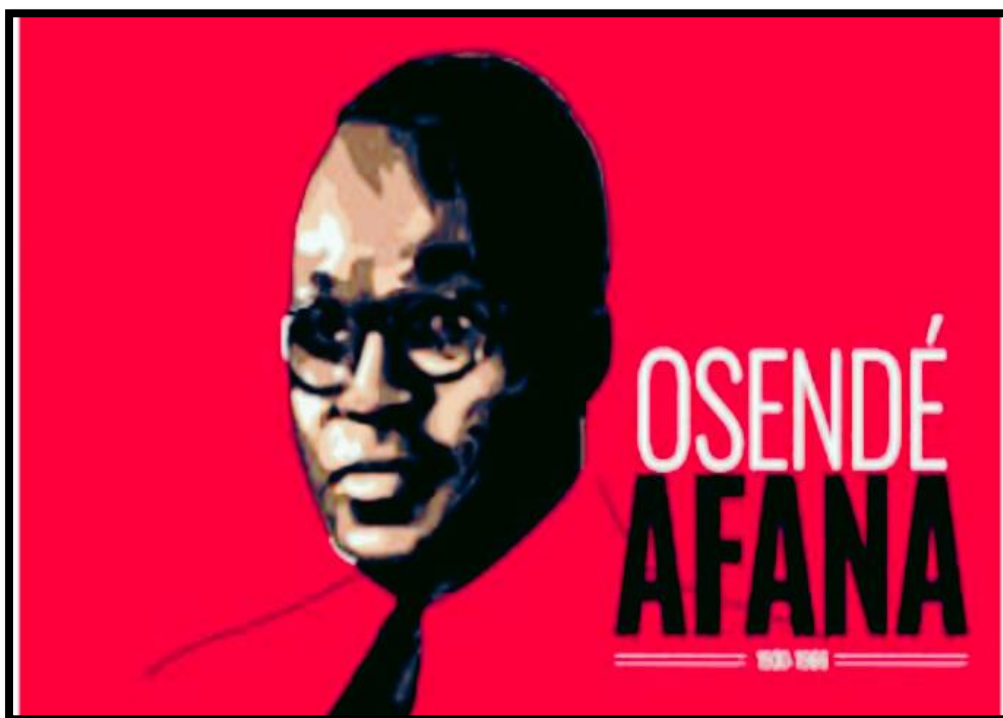
<sup>328</sup> *Ibid*, p. 124.

<sup>329</sup> The *comité révolutionnaire* in Ghana was a revolutionary organ of the UPC put in place by Exiled UPC militants to coordinate the fight against imperialism in Cameroon.

<sup>330</sup> Eyinga, *L'UPC une Révolution*, pp. 132-136

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid*, p.137

**PLATE IX: Castor Osende Afana: Martyr of Anti-Imperialism in Post-Independent Cameroon**



**Source:** adapted from [www.rolandtsapi.com](http://www.rolandtsapi.com)

Having mobilised many more militants and fighters than before, the mission did not still succeed due to the poor management of the fighters by *Commandant Woungly Massaga* who decide to abdicate the fight abandoning the fighters in the middle of the forest thereby foiling the resistance completely<sup>332</sup>. With the death of Abel Kingue in 1964, which was a heavy loss to the Anti-imperialist UPC faction, the arrest and eventual execution of Ernest Ouandie on the 15<sup>TH</sup> January 1971 dealt a serious blow to the anti-imperialist and their political ideology, for another martyr of the anti-imperialist fight had fallen. (See **Plate X**) Considering that its principal leadership on the ground had been neutralised by the forces of Yaoundé, the death of Ouandie was the last stroke on the Carmel back as it brought to an end what had been termed the second war of independence in Cameroon<sup>333</sup>.

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<sup>332</sup> *Ibid*, p.138.

<sup>333</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun : Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p, 316.

**PLATE X: Ernest Ouandie: Martyr of Anti-Imperialism in Post-Independent Cameroon**



**Source:** Adapted from Almanac of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the independence and Reunification of Cameroon.

Though the frontline leaders had been neutralised, the Anti-imperialist ideology did not die as some surviving militants like Ndeh Ntumaza (See **plate XI**) and Woungly Massaga who had taken refuge in Europe continuously nourished and propagated the ideology in Cameroon. For instance Ndeh Ntumaza a pioneer UPC militant since its early beginnings in 1948, remained faithful to the Anti-imperialist ideology of the party. He was among the Anti-imperialist UPC militant who at no point of their Political career had to fraternise with the Yaoundé regime. Unlike Massaga who accepted the extended hand of Biya in 1990, Ntumazah remained loyal to the UPC Anti-imperialist ideology and when even power changed hands from Ahidjo to Biya he continuously posed serious threats to the legitimacy of the government as he frequently fired explosive letters and articles in national and international journals that gave sleepless nights to the regime.<sup>334</sup> Susan Kala Lobe puts it better when she says;

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<sup>334</sup> S. Kala Lobe, et Jean Claude Abena, « Sans Eux Pas D'unité » in, *Jeune Afrique Economique, Que reste-t-il de L'UPC de Ouandie, Moumie, Um Nyobe* N° 125, Février 1992, p.156.

**PLATE XI: Ndeh Ntumazah: Anti-Imperialist and Dissident of the Neo-colonial Order**



**Source:** Adapted from Lawrence Chi Nyamngoh Picture Archives

*C'est donc en exile que Ntumazah s'offrira sa réputation de leader Upecist. Installé à Londres pendant quelque vingt ans, il se contentera de publier irrégulièrement un journal et quelques tracts critiquant le gouvernement d'Ahmadou Ahidjo et de Paul Biya. Incapable de mobiliser des troupes et encore moins de reconstituer la grand famille Upecist, il vivra surtout les rentes d'un passé glorieux<sup>335</sup>*

As long as these militants incarnating the Anti-imperialist spirit of the UPC were still alive, the Cameroon government duct neo-colonial regime could not give itself rest. To this effect therefore the Yaoundé regime like the French administrators resorted to the manoeuvring of divisive schemes to frustrate all efforts that could bring about unity within the party and its displaced/exiled militants. To accomplish this, the legal wing of the UPC which had received

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<sup>335</sup> *Ibid*, p.156.

amnesty and now resuscitated under the leadership of Dika Akwa, was to hence forth serve the interest of the government by ensuring that the militants of the fundamentalist Anti-imperialist ideology are isolated thus keeping the legal UPC perpetually weak and separated from the home-based legal faction<sup>336</sup>. Realising that Newly legalised UPC under Dika Akwa was nothing but an arrangement of the neo-colonial authorities to prevent the original UPC from gaining back its original steam, a cross section of fundamentalist UPC militants who did not consider credible the legalisation of a new UPC in 1990 of which the UPC had been legalised since 1948, decided to create a new structure that will keep alive the fundamental UPC ideology of Anti-imperialism. This new structure was the MANIDEM.<sup>337</sup>

The result of this scheme produced an unending struggle for power and perpetual division within the Anti-imperialist (fundamentalist) UPC and even the legal (compromised) UPC. This divisive struggle for power within the UPC has persisted till date and has greatly animated party politics in post-independent Cameroon and produced serious dynamics which greatly influenced militancy and the conduct of politics in Cameroon.

## **ii. Reunificationism in Post-Independence Politics: A Constrain or Necessity**

Among the first very crucial political problems in post independent Cameroon which necessitated great care and caution in handling, was the reunification problem. Reunification happened to have been a transnational ideology that animated political circles and cut across both British and French Cameroons throughout the trusteeship period and later post independent Cameroon. This ideology that emerged from the Pan-Kamerun idea and fashioned the platform for radical nationalism in Cameroon, became a real bone of contention in 1960 when Cameroon became independent on a platform that did not incorporate the reunification of the two territories. The question that arose among the political class of the time was; is this reunification actually necessary? This question which became the centre of political discourse in both British and French Cameroon provoking the rise and fall of governments in the post-independent Cameroon, is enough evidence of its complexity. The complexity of the idea over the years has continuously structured and influenced competitive politics in Cameroon, and like

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<sup>336</sup> Interview with Mbombog Yebga, UPC militant and former leader of the UPC-MANIDEM, Douala, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

<sup>337</sup> *Idem.*



Nicodemus awesome<sup>338</sup> the analogy of the reluctant and enthusiastic bride will become a relevant instrument for our effective analyses and understanding of reunification politics in post independent Cameroon.

### **Ahmadou Ahidjo, facing the UPC and the Reunification Question.**

Reunification as one of the credo of the UPC party had never received an approval within the governing political class of the Republic of Cameroon until 1960. Rising to power in 1958 following the fall of Mbida, Ahidjo had never been a partisan to the reunification ideology<sup>339</sup> since it was an instrument of the Anti-imperialist propaganda championed by the UPC. Having as focus the maintenance of very cordial relation with the French authorities, it became of utmost necessity that Ahidjo shuns reunification for fear of being associated with the Anti-imperialist (UPC) propaganda. Realising at independence that his authority and power was under serious threat masterminded by UPC fundamentalist, couple with the slim majority his party the UC had in parliament, Ahidjo saw himself caught-up in a dilemma. Would he give a deaf ear to the UPC reunification campaign and solidify his bond with France while losing total grip over the country or would he embrace the UPC ideological platform of reunification and strain relations with France to maintain legitimate authority and power. It was in the face of this dilemma that Ahidjo finally accepted the idea of reunification which he had all along rejected and taken great distances<sup>340</sup>. Even though accepted just only as a matter of course, reunification in post independent Cameroon was a highly manipulative ideology which at some point was embraced out of constrain and in another out of necessity.

The constraining aspect of reunification in post independent politics was very much perceived in the bloody struggle for power between the Pro-French UC of Ahidjo and the Anti-imperialist UPC Party. The UC and its militants, having benefited the confidence of French authorities who bestowed on their leader Ahidjo the mandate to preside over the destiny of the independent Cameroon, persistently saw their mandate questioned and their authority threatened by an anti-imperialist movement spearheaded by fundamentally radical UPC militants who largely operated underground. These UPC militants in their Anti-imperialist propaganda, firmly castigated the new fabrics of imperialism installed by the UC and its leader Ahidjo. They reproached him of having negotiated fake independence which in no way adhered

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<sup>338</sup> N. Fru Awesome, "Reunification Question in Cameroon History: The Bride, an Enthusiastic or Reluctant One? In *Africa Today* Vol. 47. N° 2.

<sup>339</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p. 119.

<sup>340</sup> Aka, *Southern Cameroons*, p.266.



to the ideals of African nationalism and pan-Africanism preached by the founding fathers of the African liberation struggle. In one of their numerous flyers of sensitisation and political propaganda dated March 10<sup>th</sup> 1960<sup>341</sup>, they affirmed their strong determination to completely eradicate colonialism and like other liberation movements in Africa, render their territory ungovernable by the colonialists.

*Nous ne sommes pas seuls du continent africain qui combattons le colonialisme. Les ressortissant du Congo Rhodésie, Kenya, Algérie, etc. trépidant d'énergie, de l'amour patriotique sont unis s'arcbutent et combattant les colonialistes avec beaucoup de succès. C'est honteux de constater qu'au Cameroun, loin de rester à l'écart nos frères de sang et de peau luttent en faveur des colonialistes qui s'emparent de nos terres...*

As if this was not enough, their anti-imperialist campaign was equally ditched out to the population through songs of liberation which echoed a strong call for Kamerun Unification so as to liberate their territory trapped in the tentacles of neo-colonialism. One of such songs said<sup>342</sup>

*Vive ce beau pays parce qu'il nous a donné la vie  
Nos parent ne l'ont pas trahis et ne l'ont pas vendu  
Nous aussi nous jurons de ne jamais le vendre  
Nous refusons d'être condamné a une lente mort  
Vous enfant du Kamerun levez-vous unis en un seul corps  
Allez combattre celui-là qui est seulement venu au Kamerun pour gagner notre terre...*

With this strong nationalist force propelled by the UPC across the territory which mobilised a huge crowd of anti-imperialist especially in the Bamiléké and Bassa regions, it immediately dawn on Ahidjo that it was time to add to his military solution an appropriate political solution to save his mandate from falling into the hands of UPC militants who were gradually gaining control of important portions of the territory. Faced with the growing threats by the UPC to sabotage the independence of Cameroun obtained in 1960 and completely liberate the territory from French imperialism, Ahidjo was constrained to seek for an appropriate political solution to save his regime and this solution was nothing else but Reunification.

Ahidjo who had never shown interest in reunification as he persistently turned down all consultation talks initiated by the Foncha government and the British embassy in Yaoundé,

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<sup>341</sup>F. M. Kenne. "Les grands chefs de l'insurrection armés en pays bamiléké et leurs activités 1955-1971 », PhD Thèses, Histoire Université de Yaoundé I, 2006, pp. 141-143

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid*, p.145.

suddenly changed his mind in July 1960. It should be noted that between February and May 1960, Ahidjo turned down over 3 initiatives for effective reunification talks to take place between him and the representatives of the British Cameroons<sup>343</sup>. He did this only to later come back with great enthusiasm in July 1960 to accept the invitation of the British commissioner in Buea to talk about reunification from 15<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> July 1960. This sudden enthusiasm about reunification as observed in the multiplication of meetings with representatives of British Southern Cameroons in October and December 1960<sup>344</sup> are a clear indication that Ahidjo was now compelled to adhere to reunification not because it was necessary but rather because he had to use it against the UPC party which thought it had a monopoly over the ideology.<sup>345</sup> Embracing the reunification ideology, Ahidjo intended also to win back the support of the bulk of militants who had joined the UPC rebellion on account that the 1960 independence did not incorporate reunification of the British and French Cameroons. With the above justifications established, reunification became an utmost ideal for Ahidjo as failure to yield to the idea implied sacrificing his power and giving credit to Anti-imperialists.

The above analyses go a long way to deconstruct every historiography that projected reunification as an exclusive British Southern Cameroons issue with French Cameroon having nothing to do with the issue as was said and reiterated, by Charles Assale in media organs,<sup>346</sup> not forgetting the recent affirmation of Amadou Ali a former minister of Justice who said to a Cameroonian Anglophone Parliamentarian referring to reunification that; **“it is your people who chose to come here”**<sup>347</sup> that is; French Cameroon had no interest in reunification for it was simply a Southern Cameroons issue.

In as much reunification imposed itself on Ahidjo and the UC party as a constrain, it equally turned out to become an issue of necessity for the UC party which in 1960 could boast only of North Cameroon as its strong hold. Considering that Ahidjo’s authority and power was greatly contested by a good majority of the populations concentrated in the South<sup>348</sup>, it became clear to him that his popularity was down and his authority questioned, thus if measures were not taken early enough, a Southern coalition could eventually unseat him and his party from power. Conscious of the slim majority commanded by the UC party which a Southern coalition could overturn at any moment, it became very necessary for Ahidjo to go in for Reunification.

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<sup>343</sup> Aka, *The British Southern*, p.244.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid*, p.245.

<sup>345</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun: Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, Pp.375-376.

<sup>346</sup> „Awesome,” Reunification, p.92.

<sup>347</sup> See, Hon. Wirba Joseph’s Speech in the Cameroon National Assembly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016

<sup>348</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun Histoire d'un nationalisme*, p.379.

This was an important aspect of political calculation displayed by Ahidjo as according to him, reunification was to open and widen the Northern stronghold of the UC party as he saw already the eventuality of British Northern Cameroon joining the Republic of Cameroon which would give him another vast area to extend UC influence and consolidate power. Unfortunately for him on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 1961 British Northern Cameroons did not vote in favour of reunification. A situation which provoked bitterness and grief in Ahidjo, not only was he deeply hurt by the plebiscite results, he went ahead to file a case at the international court of justice against Britain contesting the plebiscite results in British Northern Cameroons.<sup>349</sup>

Realising at the end of the day that the purpose for which he saw reunification necessary was defeated in the loss of British Northern Cameroon, the enthusiastic Reunificationist that Ahidjo had become, automatically changed to a very reluctant one. Thus going in for reunification with Southern Cameroons in 1961 was no longer a matter of necessity, it had now become a constrain. This explains why Ahidjo engaged the reunification deals with double standards which had just one motif; that of strengthening his authority and power.

### **Southern/West Cameroons Facing Ahidjo and the Reunification Question**

Just like in the East of the Mungo, Reunification in the Southern later West Cameroon, remained a very sensitive issue necessitating care and tactful handling. Already animating political meetings and circles as far back as 1945, reunification remained a great puzzle in the political evolution of British Southern Cameroons<sup>350</sup>. With the approach of the year 1960; year of independence in French Cameroon and Nigeria, reunification took the central stage as benchmark for political competition and militancy in British Cameroons. While the KNDP tactfully handled the question by playing a double standard game using secessionism and reunificationism simultaneously as political ideology, the CPNC on its part outrightly rejected reunification in favour of integration with Nigeria. Ahidjo who had just been compelled to take interest in reunification introduced himself as the third actor and major contender in the reunification politics of the territory thereby adding steam to the reunification and post reunification politics in Southern Cameroon.

Occupying the frontline position in all political discourse in Southern Cameroons, reunification greatly divided the political elite of the territory as it created an ideological barrier between the KNDP and the CPNC. These political parties which had constantly been in

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<sup>349</sup> *Ibid*, p.378.

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid*, p.367.

competition against each other, were to see their ideological position by 1960 greatly influenced by reunification. The CPNC in 1960 remained attached to its integrationist policy with Nigeria, a policy that was highly resented by many Southern Cameroonians especially of the KNDP extraction was to become a contending force in reunification politics as it threatened the KNDP agenda which incorporated in its secession programme the necessity for reunification. Using the 1959 Mamfe conference as the ideal avenue to push through their ideology, the KNC-KPP alliance (CPNC) in suggesting the question for the Plebiscite emphasised through the voice of Ajebe Sone that the Southern Cameroons could follow only two courses. It was either the territory remained a region within the Nigerian Federation or unify with the French Cameroon.<sup>351</sup>

Aware of the growing public opinion which was strongly in favour of secession and against unification, the KNC-KPP alliance (CPNC) scored a strong point in political calculation as they succeeded to press the KNDP to the wall with no possibility of escape as it was made clear that the choice before the Southern Cameroons was to be independence in association with either one of the neighbouring states.<sup>352</sup> The KNDP which had always dreamt of a sovereign Southern Cameroons fully independent with the capacity to negotiate reunification in the future with Cameroun on equal terms saw itself trapped in an ideological tussle with the CPNC in 1960. Realising that by 1960 the Nigerian constitution had already clearly defined the status of Southern Cameroons as a self-governing region within Nigeria and that until February 1960 no formal meeting on the terms of reunification with *Cameroun* had even taken place with Ahidjo or his representatives, Foncha leader of the KNDP was politically weakened with no strong argument to preach Reunification. Since preaching reunification at the time was to indirectly popularise the integrationist ideology of the CPNC, Foncha had no other option than to play double standards with secession and reunification.<sup>353</sup>

With the plebiscite campaign dates already set and fixed to commence on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1960, and the plebiscite proper in February 1961, the KNDP which had been put to the floor by the inclusion of Reunification as part of the plebiscite question decided to embark on an aggressive campaign based on a double standard game. The question within the party at the time was, Should the KNDP campaign for secession or reunification? Knowing well that secession was not an option in the plebiscite the KNDP was constrained to embrace

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<sup>351</sup> Aka, *Southern Cameroons*, p.224.

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid*, p.225.

<sup>353</sup> Interview with Fon Angwafor III of Mankon, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2014, Bamenda.

reunification. In the Words of George Mbaraga, the KNDP was shaky over the issue of reunification until the OK as the originators of the idea and generals in battle came to its rescue and convinced the KNDP leaders for unification<sup>354</sup> and how then could it be possible as a cross section of the militants wanted secession.

Considering that until November 1960 the KNDP was still in lobby with the British government to cancel the plebiscite and facilitate Southern Cameroons independence as a unit within the British common wealth, a status which will guarantee the territory continuous British loans and aid. It is therefore undisputable and evident that for the KNDP, reunification was not a winning option but because of the strong advocacy and diplomatic push the OK was giving to unification both within and out of the territory through its cable grams, petitions and protest letters as was the case in October 8<sup>th</sup> 1960, which read;

One Kamerun protest strongly subtle attempts British and Foncha's government circumvent UNO decisions on Kamerun by rejected plebiscite and forcing country as independent unit within commonwealth through fat loans and vague constitutional reforms...<sup>355</sup>

The KNDP was forced to swallow the idea of reunification against their wish. In spite of her continuous rejection and denial of all forms of connection with the OK Party as was the case in the KNDP area president's note to the SDO for Bamenda captioned "**OK a Danger to the Southern Cameroons**"<sup>356</sup> and also in Foncha's declaration of February 1961 to the Cameroons Champion saying;

Moumie was a Rebel... The OK Party is an offshoot of the outlawed UPC which Moumie led and has warned KNDP Supporters and lecturers not to associate with the OK party<sup>357</sup>

The KNDP after all this, still ended up preaching reunification to its militants, but this was done with great tact and wisdom putting on the limelight a double standard game. Knowing so well that reunification which had given the KNDP victory over the KNC/KPP alliance in 1959 elections had suddenly become very unpopular and highly contested within the party and especially among traditional rulers, it was but normal for the KNDP to suppress this ideology in a very tactful manner. For if the KNDP completely rejected unification to uphold its primary ideology of secession, then it would have meant a total surrender of the KNDP to the CPNC in

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<sup>354</sup> G. Mbaraga, "we convinced the KNDP for Unification" in *Cameroon champion* Vol. 2 No. 7 of 15<sup>th</sup> February 1961, p.2.

<sup>355</sup> See, NAB, File No. 6168. OK letter of petition to the Colonial Secretary in dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 1960

<sup>356</sup> See NWRA, File, /Vc/d/1959/3: KNDP Note to SDO for BAMENDA 13th March 1959. "OK a Danger to the Southern Cameroons"

<sup>357</sup> See "Moumie was a Rebel" in *Cameroons Champion* Vol. 2, No. 7 of 15th February 1961

the 1961 plebiscite. Since the plebiscite question provided just 2 options; that is, Reunification and Integration, rejecting Reunification was a clear way of allowing the CPNC to freely campaign for integration and win the pools. Now that the KNDP was not ready to sacrifice the core ideology of the party, it was therefore constrained to campaign for reunification in an implicit rather than explicit manner. This was so because an explicit campaign for reunification would have antagonised a great majority of KNDP militants and of course confirm the alleged KNDP/ UPC collaboration which could have been very catastrophic on the KNDP results of the plebiscite. On the basis of this argument, the KNDP tactfully and systematically campaigned for Reunification by denying any links with the ideology where the secession drive was strong while embracing and defending the ideology where Reunification drive was strong. This double standard game of Foncha was clearly reflected in Foncha's press statement reported by the Cameroon champion in which he said;

Dr. Felix Roland Moumie was a rebel and leader of a dangerous movement called UPC/OK and so warns KNDP supporters not to associate with the OK” and at the same time he still makes it clear in his statement that **“he would fear Ibos rather than the Bamiléké”**<sup>358</sup>

With this it became very difficult to state with precision what the KNDP was proposing to the electorate as far as the future of Southern Cameroons was concern. Mr Djalal Abdoh UN Plebiscite supervisor for the Cameroons was keen to realise this imprecision of the KNDP 5 months before the launching of the campaigns of the plebiscite as only the Nigerian constitution was on his table and nothing had been put in place to spell out the terms of Reunification which was the second option campaigned by the KNDP<sup>359</sup>

Though Foncha brandished the outline of a draft constitutional proposal agreed between him and Ahidjo in October 1960, Mr Abdoh curiously came to realise that this agreement did not in any way engage the Southern Cameroons government as it was just a statement signed by Foncha in his personal capacity and issued as a statement of intension of the KNDP<sup>360</sup> In a correspondence addressed to Abdoh, the British commissioner for Cameroons made it clear that;

the Southern Cameroons was neither a party to the resolution nor to the declaration contained in the outlined proposals agreed upon by Foncha and Ahidjo and was in no way committed to them ... The press release containing

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<sup>358</sup> See *Cameroon Champion*, Vol. 2, No. 7 of 15th February 1961 (Emphases mine)

<sup>359</sup> Aka, *Southern Cameroons*, p.245.

<sup>360</sup> See UN Doc. T/1556, press release No 1101, 6/12/60. Cited in E. A. Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p.245.

the outlined proposals was not an authoritative statement made on behalf of the Southern Cameroons government.<sup>361</sup>

The fact that Foncha entered this deal with Ahidjo without engaging the government of Southern Cameroons was a well calculated scheme which only ended up ascertaining the fact that the KNDP did not want reunification as prescribed by the UN plebiscite but was forced to embrace the ideology against her wish. For it is very clear that Foncha could not have engaged the Southern Cameroons government in an agreement that he was not sure would guaranteed the deep aspiration of the people which was independence. Thus in his double standard game he exploited Ahidjo's enthusiasm for Reunification by concluding a deal while at the same time emitting reserves by not engaging the Southern Cameroons government.

Ahidjo who at the time badly needed a Reunification deal with Southern Cameroons to cement his political authority, in the Republic of Cameroon, had no option but to play the KNDP game even when it was made clear that none of their agreements engaged or represented the expression of the official views of the Southern Cameroons government. Thus, even after several moves by the British embassy in Yaoundé to make things clear, and explicit, Ahidjo remained categorical on the joint communique signed with Foncha which reiterated their attachment to unification on a Federal basis.<sup>362</sup>

Knowing fully well that their joint communique clearly specified nothing on the nature of the federation or the status of Southern Cameroons in the eventuality of unification, Foncha before the launch of campaigns for the plebiscite decided to meet Ahidjo again on the 20-21<sup>st</sup> December<sup>363</sup> where he gave him another draft which was a modified version of the earlier one agreed upon. In this draft, which was to be used by the KNDP during the plebiscite, Foncha's double standard was again exhibited; at the same time he made it clear to Ahidjo that it was impossible to state with precision the conditions under which Southern Cameroons would join the Republic of Cameroon, he again stated in another publication that Southern Cameroons would become a fully self-governing state in all aspects equal to and having the same powers as the other states<sup>364</sup>

This ideological position of the KNDP which could easily be identified in the One Kamerun campaign flyers and bulletins is a clear proof that there existed a strong connection

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<sup>361</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p.245.

<sup>362</sup> *Ibid*, p.248.

<sup>363</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid*, 247.

between the KNDP and the OK. For it could not have been a coincidence for the KNDP to campaign that reunification would bring freedom to Southern Cameroons and the OK at the same time is propagating the same message in their campaign songs saying;<sup>365</sup>

Hallo!!! Hallo!!! Hallo!!!  
 Freedom for voting and choosing is open for Kamerunians  
 To decide whether to become Nigerians or to maintain the Kamerun nation  
 He!! He!! He!!  
 Kamerunians go and vote on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 1961 plebiscite  
 You will automatically become free and independent  
 If you vote for white box the second alternative!!!!

This clearly shows that KNDP denial of association with OK was nothing but a well calculated double standard game which was further justified by the fact that the KNDP and OK campaigned separately for reunification in the same territory of which it could have been very logical that they pool their resources together and openly campaign for reunification. If they did not do that it was simply because the KNDP had a secession agenda which they didn't want to compromise in an association with the OK party which was openly recognised by all as Reunificationists. Thus the only way out for Foncha was to play a double standard game which at the end of day revealed that reunification for the KNDP, was more of a constrain than a need.

Trapped therefore in the unification ideology, Foncha still had a strong obligation to meet the aspiration of the KNDP party which was Secession and self-determination. Thus with the pressure from the KNDP militants who feared the eventual annexation of Southern Cameroons in to the Republic of Cameroon as well as the scepticism of public opinion which at the time brandish Reunification as a useful flag to wave but not a Plebiscite winning concept<sup>366</sup>, Foncha was compelled in his double standard game to play the cards of secession and reunification. The outcome was a massive victory for “**Secession and Reunification**” of which there was no secession as option in the plebiscite. *Fon Angwafor III* of Mankon confirms this political tactics of the KNDP when testified to us saying that “*in 1961 I voted for **secession and reunification***”<sup>367</sup>

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<sup>365</sup> See, One Kamerun (OK) Press Release and News No. 001/15 No. 043/OK/22/11/1960

<sup>366</sup> A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroons Revisited*, Vol. I p.298.

<sup>367</sup> Interview with Fon Angwafor III of Mankon, (Emphasis mine)



### iii. Federalism: The Domineering idea in Post-Plebiscite Politics in Cameroon

Having obtained a landslide victory for “secession and reunification”<sup>368</sup> the greatest challenge of Foncha at the end of the plebiscite was to realise the promised secession and freedom he had preached to his supporters and militants of the KNDP who were very much afraid of an eventual absorption of Southern Cameroons into the Cameroon republic. Knowing fully well that Ahidjo’s enthusiasm for reunification was defeated in the loss of British Northern Cameroons to Nigeria, the question which puzzled the minds of every one at the time was; will Ahidjo still honour his engagements of Federalism he had earlier made to Foncha before the plebiscite?, and if he does what will be the nature of this Federalism?, Will it safeguard secession and sovereignty for Southern Cameroons as clamoured within the KNDP? These amongst others were the many interrogations around which Post-Plebiscite Politics in Cameroon was established and fashioned.

The greatest challenge now rested on the shoulder of Foncha who as leader of the victorious KNDP had the obligation and responsibility to secure the most appropriate deal with the Republic of Cameroon. This deal was expected to safeguard the interest of Southern Cameroonians and most especially militants of the KNDP who before now had shown great resentment and caution as far as reunification was concern for fear of Annexation. After expressing great and deep regret for the loss of British Northern Cameroons to Nigeria, Ahidjo did not in any way forsake his engagements with Foncha. He remained very consistent on the word “Federation”. Considering that Soppo Priso and other political leaders of the *Sud Cameroun* had already invested much in boosting Foncha’s campaign for the plebiscite<sup>369</sup> with the ambition of building a future strong *Sud Cameroun* alliance against the North<sup>370</sup>. Ahidjo who had loss the British Northern Cameroons, faced with this Southern political scheme to unsit the Northern majority, decided to reconsider his position on reunification and insisted on Federalism. The reason for this strong insistence on federalism by Ahidjo was not just to woe Foncha and the Southern Cameroons Reunificationists, it was as well a measure of power preservation and security which consisted of keeping the Southern Cameroons separated from the politics of the Republic of Cameroun in order to frustrate any initiative by the *Sud* political parties and leaders to concretise an electoral alliance in the future with British Southern Cameroons.

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<sup>368</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>369</sup> See, J. Nfi, “Foreign Influence in Elections in Cameroon: French Cameroonians in the Southern Cameroons 1961 Plebiscite” in, *Cameroon Journal on Democracy and Human right*, Vol. 5 No. 1, 2011, pp., 52-70.

<sup>370</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.120.

Naively comforted that an appropriate deal on federalism had been initiated, which to him would put to rest the anti-annexationist and CPNC opposition propaganda, Foncha only had to realise later that he was duped. In effect, the constitutional consultations engaged between the Southern Cameroons government and the Cameroun Republic Revealed that the much talked about Ahidjo's Federalism was not Southern Cameroons Federalism. Meeting in Buea from the 15-17<sup>th</sup> of May 1961 in what has been termed the Buea Tripartite conference, the KNDP Cabinet, the Republic of Cameroun, and the British government successfully held a discussion on the nature of reunification. In an effort to begin constitutional consultations and lay down the basic functioning mechanism for the proposed Federation, the three parties in the discussion completely disagreed on key issues that had to do with the defence and sovereignty of Southern Cameroons.<sup>371</sup>

This first step in constitutional consultation which revealed Ahidjo's bad fate as far as federalism was concerned, also revealed British conspiracy to frustrate every single move taken by the Government of Foncha to secure sovereignty for Southern Cameroons thus completely weakened KNDP bargaining power in the reunification talks. This Ahidjo-British conspiracy was later confirmed by the sudden British withdrawal of all her troops in Southern Cameroons<sup>372</sup> as well as Ahidjo's imposition of a highly centralised federal constitution on Foncha, a constitution he served to Foncha in the presence of his cabinet and a British attorney Mr B.G. Smith<sup>373</sup>.

Realising during the Buea consultation talks a certain kind of collusion between Britain and the Republic of Cameroon, Foncha sceptically made the following remark.

**“It was a coincidence that the British position corresponded exactly with that outlined by Ahidjo”**<sup>374</sup> Considering that Foncha and his delegation had always insisted on having an autonomous Southern Cameroon within the Federation as they had already promised the electorate during the plebiscite campaigns, Ahidjo on the contrary, by insisting during the Buea talks of having the right to exercise full powers in the Southern Cameroons till federal structures are effectively erected, greatly contradicted the terms of the joint communiqué earlier signed with Foncha in October and December 1960 prior to the plebiscite where it was made clear that he Ahidjo supports a Federal Republic with autonomous states. Thus his change of position in favour of centralised Federation and British sudden withdrawal of her troops while the two

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<sup>371</sup> .Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, p. Vol.1, p.211.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid*, p.215.

<sup>373</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.122.

<sup>374</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, p. Vol.1, p.215.

parties were still negotiating with the hope of reaching a mutually beneficial agreement, was enough evidence to demonstrate the British conspiracy with Ahidjo to put Foncha in difficulty and eventually facilitate the Annexation of Southern Cameroons into the Republic of Cameroon. By doing this, Britain was indirectly freeing itself from the burden of financing and assisting an autonomous Southern Cameroon state.

Unable therefore to convince Ahidjo to drop his centralised federation project and reach an acceptable agreement with Southern Cameroons in Buea, Foncha decided to convene an all party conference in Bamenda on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 1961, with the aim of making broad base political consultations with all the political stakeholders of the territory. This conference was to permit the Southern Cameroons to come out with a unique and common position on the nature of Reunification and Federalism in prelude to the Foumban constitutional conference where the final negotiations on reunification were to take place. The Bamenda conference which to the British authorities would end in a fiasco, surprisingly was serene as all the parties kept their differences and supported Foncha in producing a common constitutional draft which Southern Cameroons was to take to the Foumban conference.

This new found cohesion and unity within the Southern Cameroons political arena demonstrated in the Bamenda all party conference was unfortunately short-lived as many of them who went to the Foumban constitutional talks came back greatly disappointed as all their efforts put in Bamenda went in vain. In fact United they all arrived Foumban, divided they returned. The deliberations at Foumban which opened with discussion on a Federal constitution prepared by Ahidjo, took the Southern Cameroons delegation aback as they had no idea of the existence of a Federal constitutional draft which from every indication was already presented to Foncha.<sup>375</sup> In great disappointment, they were compelled to work only on the Ahidjo proposed draft instead of making known their constitutional proposals arrived at in Bamenda.

Though they were accorded more time to go through the Ahidjo draft, it was still difficult and even impossible for them to have a clear understanding of the draft thus their contribution to the constitutional draft was minimal. All proposals for amendments which could give some autonomy to the federated states were all kept in the transitional disposition. In concrete terms the only contribution of Southern Cameroons to the draft Federal constitution was the clause on president being elected by the electorate throughout the nation and not by the national assembly.<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>375</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.122.

<sup>376</sup> Aka, *Southern Cameroons*, p. 264.

In the final analyses Federalism promised to the Southern Cameroons was not the same Federalism that was produced in Fouban. In actual fact Federalism was supposed to put an end to all the autonomy crisis within the Southern Cameroons and effectively lay to rest the Anti-annexationist ideology. Unfortunately the federalism obtained at Fouban rather strengthened and kept Anti-Annexationism very much alive. Though this Federalism did not quell down completely the Anti-annexation spirit, it contributed a great deal to provide legal instruments to control and press for equality and social justice for the people of Southern Cameroon within the Federal institution until 1972 when it was abrogated. Thus Federalism as a political idea shaped politics in Cameroon and influenced militancy throughout the post plebiscite Era.

## **II. Federatics And Federalism: The Political Divide In Post-Independence Politics**

The consolidation of the Federal Republic of Cameroon with new state institutions in 1961 marked a great turning point in the political history of Cameroon. In effect, on the 1st October 1961, a new Republic was born, and the birth of this new Republic was to bring forth new challenges, new power relations as well as new struggles in the race for power. One of these happens to be the clash of Federatics<sup>377</sup> and Federalism; that is, absolute centralisation and autonomy. Perceiving the eminent collapse of central power in the hands of autonomous states, Ahidjo who had masterminded the adoption of a centralised Federation at Fouban feared an eventual loss of influence of his party (UC) within the Federal system where states politics was to have influence on Federal politics. To avoid this, an arsenal of centralised political reforms (Federatics) were crafted and enforced to suppress Federalism. These strategic reforms which aimed at controlling the autonomy of Federated states of East and West Cameroon, had serious bearing on the conduct and practice of politics and militancy in the Federal Republic of Cameroon. Besides conditioning political participation and militancy, it institutionalised Neo-patrimonialism through the dictate of the ruling party. Therefore, where the quest for autonomy and power prevails there will be an automatic clash with Federatics which in turn sets the pace for political completion and militancy.

### **i. The Pre-Eminence of the UC Party and Political competition in East Cameroon**

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<sup>377</sup> \*Federatics refers to the deliberate coining of political reforms and strategies to down play the federal essence which is the autonomy of federated states. Such tactics and policies often produces hyper centralisation within federalism hence institutionalising autocracy in the guise of Federalism.

Having attained independence for French Cameroon in 1960, and effectively pulled all political dividends in its favour, the *Union Camerounaise* (UC) in all certainty could boast of having firm grip and domination over the territory. Unfortunately, this consolidated domination could only last for one year, since the coming of the year 1961 opened new perspectives in power- relations and politics in *Cameroun*. These new perspectives in politics and power relation were principally produced and orchestrated by the birth of the Federal Republic of Cameroon on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1961. This new Republic in its structure and institutional framework or configuration raised new political stakes and aspirations in the practice of politics in East Cameroon.

While the weakened and dominated opposition political parties in East Cameroon saw the birth of the Federal system as an opportunity to reposition themselves, enter new alliances and Overturn the UC domination, Ahidjo and the UC on their part remained very much preoccupied with the challenge of imposing and sustaining their influence and supremacy over the Federal system. To this effect, two political tendencies immediately surfaced in East Cameroon politics;

The first tendency led by the opposition exhibited what Charles Hamilton commonly termed “Politics of Liberation”<sup>378</sup> while the second tendency led by Ahidjo and the UC party exhibited the “Politics of domination” which we have termed “Pre-eminence politics”<sup>379</sup>. From these two tendencies emerged the clash of Federatics versus Federalism which was to constitute the core of politics in East Cameroon and the Federal Republic at large.

The state of East Cameroon by 1961 it should be noted was politically divided into two fronts we had the Northern Front and the Southern Front while the Northern front was the political strong hold of Ahidjo, dominated by the UC Party, the Southern Front was the base of the all the mainline opposition parties in East Cameroon. This political divide in East Cameroon institutionalised a permanent struggle for power between the North and the South in a general context of UC Northern majority and supremacy which affected national unity negatively.

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<sup>378</sup> Politics of liberation is politics that emphasises on the coining and adoption of strong, concrete and courageous measures or policies to roll back domination and total subjugation which if neglected may simply lead to complete extinction of the dominated people. This in effect was politics advocated for by the Black Power Movements in America to roll back the annihilating effects of White domination and racism which put black lives in the United States of America in total peril. See, **Kwame Ture & Charles Hamilton**, *Black Power: The Politics Of Liberation*, Vintage Books, New York, 1992. By extension, this same strategy became the only resort of political parties in East Cameroon who trapped in the crushing UC domination spiral had to struggle for political liberation and survival to avoid political extinction and annihilation.

<sup>379</sup> Pre-eminence politics here would simply mean the practice or institutionalisation of a politics of constant domination through perpetual influence, Power and supremacy.

Convinced of the fact that state authority and power cannot be effectively exercised in a politically divided nation, Ahidjo had to activate his obsession for national unity, and this could only be safeguarded or achieved by a strong central authority and party which could be no other than the UC party. The UC party was therefore elevated above all other parties as the Party-State thus imposing its pre-eminence throughout East Cameroon and the Federal Republic at large. To effectively push through this policy of the party-state, Ahidjo proceeded first by launching the campaign for the creation of the Grand National party. This idea which he had already conceived and shared in the Garoua UC congress of 25<sup>th</sup> September 1960<sup>380</sup> was to effectively go operational in 1961 as the period appeared very much ideal as it would help him to safeguard and impose centralisation in Federalism.

This scheme was a well calculated plan to silence the North-South divide in East Cameroon which was becoming a big threat to national unity and most especially to the power and authority of Ahidjo. To therefore enforce the policy of the state-party Ahidjo institutionalised a Clientelist and opportunistic kind of politics in East Cameroon through which he seduced militants of the Southern Opposition by opening spheres for them in government through very important and strategic posts of responsibility within the Federal institutions and the UC party. This did not only provoke internal dysfunctions and dissensions within the opposition parties in the South, it as well provoked resignations and eventual crossing of carpets by several militants of the opposition parties to eventually adhere to the State-party ideology of the UC.

This therefore contributed greatly in facilitating the realisation of Ahidjo's scheme of making the UC party the only prominent and powerful party in the entire East Cameroon and Federal Republic. To show their strong attachment to the UC ideals the many opposition militants who had crossed over to the UC party pledged their support to the Grand National Party project of Ahidjo. This cross-carpet parade by opposition militants into the UC started within the UPC legal wing who in their 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress held in Yaoundé in January 1962 declared through the voice of Emah Otu that UPC delegates at congress should adhere to the Grand National party project of Ahidjo.<sup>381</sup> Consequence of this was the flow of many more opposition militants into the UC party a good example was the case of Mbandja Malengue and Bebey Eyidi former UPC militants who had just created their own party the *Parti Nationale Travailist Camerounais* decided to adhere to the seduction of Ahidjo by joining the UC party in May

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<sup>380</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.115.

<sup>381</sup> ANY, "Discours Emah OTU" Press Du Cameroun / No. 3520. /Jan.1962.

1962.<sup>382</sup> Not long, other opposition parties like the *Democrates Camerounais* followed the same steps taken by the UPC legal wing by crossing over to the UC. This was the case of Henri Effa and G. Atangana who all abandoned the DC of Mbida to join the UC of Ahidjo.<sup>383</sup>

Like a consuming fire, the Ahidjo Seduction continuously broke through the doors of many opposition parties of the South as was the case this time with the *Parti Socialist* of R. G. Okala, who publicly announced the total switch over of his party to the UC. This action of Okala Influenced his militants all over the country to also join the UC, this was the case with Paul Monthe, Doumbe Boeger, Zacharie Amoubou, Moffi Maurice Schmidt, Ekane Jacque and Goeth noel all in the Littoral. We equally have the case of Kameni Dominic, Noubizie Louis, Tchaphchet and Edouard in the Mungo as well as that of Tenawa Emmanuel, Siewe Andre, and Nitcheu Paul in the Upper Nkam.<sup>384</sup>

As if this was not enough, the administrative secretary of PSC Paul Pandahou who had also crossed carpet called on all militants who had joint the PSC because of him to also quit and adhere to the UC party.<sup>385</sup> In the same continuum the *Rassemblement des paysan Camerounais RASPAC* through the voice of its leaders Gaston Ahanda and Etienne Roger Ahanda Publicly declared the dissolution of their party and their total adherence to the UC party.<sup>386</sup> As this trend became the order of the day, tribal associations as well as traditional rulers did not remain indifferent. Seduced by Ahidjo's Clientelism manifested in his power broking tactics<sup>387</sup> traditional rulers went ahead to also declare their adherence to the UC. This was the case with the paramount king of the Diedo traditional council King Ekwalla Esaaka Diedo who called on all his subjects to join the UC party<sup>388</sup>.

The same action was taken in Dschang by the "Lepite Tribal Association"<sup>389</sup>. In a knot shell, all this is to show that the UC of Ahidjo had become that Party to which every person who wanted to enjoy freedom and become prominent or grab an opportunity in government administration had to do all it took to identify with it. Thus with this idea well established in the mind of Cameroonians and most especially the political class of East Cameroon the UC which was a predominantly Northern party was successfully transformed into a State-party and

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<sup>382</sup> ANY, Press Du Cameroun / No. 3615. /May.1962.

<sup>383</sup> ANY, Press Du Cameroun / No. 3597. /1962.

<sup>384</sup> ANY, Press Du Cameroun / No. 3618. /1962.

<sup>385</sup> ANY, Press Du Cameroun / No. 3621. /1962.

<sup>386</sup> ANY, Press Du Cameroun / No. 3625. /1962.

<sup>387</sup> Interview with Abel Ndeh, erstwhile Government Delegate Bamenda city Council, Bamenda 9<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

<sup>388</sup> ANY, Press Du Cameroun / No. 3613. /1962.

<sup>389</sup> ANY, Press Du Cameroun / No. 3625. /1962.

imposed on the Southern opposition hence institutionalising the Pre-eminence of Ahmadou Ahidjo and his UC party in the politics of the Federal state of East Cameroon and the Federal Republic as a whole.

It should be noted that the massive adherence of the Southern opposition to Ahidjo's program was not just because of political position and opportunity but largely because of fear of stigmatisation, exclusion and repression which the Ahidjo regime made good use to lure and compel many more opposition leaders to adhere to the UC. This strategy of Ahidjo greatly blindfolded the Southern opposition who out of seduction or compulsion joined the UC with the hope of existing politically while securing very influential political space within the UC. Unfortunately this could not be achieved as Ahidjo himself had already declared in November 11, 1961 that the idea of Grand National Party had evolved to something new which he called the Grand Unified National Party.<sup>390</sup> The aim of this new concept as stated by Ahidjo was first to unify all political parties under a common programme and of course to create an appropriate platform within the party for effective reconciliation, democracy, and freedom of thought among Cameroonians.<sup>391</sup>

Realising the danger imbedded within this new concept of the Grand Unified National Party which preconized the complete political death and disappearance of the opposition, some courageous opposition leaders in their quest to be free and to exist politically, decided to stand against the Grand Unified National Party concept. These leaders were; Mayi Matip, of the Legal UPC, A. M. Mbida of DC, Bebey Eyidi of the PNTC and R. G. Okala of the PSC. Likening the Grand Unified National Party concept to a tacit move taken by Ahidjo towards the institutionalisation of a one-party state, this new opposition saw in the concept a great danger to democracy and freedom. Thus the new opposition therefore decided to work in synergy by putting in place a common platform for joint action on the 16<sup>TH</sup> June 1962 called *Front Nationale Unifié*. This opposition platform published on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1962 a manifesto against the UC and the Grand Unified National party Project. Through this they projected themselves as the new opposition and the voice of defenceless Southern front which had been completely subjugated and wrapped up in the Northern UC hegemony<sup>392</sup>.

Coming to realise that these political leaders had openly challenged his political agenda, Ahidjo had no other option than to have all of them arrested. For with Ahidjo, where

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<sup>390</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.128.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid*, p. 130.



political tactics failed, Power could not fail. This became very clear to all political contenders in East Cameroon at the time as it was made known to all that “he that is not with the UC is against Ahidjo” hence should be ready for the worst experience. With this, Ahidjo officially rendered any form of opposition to the UC as tantamount to subversion thus the party had become the State and the State had become the party. All this worked in the favour of Ahidjo who had successfully institutionalised centralisation in the Federal state of East Cameroon with the UC party as the lone political party with absolute pre-eminence over the federated state and federal politics as a whole.

## ii. West Cameroon Politics in the Trappings of Federalism and Federatics

Re-baptised as West Cameroon on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 1961<sup>393</sup>, the former British Southern Cameroons which had voted in the UN plebiscite of February 1961 totalising 233,571 votes as against 97,741<sup>394</sup> in favour of reunification, became the centre of post reunification politics in Cameroon. This territory was indeed opening a new chapter in its history and political evolution as it officially made its first steps as a free nation within the reunified Kamerun. This freedom which was successfully secured and guaranteed in Federalism, suddenly became threatened by Ahidjo’s Federatics as observed in administrative reforms and the policy of national unity which had already gained steam in French Cameroon now called the State of East Cameroon, hence resuscitating the perfidious relationship that characterised the Republic of Cameroon and British Southern Cameroons throughout pre-reunification politics.

Having gained full autonomy as a state within the Federal Republic of Cameroon, West Cameroon as an entity of the reunified Cameroon still remained very cautious in its dealings with the Federal government all in abet to jealously preserve freedom and autonomy it had always aspired for. But unfortunately Ahidjo’s reforms aimed at strengthening central authority through national unity and integration left West Cameroon in an impasse, hence provoking a merciless struggle between Centralisation and Autonomy. This struggle marked the beginning of turbulent years that were to greatly shape politics and militancy in the Federal Republic of Cameroon. The struggle as mentioned above or better still, the practice and conduct of politics in West Cameroon from 1961-1972 was greatly determined by two factors; on one hand we had the **Federal Scare** exhibited by Ahidjo and on the other hand was **Political Mistrust** among the West Cameroon political Elite.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> See Decree N° 61-DF-15 of 20 October 1961

<sup>394</sup> See UN Doc. T/1556, Report of UN commission for the supervision of plebiscite in the Southern and Northern parts of the trust territory Cameroon under UK administration April, 3, 1961, p.140.

<sup>395</sup> See Ndi, Southern West Cameroons Revisited, p,

### **Ahidjo and the Federal Scare in West Cameroon Politics, 1961-1966**

Ahidjo, in his cravings for reunification all along the years 1960 and 1961 as earlier mentioned, was not going in for this reunification as an end in itself but rather a means to an end. Since his major end or objective was to consolidate power and have a strong political influence over the reunified Cameroons. He therefore did everything to secure a Federal deal with heavy centralisation (Federatics) which was to preserve his supremacy over the Federal Republic of Cameroon and most especially on the state of West Cameroon within which prospered a strong movement of anti-annexationists and autonomist ideologies<sup>396</sup>. Thus the continuous machination, manipulation and gradual suppression of the centralised federation already gained at Foumban by Ahidjo could only depict one thing and this is what we have termed the Federal Scare. The Federal scare in West Cameroon was sustained by two phenomenon: The fear of the possible triumph of the autonomist movement in West Cameroon over the Federal government and the fear of a possible political alliance between leading West Cameroon political parties and the Southern parties of East Cameroon. These two principal fears that continuously haunted Ahidjo and his central administration lured him into the machination and manipulation of the Federal constitution as well as the introduction of new reforms or policies which had just one objective which was to downplay the Federal system and uphold Jacobinism<sup>397</sup>.

To materialise this, Ahidjo began by introducing decree No. 61-DF-15 of Dec. 20, 1961<sup>398</sup> which divided the two state Federal Republic into 6 administrative units placed under the heavy control and supervision of Federal inspectors. The state of west Cameroon which was a little bit comforted with the Federalism obtained at Foumban only came to realise later that even the little autonomy they had gained was taken back and given to the Federal inspector whose authority was not distinguished from that of the Prime minister and who even acted in defiance of the authority of the Prime minister as he could report directly to the president without the consent of the Prime minister<sup>399</sup>. By this arrangement, Ahidjo had successfully

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<sup>396</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>397</sup> This is a political doctrine or ideology that upholds a strong and centralised government power. It first emerged in France during the 1789 Revolution as a revolutionary movement renowned for its left wing revolutionary politics characterised by the reign of terror and extreme measures.

<sup>398</sup> Ebune, "The Dilemma of the Federal System in West Cameroon, 1961-1972", *Journal of scientific research and studies* Vol. 3 No. 7, July, 2016 pp.133-139.

<sup>399</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, p.133.

transformed the state of West Cameroon into one of the 6 administrative regions with Jean Claude Ngoh as the Federal inspector for West Cameroon.

As inspector General for West Cameroon appointed by Ahidjo, Jean Claude Ngoh had absolute control over all administrative units in West Cameroon. In fact he was the personal representative of the president of the Federal Republic within the state of West Cameroon who had an authoritative eye on all administrative, economic and political affairs of the state of West Cameroon. Exercising his authority with absolute power invested on him by Ahidjo, J. C. Ngoh indulged into great excesses and abuse of power. An incident is even reported of him badging unannounced into the radio broadcasting studios of Radio Buea just because he heard the name of EML Endeley mentioned in a programme he didn't even border to know but was so swift to charge the presenter Wilfred Nkwenti of supporting the opposition.<sup>400</sup> Added to this, the police and the French elite force *Gendarmerie* were at his disposal. This reputed brutal<sup>401</sup> paramilitary corps that acted in extreme savagery and in total violation of fundamental human rights became an appropriate instrument of terror in the hands of Inspector J.C. Ngoh which he effectively used to exhibit the supremacy of Central authority over Federal authority This heavy concentration of power in the hands of Inspector Ngoh had one principal aim which was to subdue and suppress the politico-administrative autonomy of the PM. of West Cameroon hence alleviate or eradicate the Federal scare which remained a strong obstacle to the full exercise of power by Ahidjo over the entire Federal Republic of Cameroon.

Equally Ahidjo's fear about Federalism are clearly portrayed in November 11<sup>th</sup> 1961 just a month after the enactment of the Federal constitution as on this day in a press statement he officially modified the Grand National Party idea earlier evoked in the Maroua congress<sup>402</sup> to evoke a new concept he called *le Grand Parti National Unifié* in his own words Ahidjo said

*Je souhaite, personnellement, un Grand Parti National Unifié pour mobiliser les bonnes volontés sinon toutes les énergies...réconcilier l'efficacité avec la démocratie et la liberté de pensée*<sup>403</sup>

Behind this new policy evoked by Ahidjo was hidden an envisaged rapid step towards the elimination of political competition and institutionalise a unique party system or a one party

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<sup>400</sup> *Ibid*, p.136.

<sup>401</sup> See Justice Nyo Wakai, *Under the Broken Scale of Justice: The Law and My Times*, Langaa Research and Publishing CIG, Bamenda, 2009, pp.22-24.

<sup>402</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, pp. 115-116

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid*, p.128.

state. This sudden change of policy just immediately after the putting in place of the Federal system was indicative of the great scare Ahidjo and his government developed for Federalism. Thus the review of Ahidjo's policy of a Grand National Party evoked at the Maroua UC Congress of 26 September 1960 to adopt the Grand Unified National Party just immediately after the putting in place of the Federal constitution is a clear proof that the Federal scare had become a night mare for Ahidjo. The justification of the scare this time around was based on nothing else than the fear of a possible rapprochement between the political leaders of East Cameroon with those of West Cameroon to eventually override the UC majority in the Federal assembly and thus put an end to Ahidjo's reign and power in the Federal Republic of Cameroon. This was evidently perceived in the joy earlier manifested by East Cameroon opposition leaders who welcomed the loss of British Northern Cameroons to Nigeria and accepted Reunification with Southern/West Cameroons as a political advantage for the Southern (*Sud Cameroun*) opposition for whom the Federal system that followed reunification would provide opportunity for coalition. Observers of the political landscape of Cameroon at the time had this same analysis of the situation saying;

*Les leaders de l'opposition ne sont pas autrement fâchés de ce qu'il tiennent pour un échec de Ahidjo et Union Camerounaise; la plupart notamment Kemadjou Daniel et Soppo Priso fondent de gros espoirs sur des future élections fédérales..*<sup>404</sup>

It was therefore for the purpose of preventing and counteracting any such coalition between the *Sud Cameroun* opposition and West Cameroon political leaders that Ahidjo as soon as he concluded the federal deal, still went further to emit reforms that contradict in every sense the notion of Federalism. For fear that federalism would cause his political death, Ahidjo intensified the campaign for the putting in place of the Grand Unified National Party which would discard all oppositions and consolidate a single national party.

### **Division and Mistrust in West Cameroon Politics**

Trapped in the struggle to defend Autonomy in an environment succumbing to the ever increasing influence of Ahidjo and his centralised Federal administration West Cameroon became a political playground for Ahidjo and a major stake in the tussle of Federalism and Federatics in the Federal Republic of Cameroon. Like in 1960 just after having been elected at

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<sup>404</sup> See, SHART 6H 259, *dossier de l'évolution de la situation au Cameroun, moi d'avril 1961*, cited in Abwa, *Cameroun Histoire d'un Nationalisme...*p.379.

the helm of the state of the Republic of Cameroon as its first president, Ahidjo asked himself this question; “*Maintenant que nous avons le pouvoir, qu’allons-nous en faire?*”<sup>405</sup> The answer to this question as formulated by Pierre Marchand<sup>406</sup> in 1960 who said; “*Transformer le Cameroun en un Etat. La nation suivra...*” remained relevant throughout the political career of Ahidjo, it was for him a political dictum and even an obsession.

Determined therefore to uphold this political dictum even within the framework of a Federal Cameroon Republic, Ahidjo after having tried with little success to render insignificant, the autonomy of the state of West Cameroon by imposing on it, his federal inspector, he finally settled for a new approach which was the materialisation of national Unity through his Unified Grand National Party. Thus to Ahidjo the journey towards what he called *Un Etat* (a single state) was to be facilitated and accelerated by the putting in place of a unique party . The injection of this idea of a single party in West Cameroon greatly stirred up confusion division and mistrust within the West Cameroon political class which went a long way to give room for Federatics to prevail over Federalism hence bringing about the end of pluralist democracy in 1966 and the complete death of Federalism in 1972.

The clash of Federalism with Federatics in West Cameroon was greatly given exposure by the campaign for national unity vehiculated by Ahidjo through the Unified Grand National party. Using a gradual and systematic approach, Ahidjo exploited the political dichotomy that existed between the CPNC and the KNDP in West Cameroon to achieve his goal of institutionalising a single party for a single and United Republic of Cameroon. The CPNC, coming out of the 1961 plebiscite greatly weakened and having failed in its attempt to negotiate an alliance with KNDP<sup>407</sup>, decided to indulge in the politics of victimisation crying foul on all KNDP policies and accusing the latter of political discrimination, tribalism and failed politics. Willard Johnson clearly paints this picture of a victimised CPNC when he says;

There were perceptions of discrimination in the appointment and promotion of civil servants according to tribal or former party affiliation. It was widely believed among people of the forest areas that they were disadvantaged during the Foncha administration particularly if they had any history of association with opposition party members. Occasionally people were dismissed from their post seemingly arbitrarily on the basis of rumours of support to the opposition or its affiliates.<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>405</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.111.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137.

<sup>408</sup> See A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon revisited Vol.II* ,p. 146, See also Sylvester Ngemasong, “crisis within the KNDP 1959-1966: an Historical Analysis” MA. University of Buea, 2004. and, Mbile, *Cameroon political story: Memories of an authentic eye witness*, pressprint, limb nd, p.190.

As if this was not enough, the CPNC just after coming out of the December 1961 elections in which the KNDP swept more than two thirds of the seats of the house of assembly, experienced a heart breaking phenomenon within its party. Of the nine seats they struggled to obtain from the said elections, four of their parliamentarians crossed the carpets into the KNDP reducing the CPNC seats to just five in a thirty-seven man assembly. Greatly saddened by the crossing of the carpets by SE Ncha, J. Nsame, Ajebe Sone and E.E.Ngone, Mbile who was still waving high the flag of the CPNC simply qualified these parliamentarians as “legislators of low moral”<sup>409</sup> and to justify his claim he concluded that Southern Cameroonians were not yet ready for Multi-party politics as he stated

Thinkers in the CPNC therefore came to the conclusion that the average Southern Cameroonian was either not ripe for multiparty politics or that he was too materialistic and wayward in character to withstand the strains and stresses that are part and parcel of multiparty politics ... The point seemed clear, if Cameroonians could not bravely face whatever results a political cause brought to them, if they wanted to always be on the winning side then party politics seemed out of place for them.<sup>410</sup>

The above assessment of Mbile is further corroborated by the chairman of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) who simply qualifies such politicians as immature and impatient politicians driven by the cravings of the stomach or what he calls *belletics*<sup>411</sup> After making the above observation and remarks, the CPNC therefore resolved to cast all its chances of survival in Ahidjo’s idea of a national party. It was in this perspective therefore that Endeley leader of the CPNC decided to approach Ahidjo for an eventual CPNC integration within the UC<sup>412</sup> Thus, setting the pace for the putting in place of the single national party. Aware of the political risk involved in such venture, Ahidjo simply turned down the request of Endeley. Though the UC was fine-tuning strategies to create a one party system in Cameroon it could not start the process in West Cameroon with a weak and dyeing CPNC, attempting this would mean political miscalculation as it would automatically open doors to a KNDP coalition with East Cameroon’s opposition of the South which in the end may frustrate all efforts put in so far to gradually bring about the end of Federalism and erect a strong centralised united republic with just one political party. On the contrary, Ahidjo rather solidified links with KNDP by creating in April 1962 a joint UC-KNDP<sup>413</sup> parliamentary group in the Federal Assembly. All this was but a political

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<sup>409</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, p. 184

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>411</sup> Interview with J. Fru Ndi, Chairman of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) party, Yaoundé, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

<sup>412</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.130.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*

tactics to gain time and gradually penetrate the leadership of the KNDP party so as to set division therein, render cohesion impossible and hence bring about a rapid adherence to the single party as the best way out.

The first step towards this gradual disintegration of the KNDP by Ahidjo was his vehement refusal to initiate reform in the working relation of the UC and KNDP Unity group. Relegated to the background and largely marginalised within the Federal Assembly, the KNDP while presenting its memorandum in a closed door UC-KNDP meeting, Fonlon as KNDP spokesman made it clear to Ahidjo that **“since their coming together, the KNDP had hardly done more than stand by and look on.”**<sup>414</sup> In line with this, Fonlon therefore proposed six areas of reforms within the UC-KNDP government policy with the target being the institution of equality between the UC and KNDP. The outright rejection of the proposed KNDP reforms by Mousa yaya<sup>415</sup> secretary general of the UC went a long way to deepen the West Cameroon and KNDP frustrations within the Federal system.

Coming out of the closed door meeting in September, the KNDP leaders immediately assembled in November 1964 in Kumba for the 10<sup>th</sup> KNDP convention. It was in effect here that the frustrations accumulated within the party finally gave way to political mistrust and division among its militants prior to the 1965 elections. Within the party, some militants (Autonomist) started accusing others (Federal ministers) of being Enablers, collaborating with Ahidjo to suppress the autonomy of West Cameroon. While in Kumba a clash broke out between the diehard autonomist and the federal ministers of the KNDP. An attempt by diehard autonomist to impose the will of the WCHA over presidential discretion met with stiff resistance from the Federal ministers of the KNDP who because of their proximity with Yaoundé and Ahidjo stood in opposition to all amendments proposed at the convention that could strengthen the position of the WCHA.

To these Federalist, accepting the KNDP constitutional amendment<sup>416</sup> which stipulated that the holder of the party post next to Foncha was to be the party nominee for the post of Prime Minister implied that they who had not been privileged to hold such post in the party cannot become Prime minister. It was therefore because of the need to benefit the privilege of being nominee to the post of prime minister that S.T. Muna, E.T. Egbe and others opposed

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<sup>414</sup> Ndi, *Southern/West Cameroons Revisited*, Vol. II, p.148.

<sup>415</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.140.

<sup>416</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon political story*, p.194.

the candidacy of A.N. Jua in the party elections and even went as far as not accepting the defeat of Muna at the end of the party elections.

The suspicion and division that followed these elections brought about conflict within the KNDP causing the dismissal of Muna, Egbe and all their supporters from the party<sup>417</sup>. As these ten dismissed militants left the party to create the CUC<sup>418</sup>, it became clear that Ahidjo had succeeded his plan of dividing West Cameroon and of course breaking the strong influence of the KNDP that had started questioning the Policies (Federalitics) he was imposing on the territory. The emergence of the CUC to add to the existing CPNC and KNDP brought the number of parties in West Cameroon to three, thus opening the doors for greater UC and Ahidjo influence in the territory. As many KNDP militants by 1965 had left the party to join the CUC, the KNDP majority in WCHA was greatly reduced forcing Jua to negotiate a coalition with the CPNC<sup>419</sup>.

It had become clear to everyone at the time that Ahidjo, not only had he dropped Foncha he equally isolated him from both sides of the divide within the KNDP. In fact Foncha had lost total control over the KNDP which was now greatly shattered, mortified and weakened. After several moves taken by Hon. Jua to revive the party by coalescing with the CPNC so as to put the CUC in minority and continuously influencing politics in West Cameroon, the immediate dissolution of CUC into the UC to form the CNU ended up placing the KNDP in great difficulty. Thus the KNDP which had continuously resisted Ahidjo's one party proposal to uphold greater democratisation through an autonomous West Cameroon saw itself trapped in a tied corner as all was now clear that Ahidjo had successfully used the CUC to eventually do away with Foncha, the KNDP influence and Federalism as a whole. Left with no other political option, the KNDP and the CPNC followed the example of the CUC by fusing into the UC to form the One Party CNU in September 1966. In his reflections SENDZE<sup>420</sup> a political actor of the time states clearly that the dissolution of the KNDP into the CNU contrary to other opinions, was never voluntary. It was rather the product of a political circumstance imposed on it by Ahidjo and the CUC.

It was when Jua and Fonlon saw Ahidjo's plan to use the CUC as a surrogate to stand elections with him as an ally and renounce his understanding with the KNDP

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<sup>417</sup> *Ibid*, p.196.

<sup>418</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p. 140

<sup>419</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon political story*, p.196.

<sup>420</sup> See Sendze, *My Reflections*, cited in A. Ndi, *SouthernWest Cameroon Revisited*, Vol. II, p.153



that they advised Foncha to succumb to the one-party scheme. The divide and rule tactics of Ahidjo to break the KNDP resistance had once more succeeded.<sup>421</sup>

The successful emergence of the CNU as the lone political party in West/East Cameroon, marked not only the complete end of pluralist democracy in Cameroon, it also implied the victory of Ahidjo's Federatics over Federalism as the CNU became all embracing, centralising every fabric of the society within its fold to the only exception of religious bodies. In effect the CNU was an all-inclusive party displaying all the outward trappings of pluralism and plurality but in essence was the one and lone voice echoing above all institutions and even substituted the state. In his own words, Levine adds that;

The CNU, despite its pretensions to be a truly national party, failed to become a genuine mass party with power emanating from the people. Instead, the party appears to have become a secondary auxiliary of the state, its cadres behaving more like government agents and civil servants.<sup>422</sup>

All this goes to attest that the clarion call for unity and a unique party made by Ahidjo all through the years 1962-66 was nothing but a political scheme to materialise his obsession for a centralised Jacobinist form of the state where his authority prevailed over every institution. Since Federalism was greatly incompatible with this form of the state Ahidjo had to play with time using a gradualist approach whereby he successively subverted all federal laws with Federatics hence imposing the CNU in 1966 through which he finally realised his dream reigning as monarch over Cameroon.

### **iii. The birth of CNU: The death of Federalism and Pluralist Democracy in Cameroon**

When all had been set for the Grand National Unified party (CNU) to ascend the political scene of Cameroon, two important ideologies continuously imposed themselves as obstacles to Ahidjo's Resolve of transforming Cameroon into a one and united republic. These ideologies were Anti-Annexationism and Anti-Imperialism propagated by the diehard KNDP autonomist in West Cameroon and the Exile UPC wing in East Cameroon respectively. Determined therefore to put an end to political contradiction and raise among Cameroonians a national idea which to N. N. Mbile was a panacea to the "**bitter and painful experience of the pangs and futility of party-politics**"<sup>423</sup> Ahidjo went ahead to impose constitutional adjustments in West Cameroon and intensified crack down measures in East Cameroon which

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<sup>421</sup> See. Ndi, *Southern/West Cameroon Revisited*, Vol.II, p.153.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid*, p.155.

<sup>423</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon political story*, Pp.255&256. (Emphasis mine).

all together convinced the national political opinion that the CNU and Ahidjo had risen far above the state. Thus existence in the Federal Republic of Cameroon was only possible within the CNU, which became the lone and unique platform for political interaction. The outcome of this was the final abrogation of federalism and the complete death of pluralist democracy in Cameroon.

The first step taken by Ahidjo to abrogate federalism and End Pluralist democracy immediately after putting in place of the CNU, was his muscular intervention into the WCHA elections of December 1967. Unlike before the house was compelled to forward a unique CNU list of 37 Candidates, which to Mbile spared the candidates of the painful cost, bitterness and discord that usually accompanied pluralist elections in West Cameroon. As he puts it;

Those seeking elective office either won or lost without the painful cost, bitterness and discord to the community that had been our earlier experience. Candidates either won or lost without ruining themselves financially as hitherto campaigns for the party list turned out to be rallies of joyful Cameroonians who listened to speeches all directed at the unity of the nation rather than of the bitter polemics of the earlier days.<sup>424</sup>

Surprisingly of the 37sits in the WCHA, 31 sits were given to the diehard autonomist while only 6 were attributed to the moderate federalist or ex- CUC militants. Frightened by the ambition of the Autonomist to control power and continuously influence the course of politics in west Cameroon, Ahidjo decided to Appoint Muna as Prime Minister in 1968 to replace Jua even when he saw clearly that the Jua camp held the majority of sits in the assembly.<sup>425</sup> The reason behind this choice of Ahidjo was one built on the need to have West Cameroon very much inclined and dependent on the East. And this was attained as Mbile himself did mention; **“the new regime (Muna) leaned heavily eastward”**.<sup>426</sup> Coming to the realisation that the easiest way to abrogate federalism was to start by neutralising the anti-annexationist (Autonomist), Ahidjo, during the First CNU Congress of Garoua march 1969 decided to integrate within the political bureau of the CNU, Key militants of the autonomist ideology in the likes of Foncha, Fonlon, Jua and Endeley with Foncha occupying the post of First Vice President of the CNU. This means of neutralising the autonomist which was instead considered by many as their consolation for losing power in West Cameroon was made worst in 1970 when the post of Vice president of the Federal Republic was taken from Foncha and Given to S. T.

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<sup>424</sup> *Ibid*, p.256.

<sup>425</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.155.

<sup>426</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon political story*, p.208.

Muna who now doubled as Prime minister of West Cameroon and Vice president of the federal republic<sup>427</sup>

This was done by Ahidjo in gross violation of Article 9(3)<sup>428</sup> of the Federal constitution which had earlier forbidden Foncha from holding the two post. The successful manipulation and adjustment of the Federal constitution to position Muna at the helm of the state of west Cameroon and as vice president of the federal republic, marked the complete neutralisation of the anti-annexationist (Autonomist), hence cleared the political scene of a very great obstacle which therefore permitted Ahidjo to hit the final nail on federalism by convening an extraordinary parliamentary session on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 1972 in which a referendum is announced for the 20<sup>th</sup> May 1972 where Cameroonians had to decide by Yes or No for the immediate institution of the Unitary state. Since all form of political contradiction had been silent within the CNU and even the stubborn Autonomist ideology now quarantine, “the pacific revolution” smoothly took its course uncontested with a score of 3 177 846 for “YES” to Unitary State against 176 “NO”<sup>429</sup>. Thus marking the complete death of federalism in Cameroon.

The end of federalism in 1972, it should be noted, became the sledge hammer which Ahidjo used to drive the final nail into the coffin of pluralist democracy. Having completely silent the opposition in East Cameroon and even went further to launch a heavy crack down on UPC rebellion which saw the final capture and execution of its last leader on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 1971<sup>430</sup>, the only remaining obstacle to Ahidjo’s authority was the state of West Cameroon. Thus with the abrogation of federalism in 1972, all power and authority had been seized centralised and handed to Ahidjo. Ahidjo henceforth fully affirmed his authority over the entire United Republic of Cameroon. In fact he incarnated the state and all its institutions. He punished with severe cruelty all who nursed ideas of opposition and even went as far putting in place a secret police that instilled fear and terror in the minds of Cameroonians. All this greatly contradicted the initial justification he had given for the putting in place of a unified party and a unitary state which he said “would consolidate democracy and freedom of thought”<sup>431</sup>. Rather the birth of the unitary state greatly curtailed freedom, suppressed and killed pluralist democracy hence favoured the rise of a Presidentialist kind of democracy dictated from, top and

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<sup>427</sup> Ndi, *Southern/West Cameroon Revisited*, p.156.

<sup>428</sup> See Article 9 (3) of the federal constitution of the federal republic of Cameroon

<sup>429</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.165.

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid*, p.161.

<sup>431</sup> *Ibid*, p.128.

unanimously accepted by all the people down without contradiction. This became the new political order established in Cameroon after the abrogation of Federalism. Well fashioned and consolidated by Ahidjo, it was inherited and perpetuated by Paul Biya who like his predecessor invested in repression torture, terror and intimidation to silent every iota political contradiction, hence burying pluralist democracy which had already been killed by Ahidjo since 1966.

## **CONCLUSION.**

Embracing independence with mixed feelings, the political class in both British and French Cameroon remained very sceptical and uncertain about the future of Cameroon. This uncertainty which was nourished by the insufficiencies and excesses in post independent reforms initiated by Ahidjo, rather provoked a wide range of contestations which ended up fomenting contestant and contradictory policies among the dissatisfied opposition thus setting the pace for post-independent politics and militancy. Trapped between the exigencies of Neo-colonialism and the necessity to preserve power, the political contradiction and contestation which emerged in post independent cameroon from the opposition could only cause Ahidjo to put in place extreme measures which not only did they legitimise neo-colonialism, they went as far as jeopardising federalism and instituted unconditional conformism hence curtailing basic freedom and democracy in the territory. Deprived therefore of every form of liberty and sovereignty, politics in Cameroon eventually became a game of survival. Thus from Ahidjo to Biya, politicians and political parties in post-independent Cameroon continuously struggled to survive or exist politically, and this they did by adopting both Conformist and Anti conformist policies/ideologies which they manipulated with great inconsistency all just for the sake of political survival and continuous participation in the country's politics in total freedom.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **POLITICAL COMPETITION AND MILITANCY IN A MULTI-POLAR AND UNI-POLAR POST-INDEPENDENT CAMEROON**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The conduct and practice of politics in Cameroon situates itself within a very long epic that has been structured in three different episodes. For each episode corresponded a significant circumstantial event that greatly shaped and influenced political choice, political behaviour and political action. While the first and second episodes corresponding to the pre-colonial and colonial era were greatly influenced by the struggle for survival and the quest for freedom respectively, the third episode corresponding to Post independent Cameroon was marked by two circumstantial events which were: the Multi-polarisation and Uni-polarisation of political ideologies as basis for state construction and nation building. Within this context of Multi-polarity and Uni-polarity of political ideas emerged political competition animated by a political class whose behaviour, choices and actions became subjected to moral and value judgements at different periods giving rise to the dynamics of militancy. This chapter, while drawing elements from political ethics and theories, political science, anthropology and political psychology in an inter-disciplinary approach, discusses the conduct and practice of politics in a Multi-polarised and Uni-polarised political landscape of post-independent Cameroon. This is done while exposing the dynamics of militancy, hence interrogating their basis as well as the influence these dynamics have produced in the political evolution of Cameroon since 1961.

#### **I. Conditionalities And Considerations Sustaining The Dynamics Of Militancy In Cameroon**

According to Paul Taffinders' theory on political psychology, Politicians or militants of political parties like any other social group that is in a rarefied or tightly knit small community

often suffer from what he calls psychological group thinking.<sup>432</sup> This is behaviour often manifested in group exhibiting or covering three fundamental aspects which are:

- the overestimation of group power and morality
- closed mindedness
- Pressure towards uniformity.

Such behaviour usually produces strong psychological dynamics within the group which makes the politicians practically out of touch that is; firmly rooted in his/ her belief and convictions and generally perceives change as nothing but an illusion. For this reason, such politicians tend to be very reluctant and even adamant in changing their political beliefs or convictions. Evidence of this is the relatively small number of Members of Parliament (MPs) that cross the carpet of the Westminster to join the opposition. Thus, by the basis of this theory as elucidated within the British political landscape, the Dynamics of Militancy as developed in this thesis should become a minimal and even a non-event. Instead, the dynamics of militancy when placed in a global political perspective this theory of Taffinder completely loses its pertinence as contrary to the British experience, in most African countries and in Cameroon in particular frequent and recurrent mass defections and carpet crossings are registered each year and one of the reasons accounting for this phenomenon is the fact that politics in Africa and Cameroon in particular is based less on **Policy** and more on other things like; the provision of resources, (who can bring more money or wealth back to the district) ethnicity, and power<sup>433</sup>.

Under such circumstances there are high chances that politicians will easily influence the masses and change their political viewpoint, the same as the masses can also easily influence the politicians and cause them to change their political views or cross the carpet. Based on the aforementioned, it becomes clear that politics in Africa as was and is still being practiced in Cameroon today, is a function of several and different socio-political variables (resources, wealth, ethnicity, power etc.) instead of a unique and single constant (Policy or ideology). To this effect the Dynamics of militancy in its widest exhibition across Africa and Cameroon in particular prompts us immediately to question the conditionality, basis and considerations that gives it expression within the political landscape of Cameroon.

Among the pertinent issues that give the changing of political view point its widest expression in Cameroon's politics we have;

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<sup>432</sup> A. Martin, "The psychology of Changing Political View point" in *WIRED. CO. UK*, 04, October 2013.

<sup>433</sup> See C. Millazo, cited in "the psychology of changing political view point"

### i. Personality and Personal values

Current research in political psychology has revealed that politics is getting more and more personalised, in fact individual personal characteristics greatly shape, influence and even constitute a benchmark for political choice and militancy. In Wattenberg's<sup>434</sup> opinion, one major reason for this growing tendency is the fact that the electorate in most democracies is getting more concerned with social relations and intimacy. According to Festus Asana<sup>435</sup> personality is a strong determinant of militancy and political support in Cameroon, as political beliefs and convictions are built not on the basis of their pertinence but rather on the basis of the person or personality that incarnates or projects the political belief. As such, preliminary questions like; who is the precursor of this political belief or idea? What are his/her mental dispositions? Where is he/she from? Can he/she understand our plight? Can he/she be trusted? Etc. are questions often posed as prerequisites for political engagement or militancy in Cameroon.

In the opinion of Joseph Espoire Biyong; deputy Mayor for Douala V, Personality in politics is a strong factor around which is often built the concept of political fanaticism.<sup>436</sup> Quoting himself as a good example of a political fanatic he says; his entry into politics was never the function of his adherence to a political party, rather his taste for politics was ignited by the personality of Cabral Libii a young vibrant charismatic and daring young cameroon with excellent oratory skill which he displayed so well on public radio and TV panels. This vibrant young Cameroonian who inspired great hope was the reason for his implication in politics and so he did not hesitate at any point to join in his *movement 11million de citoyen*, when this same personality decided to contest presidential election on the ticket of *Parti Universe* he aligned with him and today that he left the *Parti Univers* for the *Parti Camerounais pour la Reconciliation Nationale* (PCRN) he still didn't think twice but to follow the person he considers himself to be the first Fan.<sup>437</sup>

On these grounds therefore the concept of personality becomes of utmost relevance in explaining and even understanding the Dynamics of Militancy as was displayed in Cameroons'

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<sup>434</sup> See Wattenberg M.P, *The Decline of American Political Parties*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, and 1998 Cited in "personality and politics: Values, traits and political choice." By G. V. Caprara, Shalom Schwartz et al. In *Political Psychology*, Vol. 27 No.1, February 2006, p.1-28.

<sup>435</sup> Interview with Rev. Festus Asana 66years, Moderator Emeritus of the Presbyterian Church Cameroon (PCC), Bamenda,02/03/2015

<sup>436</sup> Interview with Joseph Espoire Biyong, Deputy Mayor for Douala V Council, Bonamousadi, 15/09/2020.

<sup>437</sup> *Idem*.

post-independence politics. Personality according to Carprara G.V. and Cervone<sup>438</sup>, is a set of dynamic and self-regulatory systems that emerge and operate over the life course in the service of personal adaptations. These systems guide affective cognitive and motivational processes directing people towards the achievement of their individual and collective goals. Personality is understood as being composed of traits, needs, motives and self-conceptions that predispose individuals to relatively stable and consistent pattern of political thought and behaviour.<sup>439</sup> In his analyses of personality in relation to political choice, Caprara *et al.*<sup>440</sup> holds that personality engloves two important aspects which are Traits and Values. While traits are enduring dispositions, values are enduring goals. In fact traits describe what people are like; and values refer to what people consider important. As such people will explain behaviour by referring to traits or values but will only refer to values when they want to justify a choice or an action to establish its legitimacy. Thus personal values which are broad goals to which people attribute importance as guiding principles for life, constitute an important and crucial element in the grounding of political ideology. In this light therefore, the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon can find its explanations in Schwartz theory<sup>441</sup> of basic personal values.

According to this theory, there are 10 basic values in the Universal requirements of human condition which are; Power, Achievement, Stimulation, Hedonism, Self-Direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Security and Conformity<sup>442</sup>. For each of these values is a motivational goal that in turn directs peoples' action, for instance people with personal values of self-direction and stimulation will automatically display actions in line with freedom, independence of thought, feelings and are receptive to change. Such people will find it difficult to agree with conservatives that is people with value dispositions that uphold Tradition, conformity and security. In the same way those with personal values that prone self-transcendence that is universalism and benevolence will be predisposed to take actions that promotes equality and the welfare of others. Such people will clash with those projecting personal values of Self-enhancement that is Power and Achievement where by, individual

<sup>438</sup> See Caprara, G.V., Cervone, D., *Personality: Determinants, Dynamics and potentials*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, Cited in "Personality and Politics". p. 3.

<sup>439</sup> C. Stearklé, "Political Psychology" in *International Encyclopaedia of the social and Behavioural Sciences*, second edition Vol. 18, 2015, p. 427-433.

<sup>440</sup> Caprara G. V., Shalom Schwartz et al, "Personality and Politics: Values, Traits and Political choice." In *Political Psychology*, Vol. 27 No.1, February 2006, p.1-28.

<sup>441</sup> See Schwartz, S. H., "Universalism, the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advance and Empirical Test in 20 Countries", in Zanna (Ed.) *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, New York, Academic Press, p.1-65, Cited in Caprara *et al.* "Personality and Politics" p.7.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*



success and dominance over others is encouraged. Lastly we have the double standard personalities, those prone to the personal value of Hedonism who at the same time are encouraging openness, change and freedom while also promoting self-enhancement (power and achievement.)

This theory of Schwartz in effect projects the complexity of personality and personal values who in their distinct predispositions and motivated actions enhance conflicts in politics that usually leads to defections, resignations, and carpet crossings as was the case in Post-independent Cameroon.

With a close examination of the political landscape of Cameroon after independence, in which the key political actors and parties were faced with crucial political choices to make which had serious bearing on the political future of the territory, it is observed that personality and personal values greatly influenced the conduct and practice of politics in the territory hence provoking Dynamics in militancy which became part and parcel of Cameroon politics. For instance, having achieved independence for French Cameroon in 1960, Ahidjo and the UC Party had made the choice of preserving French interest and conforming to the Neo-colonial status-quo. Away from the socio-political stakes of the time this choice could also have been influenced by the mental psychological dispositions of Ahidjo, an aspect which is greatly linked to personality and personal values.

Described as reserved, secretive and commanding great respect<sup>443</sup>, Ahidjo being of Fulani culture and education is not predisposed to values linked with openness (self-direction and stimulation) as his culture and milieu of socialisation could not permit such. Rather this milieu had built a personality with strong conservative dispositions to uphold values of Tradition, Conformity and Security. Pulling a large crowd of supporters and militants from the North who shared these same values, Ahidjo was to unfortunately by 1961 meet strong opposition from not only the South which was prone to openness, but as well from the former Southern Cameroons which was more inclined to values of Equality (Universalism and Benevolence). This in effect was the situation that sparked up personality conflict in Cameroons' politics orchestrating competition that often manifested itself in the dynamics of militancy as was seen within the UC and UPC. The UC and East Cameroon opposition, the CNU and the KNDP, the KNDP and the West Cameroon Opposition. Besides personality and

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<sup>443</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.10.

personal values there was also political ethics which seriously influenced the dynamics of militancy.

## ii. Political Ethics

Going by general opinion polls, many people have loss trust in politics and politicians in general. They now often see politicians as selfish and corrupt power-players defending special interest instead of the common good<sup>444</sup>. Political observers in Cameroon hold that politics as an essential human activity necessary for the building of society and communities has gradually over the years failed to meet the aspirations of the people and as consequence has led to total loss of trust in politics manifested in an ever rising rate of voter apathy throughout the territory. From these observations emerges the question of ethics and politics or better still political ethics.

Defined as the practice of making moral judgements about political action, political ethics can equally be referred to as political morality.<sup>445</sup> It addresses two fundamental aspects in politics which are the ethics of office and the ethics of policy<sup>446</sup>. In the process of making and executing policies, politicians as officials acting on behalf of the citizen, assume certain rights and duties which ordinary citizens do not have and such rights and duties may permit or require the politician to transgress moral principles ( use of force, kill, break promises, tell lies etc.) All this in the eyes of the normal citizens will be judged as wrong and of course qualify politicians as people of “dirty hands”<sup>447</sup>. With all this, it becomes incumbent to question the compatibility of Ethics and Politics.

While sceptics and realists hold that the concepts are incompatible that is; morality has nothing to do with politics or better still that in political matters ethical considerations can but compound problems, worsen processes, derail policies, they are rarely part of the solution<sup>448</sup>, pragmatists and moralists on their part make a strong affirmation of compatibility between politics and Ethics. To this group, politics as an essential and complex human activity, requires a high level of moral responsibility on the part of all actors. Since there is no world tradition that accepts systematic cruelty or justifies impunity, politics should also give value to human

<sup>444</sup> B. Girardin, *Ethics in Politics, Why It Matters More than Ever and How It Can Make a Difference*, Globethics.Net, Geneva, 2012, p.9.

<sup>445</sup> D. F. Thompson, “Political Ethics”, in *International Encyclopaedia of Ethics*, Scholar Harvard, Harvard University, Nd.

<sup>446</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>447</sup> See, J. M. Parrish, *Paradoxes of Political Ethics: From Dirty Hands to Invisible Hand*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, Nd., See, P. Rynard and D. P. Shugarman, (Eds) *Cruelty and Deception: The Controversy over Dirty Hands in Politics*, Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2000.

<sup>448</sup> B. Girardin, *Ethics in Politics*. p. 20

life by upholding some fundamental ethical values such as; Accountability, Justice, effectiveness and control of power.<sup>449</sup> While taking into considerations the suspicions of the ethical agenda as developed by Karl Max, Freud and Nietzsche<sup>450</sup> Ethics remains a fundamental factor for Sustainable and “Just Politics”. It was for this reason that advocates of Just Politics in Cameroon at no point in time compromised values for power, rather they stood firm in upholding values within the political land scape and whenever these values were transgressed, the outcome was dissension, resignations, and carpet crossing from one end of the political balance to the other.

This was the case within the UPC in 1960’s as the quest for just politics pushed a cross section of the party led by Mayi Matip to abandon the radical wing and form what became known as the UPC legal wing and which later had to cross the carpet from opposition into ruling party. It was the same quest for just politics that pushed many members of the Mbida led Party (*Démocrate Camerounais*) into the UC and later CNU of Ahidjo. It was still the quest for just politics that pushed many Anglophone politicians to resign from the CNU and later CPDM to start militating in the civil society for the recognition of their humanity and existence as a people. All of this was at the origin of the dynamics of militancy that Cameroon has experienced in its political landscape since independence. As such if we talk of inconsistency and dynamics in the conduct and practice of politics in Cameroon ethics played a crucial role in giving expression to this phenomenon, for Politics without ethics is like Man without Humanity thus for the preservation of humanity political actors embraced dissensions and dynamics which greatly shaped post-independent politics in cameroon.

### iii. Ethnicity

Generally in multi-ethnic societies, there is usually a high tendency for political parties to emerge around ethnic allegiances. This is evident especially when the different ethnic groups are not heterogeneously dispersed throughout the territory hence permitting the development and influence of political parties within specific geographic regions<sup>451</sup>. Under such conditions, ethnicity may likely become the driving force or determining factor for mass support as well as

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<sup>449</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9.

<sup>450</sup> The Suspicion of The Ethical Agenda as emitted by Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud holds that behind every moral pretence and objective statement on values, was hidden economic vested interests; vital force interest and self-assertive ego.

<sup>451</sup> S. kajirwa Keverenge, “Political Party Formation and Alliances: A case of Kenya” PhD Thesis proposal presented to school of social and human studies, Atlantic International University. p. 41.

militancy within political parties. Defined by Max Weber as “those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent, because of similarities of physical type or of custom or of both or because of memories of colonization and migration”,<sup>452</sup> Ethnicity represents a fundamental element inherent in human society and experience. Thus it had and continues to influence ideas, policies, feelings and actions of people in different societies. In Cameroon, ethnicity is an uncontested reality, a stronghold to which economic social and political development is strongly attached to. In fact the multi-ethnic configuration of Cameroon makes it practically impossible for any policy to be taken without evoking the ethnic consideration. Thus the strong influence exerted by ethnicity on the life course of the Cameroonian nation since its independence and reunification has provoked an identity upsurge which had to put to peril the nation building project.

The fact that Cameroonians saw themselves first as identically different and separate people from different ethnic communities before being Cameroonians laid the foundation for a fruitless and endless ethnic competition that was well received in the political circles and eventually transformed into an indispensable political tool of manipulation and propaganda. The appropriation of the Ethnic factor within political circles emanated from a subjective and erroneous premise which holds that political power in Cameroon can only come from ethnic consecration thus ethnic power confers political power. By this assertion, the rise to power of any individual/group or party was determined by the level of ethnic support that individual or group had. This consideration therefore pushed many political actors and parties to prioritize the ethnic base as the foundation for the launching of their political parties. The result of this was the regionalization of politics within ethnic zones; as we had the “Northern Parties” (UC, CNU, UNDP) the “Southern Parties” ( DC, MANC, FPUP, UPC) the UPC which was a nationalist party at creation was regionalized and fragelised at independence hence balkanizing its activities and influence on ethnic zones as we had “*UPC Bami*” and “*UPC Bassa*”. There was the “*Graffi Parties*” (KNDP, OK, CUC) as well as the “Coastal Parties” (CPNC, CPC) later came the SDF which was considered by all as an “*Anglo-Bami Party*” which became its name tag<sup>453</sup>.

All this is just a simple demonstration of the influence ethnicity had and continues to exert on Cameroon’s politics. This influence of ethnicity did not only determine the creation

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<sup>452</sup>[www.http //Wikipedia the free encyclopedia.org./Wiki/Ethnicity](http://Wikipedia.the.free.encyclopedia.org./Wiki/Ethnicity), 27/03/2013.

<sup>453</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*. p,

and implantation of political parties in Cameroon, it as well determined adherence and support for these parties. Hence militancy became a function of ethnicity provoking alliance and counter alliances, dissensions, resignations and even crossing of carpet on the subjective basis of ethnic affinity. With this, militancy in post-independent Cameroon was bound to be inconsistent and dynamic in its expression from 1961- 1992.

## **II. The Dynamics Of Militancy In A Multi-Polarised Political Context :1961-1966**

Political engagement and militancy in Africa and Cameroon in particular, is neither Policy driven nor ideology driven. Away from these fundamental and basic foundations of politics and militancy, politics and militancy in Cameroon is rather driven by several socio-political and economic subjective values which all converge towards the attainment of power for its own sake. The conduct and practice of politics in such a political context will automatically build-up a competitive platform on which the race for power becomes the principal driving force. And to attain such power political, economic and social subjectivisms are displayed as the main arguments while downplaying on ideological objectivism (policy). All this can only contribute in building up a highly versatile and dynamic political landscape. This because where political engagement or militancy is not backed by ideology, all other subjectivism are bound to influence militancy thus provoking inconsistencies, dissensions, alliances and above all carpet crossing<sup>454</sup> which we have generally termed the dynamics of militancy. Within the first phase of the political evolution of the reunified Cameroon (1961-1966) politics was greatly shaped by the dynamics of militancy which became the order of the day in the two federated states of the Federal Republic of Cameroon where political competition and polarisation provided the steam for its manifestation and expression.

### **i. Ideological Inconsistency and Carpet Crossings in West Cameroon Politics**

The creation of the Federal state of West Cameroon in October 1961<sup>455</sup> was the beginning of a new era in the political evolution of the former British Southern Cameroons which was known and reputed for its high level of political awareness, democratic sensitivity and accountability. This new state which had just started its first steps in reunification achieved through the 1961 Plebiscites, was faced with the challenge of preserving the autonomy of the new state and guaranteeing its full rights to exist separately within the Cameroon Federation.

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<sup>454</sup> See C. Millazo , cited in “the psychology of changing political view point”

<sup>455</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p. 123.

Led by the KNDP, the government of West Cameroon was placed under serious checks by an opposition which was highly critical of its policies and dealings with the Federal Government and the State of East Cameroon to the point of raising subjective arguments to discredit, render the KNDP and its leadership unpopular, and of course seize power. This pluralist political landscape animated by a strong competition for power, had serious impact on militancy. Aware of the strong influence socio-political, economic and cultural realities exerted on the political class of the territory, the KNDP leadership in its struggle and quest for political support had to equally advance subjective arguments which at the end of the day produced a tensed and politically competitive environment characterised by political divisions, alliances, resignations and crossing of carpets which were ethically, ethnologically and psychologically motivated.

From an ethical point of view, the dynamics of militancy started having expression in the British Southern Cameroons / West Cameroon from the time the plebiscite campaigns were announced and persisted throughout the life course of the Federal state of West Cameroon. In February 1961 when everything was set for the UN plebiscites, campaigns gained steam throughout the territory and laid the foundation for subjective influences that were to provoke the dynamics of militancy in the said territory. On an ethical prism, political morality as a guiding principle in the conduct and practice of politics had completely left West Cameroon and the KNDP in particular as all along the plebiscite period ethical values of truth, sincerity and humanism were completely dashed to the background by the KNDP which openly contradicted its own Motto **“The Truth Shall Prevail”**<sup>456</sup> by adopting falsehood and hooliganism as political strategy to water down the “truth” about French Cameroon as was presented by the CPNC and as such win more support and militants in its ranks. In effect, throughout the plebiscite campaign period, the KNDP was seriously accused of lies telling and gross misrepresentation of the concepts of independence and reunification to the electorate for instance in one of their campaign caravans Sam Mofor of the KNDP mounted loud speakers on *Land Rovers* spreading French Cameroon nationalist music captioned *“Merengue Independence”* the spread of this music across Southern/West Cameroon and Abakpa<sup>457</sup> Town in particular left the electorate with an ambiguous interpretation and understanding of

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<sup>456</sup> Interview with Anna Foncha

<sup>457</sup> Abakpa town is the colonial name of the town ship of Bamenda. This name takes its origin from Hausa migrants who settled in the area creating within Bamenda a new quarter which they called Abakpa. This name was later widely used to refer to the town of Bamenda. See, Nicodemus Fru Awesome, “The Emergence of Public Spheres In Colonial Cameroon: The Case Of Palm Wine Drinking Joints As Lieu De Sociabilité in Bamenda”, in *CODESRIA*, 7-11/12/2008, p, 7.

reunification which was presented to them as being the equivalent of independence. Thus many militated and supported the KNDP option of reunification with the understanding that they were supporting the independence of Southern Cameroons.<sup>458</sup>

Equally, the CPNC after trying by all genuine means to draw the attention of the people of Southern/West Cameroons to the chaotic socio-political situation in French Cameroon by going extremes, projecting photographs and images of the atrocities of the UPC war and the display of corpses on the streets and market squares of French Cameroon all<sup>459</sup> in a bid to awaken the electorate consciousness on the dangers of the reunification option, this did not leave the KNDP indifferent. For, in spite of the fear generated by this unorthodox political practice exhibited by the CPNC, the KNDP was still smart enough to use deception to counter the CPNC political argument against reunification. The KNDP went ahead to present French Cameroon road construction equipment which were station in Kumba as a negation of the insecurity argument of the CPNC, and thus told the electorate that these instruments were sent from French Cameroon which was presented by the CPNC as insecure to tar the KUMBA-MAMFE road and that a vote for reunification with French Cameroon was a guarantee for socio-economic development which the territory had never experienced since 1922<sup>460</sup>.

Beside the telling of lies and bad fate exhibited by the Southern/West Cameroon politicians especially of the KNDP extraction, the worst form of political immorality was again demonstrated by the KNDP with the adoption of Hooliganism<sup>461</sup> which consisted of preventing members of the CPNC from carrying out political campaigns in some parts of the territory, assaulting and even abusing physically the members of this opposition party. With this unexhausted proofs of acts of political immorality and exaggerated violation of political ethics by the KNDP, the CPNC had no choice but to reject the results of the 1961 plebiscite and adopt a strong political stance that favoured the further partition of Southern /West Cameroon into two wherein they pleaded the case of the 97.741 voters of the CPNC who did not want reunification to be allowed to join territory which they preferred and had stronger ethnic connections.<sup>462</sup> In their determination to see political justice and ethics prevail, the CPNC

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<sup>458</sup> See J. Nfi Lon, "Foreign Influence in Elections in Cameroon-French Cameroonians in the Southern Cameroons 1961 Plebiscite" in *Cameroon Journal of Democracy and Human Right*, Vol. 5. N° 1 June, 2011, p.60.

<sup>459</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p .121

<sup>460</sup> See NAB. West Cameroon Press Release N° 720.

See, J. Nfi Lon, "Foreign Influence in Elections, p.60.

<sup>461</sup> See, *Cameroon champion* Vol. 2 No. 7 of 15<sup>th</sup> February 1961, p.2.

<sup>462</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, pp. 154-160. See also Joseph Nfi Lon, "Ethnic Tensions During the 1961 Plebiscite and Reunification in Southern Cameroon", in *CJDHR*, Vol. 6 N° 1 June 2012. p. 64.

alliance sponsored a delegation to the UNO Composed of EML. Endeley, NN. Mbile, SLM. Endeley, EK. Martin, Chief. Sakwe-Bokwe, and Rev. Ando Seh.<sup>463</sup> This powerful delegation which carried the voices of the militants of the party and its ideological stance in favour of integration with Nigeria, stood firm on this ideology and were prepared to defend this ideology in total truth and sincerity before the UNO Trusteeship Council.

To the CPNC alliance, it was democratically unjust and unethical to deprive the 97.741 voters of the CPNC from joining Nigeria. This was because a plebiscite is completely different from elections which are conducted regularly and the electorate will always have another chance to correct their mistake if at all they made one. With the plebiscite the outcome was final and had to be assumed forever. Thus it was practically unjust and even unethical for people of the same ethnic affinity to be separated against their wish simply because of a political ambition held by a party which could possibly change with the passing of time. On this basis the CPNC held tied and remained consistent in its pro-Nigerian policy/ ideology and used all convincing arguments to bring the UNO to rule in favour of the wish expressed by its militants in the 1961 plebiscite. Since the CPNC political stance was not simply ideologically motivated but equally sustained by the Subjectivism of political Ethics which was at the centre of the CPNC arguments, an ethically-motivated response or counter argument was raised by Dr. Bebey Eyidi of East Cameroon in which unlike the other speakers who considered CPNC delegates as traitors, he rather agreed with them and acknowledged their opinion but raised a stronger and more challenging ethical argument which ended up influencing the CPNC leadership to abandon the pro-Nigerian ideology and crossed over to embrace Re-unification<sup>464</sup>. In Bebey Eyidi's argument, three questions could be deduced which directly appealed to the conscience of the CPNC delegates the first question we can deduce in his argument was this;

**What legacy do you live behind for posterity: a fragmented territory or a strong nation? The second is what have you done of the age-long Kamerun Nationalist struggle? And lastly which is the best thing to do, sacrificing the small and weak ethnic bond for a bigger and stronger nation or the reverse?**<sup>465</sup>

All of these ideas emitted by Bebey Eyidi were convincing enough to bring the CPNC militants to drop their initial stance which they realised was selfish and against the common good thus contradicting in itself the political ethics they intended to uphold and represent in

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<sup>463</sup> *Ibid*, p. 156.

<sup>464</sup> See Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*.pp.160-162

<sup>465</sup> *Ibid*. **Emphasis mine.**



Southern Cameroons politics. In this light therefore the CPNC leadership and militants crossed the ideological line of their party to embrace reunification and work together with the KNDP government so as to build a strong Cameroon nation. The outcome of this was the convening of a conciliatory meeting between CPNC and KNDP Chaired by Mr E. K. Martin which ended with the declaration of a truce in the political war opposing the KNDP and the CPNC hence setting up a strong foundation for collaboration towards the attainment of a happy and strong Cameroon nation.<sup>466</sup> The event related above was a first demonstration of ideological inconsistencies in the political experience of post-plebiscite/independent Cameroon, and thus showcased the influence of political ethics and its subjectivism on ideology which eventually provoked the dynamics of militancy exhibited at the UN by the CPNC party officials and later all militants of the party who after clamouring to join Nigeria changed their political stance and all accepted to embrace reunification a KNDP policy they had earlier castigated.

Despite the truce at the UN Trusteeship council that brought the political war between the CPNC and KNDP to an end, hence favouring greater collaboration between the two parties for a more stronger and united Cameroon, the events of the July 1961 Foumban conference came to produce great cracks in the new bond that was established among political parties of Southern Cameroon, thus opening more avenues for stiff political competition and of course the dynamics of militancy which became part and parcel of the political experience of the state of West Cameroon.

Returning from the Foumban conference, Southern Cameroons political leaders appeared more divided than they went. The sense of unity that was forged after the Plebiscites between the CPNC and KNDP was totally shattered in Foumban where greed, fear and suspicion resurfaced within the political class of the territory provoking divisions, dissensions, resignations and even carpet crossings which were subjectively motivated by Ethno-Tribal and Power-Oriented considerations.

From a Power-oriented/ethno-tribal point of view, the dynamics of militancy in West Cameroon gained steam during the December 1961 general elections. Prior to these elections, the state of West Cameroon was administered by the KNDP which controlled just 50% of the seats in the Southern Cameroon House of Assembly representing a parity of 13:13 seats with the CPNC opposition. This situation rendered the KNDP highly suspicious of every move or

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<sup>466</sup> *Ibid*, p. 162.

action taken by the CPNC. Hence in spite of the truce they both arrived at in New York where they opted for more collaboration the KNDP still did everything to exclude the CPNC opposition in the running of the state and all other important dealings with Ahidjo and the federal government. Since this was still not assuring to the KNDP which feared the CPNC opposition, the KNDP decided to increase the number of parliamentary seats from 26 to 37 by carving out new constituencies in its Grass field stronghold and organising fresh general elections in December 1961. These elections which came earlier than expected<sup>467</sup> was a well calculated strategy of the KNDP to affirm its supremacy over the opposition as it envisaged grabbing a bulk of the seats at the end of the process thus obtaining a more justifiable reason to isolate the opposition CPNC. Since this envisaged result of the KNDP could not be attained alone by brandishing policy or ideology, the KNDP resolved to the use of other subjective influences which were power-oriented and Ethno-Tribally motivated hence provoking resignations and carpet crossing which greatly changed the political configuration of West Cameroon from 1961-1965.

From a prism of power and Ethnicity, the December 1961 elections in West Cameroon came to expose the subjectivism of militancy in the territory. The results of these elections greatly demonstrated the weakness or flaws of political engagements in West Cameroon which was generally sustained by the subjectivism of power and ethnicity with nothing to show as political ideology or conviction. Using a comparative approach, an analysis of the 1961 elections results with those of 1959 shows that there has been a great shift or dynamics in militancy across West Cameroon in 1961 as expressed in the election results on tables (see tables V & VI below).

Taking for instance the Victoria constituency, in 1959 the KNDP won just two seats of the four seats in Victoria but in 1961, the balance went in favour of the KNDP which now increased its influence in Victoria by winning three seats out of the four seats in Victoria. This was so because a greater part of the CPNC militants in Victoria South West dropped their party the CPNC and crossed over to the KNDP causing the down fall of P.N. Motombi Woleta in favour of Lifio Carr. The analyses drawn from these results shows that the KNDP “Power” propaganda was far stronger in Victoria than its political ideology hence many militants of the CPNC who could not withstand the influence of power and achievement brandished within the KNDP, had to drop their support for the CPNC and joined the KNDP. The outcome of this was

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<sup>467</sup> The last elections to SCHA were organised in 1959 and the term of office for parliamentarians was set at 5 years. Hence on this basis the next elections ought to have been scheduled in 1964, but the KNDP decided to organise them earlier than expected for obvious reasons which were power motivated.

a landslide victory for the KNDP in Victoria, thus exhibiting the shift or dynamics of militancy within the Victoria S.W Constituency.

**TABLE V: THE 1959 ELECTION RESULTS SHOWING ELECTED PARTIES AND THEIR CANDIDATES TO THE SCHA**

Constituency	Elected Member	Parties
<b>Bamenda</b>		
Bafut East	J.N.Foncha	KNDP
Bamenda West	S.T.Muna	KNDP
Bamenda North	V.T.Lainjo	KNC
Bamenda Ndop West	J.H Nganje	KNDP
Bamenda South	W.S.Fonyonga	KNDP
<b>Nkambe</b>		
Nkambe South	J.N.Nsame	KNC
Nkambe North	Rev.Ando Seh	KNC
Nkambe Central	S.N.Tamfu	KNC
Nkambe East	Rev D. Nyanganji	KNC
<b>Wum</b>		
Wum East	A.N.Jua	KNDP
Wum West	J.M. Boja	KNDP
Wum Central	Rev JC. Kangsen	KNC
Wum North	S.N NJI	KNDP
<b>Mamfe</b>		
Mamfe North	S.E.NCHA	KPP
Mamfe South	D.Frambo	KNDP
Mamfe East	P.M Kempcha	KNDP
Mamfe West	W.N.O. Effiom	KNDP
<b>Kumba</b>		
Kumba North west	N.N.Mbile	KPP
Kumba South West	J.N Nasako	KPP
Kumba East	Ajebe Sone	KNC
Kumba West	J.M. Bokwe	KNDP
Kumba Central	J.E.Sona	KNDP
<b>Victoria</b>		
Victoria NorthWest	E.M.L.Endeley	KNC
Victoria SouthWest	P.N/Motomby Woleta	KPP
Victoria North East	M.N.Ndoke	KNDP
Victoria South East	Mbua Monono	KNDP

**Source:** Adapted from Mbile, *Cameroon Political story*, p., 98.

Another instance where KNDP “Power” Propaganda had great influence on militancy provoking inconsistencies and dynamics in militancy was in the Kumba constituency. Kumba being a CPNC strong hold, struggled against all odds to defend its legacy in the Kumba

constituency. With strong determination and tenacity, the CPNC outsmarted all KNDP traps and political manoeuvres aimed at jeopardising its results in the December 1961 election<sup>468</sup>.

**TABLE VI: THE 1961 RESULTS OF ELECTIONS INTO WEST CAMEROON HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY SHOWING CANDIDATES AND PARTY THEY RAN FOR**

Constituency	Elected Parliamentarian	Political Party
<b>Victoria</b>		
Victoria S.W	Lifio Carr	KNDP
Victoria S.E	M.M.Monono	KNDP
Victoria N.E	M.N.Ndoke	KNDP
Victoria N.W	E.M.L.Endeley	CPNC
<b>KUMBA</b>		
Kumba West	J.M. Bokwe	KNDP
Kumba East	F.N. Ajebe Sone	CPNC (CC)
Kumba S.East	H.N. Elangwe	CPNC
Kumba N.E	E.E. Ngone	CPNC (CC)
Kumba central	J.E. Sona	KNDP
Kumba S.W	D.B. Monyongo	CPNC
Kumba N.W	N.N. Mbile	CPNC
<b>MAMFE</b>		
Mamfe South	Ekanghaki Nzo	KNDP
Mamfe North	Lekunze J.C	KNDP
Mamfe East	P.M. Kemcha	KNDP
Mamfe West	W.N.O. Effiom	KNDP
Mamfe N.W	S.E Ncha	CPNC ( CC)
<b>BAMENDA</b>		
Bali	A.W. Daiga	KNDP
Bafut East	J.N. Foncha	KNDP
Bafut West	M.M. Fusi	KNDP
Ngie Ngwo	Z.A. Abendong	KNDP
Lower Ngemba	Fon Angwafor III	INDEPENDENT
Upper Ngemba	Sam Mofor	KNDP
Menemo	S.T. Muna	KNDP
Moghamo	L.M. Ndamukong	KNDP
Ndop East	J.F. Nyoh	KNDP
Ndop West	J.H. Nganje	KNDP
Nso N.E	B.T. Sakah	KNDP
Nso N.W	J. Tatah	KNDP
Nso South	J. Lafon	KNDP
<b>WUM</b>		
Wum East	A.N. Jua	KNDP
Wum West	E.A. Mendi	KNDP
Wum North	S.N. Nji	KNDP

<sup>468</sup> See the Mensah Commission on the pre-electoral litigation in Kumba west constituency. Cited in N.N.Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, p.

Wum Central	P. Mua	KNDP
<b>NKAMBE</b>		
Nkambe Central	S.N. Tamfu	CPNC
Nkambe South	J. Nsame	CPNC (CC)
Nkambe North	Ndongo	KNDP
Nkambe East	S.G.N Yor	KNDP

**Source:** Adapted from Mbile, *Cameroon Political story*, p., 182.

CC= Carpet Crosser from CPNC to KNDP

Having successfully defended its constituency and electorate from the KNDP influence, the CPNC recorded a crushing victory against the KNDP by taking 5 of the 7 existing seats in the Kumba Constituency. Though overpowered in Kumba, the KNDP still managed to keep its influence in Kumba West and Central without wavering. Surprisingly it was rather within the CPNC which was confirmed victorious that the wind of defections and resignations started blowing provoking the crossing of carpet of CPNC militants into the KNDP. The first to take the lead in abandoning the CPNC and crossing the carpet to join the KNDP was E.E.Ngone of Kumba North East who was immediately followed by Ajebe Sone from Kumba East. These two influential militants of the CPNC left their party for the KNDP not for anything else than the quest for “Power” and achievement.

This was confirmed shortly after the West Cameroon House of Assembly went into full session with the presentation of the KNDP new government within which featured Ajebe Sone who had just crossed the carpet. E.E. Ngone who had crossed the carpet for the same purpose burst out and raised his voice in disappointment complaining before the house of assembly that his name didn't feature in Foncha's government of which he was the first to cross the carpet before Ajebe Sone followed<sup>469</sup>. Though, to the staunch and idealist CPNC militants this was an embarrassing scenario and a display of political immaturity, the analyses we bring out of this display of inconsistency and dynamics of militancy demonstrated by Ajebe Sone and E.E. Ngone is that; in West Cameroon politics, subjective influences like power and grandeur, socio-economic achievements and fame were far stronger in political bargaining than ideas or ideology. Thus the inconsistencies and dynamics of militancy exhibited in the Kumba constituency in 1961 were provoked by nothing else than the quest for power, socio-economic achievement and fame which were placed in high political value than ideology.

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<sup>469</sup> See Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*. p, 184.

The next constituency to have been hit by the wind of defections and carpet crossing was the Mamfe constituency. Since 1959, Mamfe has always been a stronghold of the KNDP but for the Mamfe North constituency under S.E. Ncha which remained a consolidated territory of the CPNC. Evidence of this is that in 1959 the constituency was won by the KPP (CPNC alliance) and again in 1961 the CPNC alliance still won that constituency. With this victory it became clear that Mamfe North constituency was a no go zone for the KNDP. But for how long could this last when politics in West Cameroon was increasingly becoming Power and socio-economic achievement oriented. In fact politics was now about who could command more power and respect, who could bring more social and economic benefits to the people, who could make the peoples voice heard in top administration. With these subjective influences gaining grounds in West Cameroon politics, political ideology gradually loss its power and influence in the shaping of militancy. That is why shortly after his victory in the December 1961 election, S.E. Ncha CPNC parliamentarian for the Mamfe North Constituency, was compelled by his electorate to join the ruling KNDP where they could have more visibility and enable socio economic benefits come to their constituency as explained by Mbile following his chat with Ncha before he crossed the carpet.

Mr Ncha pulled me aside for a secret chat...Since his results came through he was under great pressure from his people they were tired of his continued stand with the opposition party and since that party possessed no patronage for them, his people had continued to suffer in Cameroons politics. They had therefore resolved that he declares for the KNDP...<sup>470</sup>

On this basis therefore, S.E. Ncha of the CPNC without delay crossed the carpet to the KNDP and as expected he ended up getting appointment in the Jua government as secretary of state at the Prime Minister's office of West Cameroon. Thus the consolidation of militancy and support for the KNDP which was guaranteed by Ncha's defection was not dependent on the ideal nor brilliance of the KNDP policy but was rather dependent on the "Power" factor which had stronger political influence than ideology.

As if to say S.E. Ncha's defection had a contagious effect, we saw shortly after his crossing of the carpet to the KNDP the coming of another CPNC baron J. Nsame into the KNDP who after winning the elections in Nkambe South, on the CPNC ticket like Ncha decided to cross the carpet into the KNDP<sup>471</sup>. This could not have been in any way caused by the charm

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<sup>470</sup> *Ibid*, p.182.

<sup>471</sup> *Ibid*.

or attraction of the KNDP ideology, rather it was the strong quest for power fame and achievement which could easily be obtained in the KNDP than in the CPNC party. This was the same influence that caused a complete switchover by militants of the CPNC into the KNDP in Wum Central. This constituency which since 1959 had always militated for the KNC (CPNC) ideology had to drop this ideology in 1961 and ran after fame achievement and power which was guaranteed in the ruling KNDP party. Thus in 1961, the one-time KNC (CPNC) stronghold in Wum Central was completely loss to the KNDP as its militants abandoned the CPNC and massively voted the KNDP list giving victory to the KNDP in Wum central something which had not happened before. These changes, inconsistencies or dynamics in militancy could only be justified by one thing: the strong influence of political subjectivisms (Power, fame achievement) over ideology.

Besides the quest for power, achievement and fame, the dynamics of militancy in West Cameroon was equally orchestrated by ethno-tribal considerations which the 1961 elections greatly helped to expose. An analyses of the 1961 elections results in West Cameroon especially in the Bamenda constituency clearly shows that ethno-tribal considerations were a strong determinant for militancy than political ideology. It should be noted that the strong influence of ethnicity in West Cameroon politics and the Bamenda constituency in particular has its foundations in the plebiscite era. This period within which politics was highly ethicised with political parties adopting a completely ethnic configuration shaped along ethno-regional identities gave rise to concepts like “Grass field Party” (KNDP) and “Coastal Party”<sup>472</sup> (CPNC). If this appeal to ethnic sentiments in politics became very strong in west Cameroon politics it was because the KNDP gave it expression during the Plebiscite campaigns as on several occasion Foncha changed the Plebiscite alternatives to read “Do you Like Dr. Endeley the Bakweri Man” or “Do you like Foncha The Bamenda Man”<sup>473</sup> .

These ethnic sentiments which were built up during the plebiscite campaigns, survived throughout the post-plebiscite era and even became stronger during the 1961 elections in the Bamenda constituency. Considered as the KNDP stronghold, the Bamenda constituency was the base of the entire KNDP leadership. Foncha, Muna, and Jua all three influential leaders of the KNDP were from Nkwen, Meta and Kom respectively all found in the Bamenda

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<sup>472</sup> See J. L. Nfi, “Ethnic Tensions during the 1961 Plebiscite and reunification in the Southern Cameroons”. In *CJDHR*, Vol. 6 No 1, 2012, p.60.

<sup>473</sup> Regional Archives Bamenda (RAB) File No nw/vc/a /1959 p. 52. See Joseph, L.Nfi, “Ethnic Tensions during the 1961 Plebiscite and reunification in the Southern Cameroons”. In *CJDHR*, Vol. 6 No 1, 2012, p.62.

Grassland.<sup>474</sup> This constituency which before 1961 could boast of political competition due to the strong presence and influence of the KNC in Bamenda North constituency piloted by V.T Lainjo,<sup>475</sup> totally gave in to the ethnic propaganda of the plebiscite period and as direct consequence, politics in the area became more of an ethno-tribal competition than an ideological competition. A close reading of the 1961 elections results in Bamenda constituency shows that of the 12 seats in the area, the KNDP swept 11 seats. The only reason they didn't get all the 12 seats was because the candidate for lower Ngemba HRH. Fon Angwafor III went in as independent candidate<sup>476</sup>.

Looking at these results keenly we see the strong influence of ethno-tribal considerations suppressing political ideology as in all the constituency the candidates the KNDP presented for the parliamentary race were natives of the tribal group in which the constituency was carved out. Thus it shows that deep within the party they were aware and convinced that militancy did not depend on the party ideology but rather on subjectivism like personality, and ethno-tribal affinities. This therefore explains why with the already established ethnic sentiments in the area there was nothing that could stop the KNDP from winning. Fon Angwafor III equally understood this principle and so went in as an independent candidate with all the assurance that as a Fon and Native of Mankon (Lower Ngemba) his ethno-tribal identity was enough to win him militants and supporters. Thus ideology did not in any way count for a candidate to win elections, the result is that he won despite the strong KNDP influence in the area. The above facts are further arguments justifying the thesis that politics in West Cameroon and Post-independent Cameroon as a whole was sustained by political subjectivisms at the detriment of policy and ideology.

After the 1961 general elections, it became clear to all political observers that the KNDP had pulled into its fold a large crowd of militants of different political backgrounds. Within the KNDP we had militants of the KNC background, there were others from the UPC/OK extraction, others who had crossed the carpet in exchange of political compensation, some who had simply lost confidence in the dying opposition and embrace the KNDP as the only hope for them to secure a place in the "sun" not forgetting the intellectuals from colleges and universities who joined the party as the best platform for the sale of their ideas. All of this diversity within the KNDP was in effect a load too much for the young party to manage and

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<sup>474</sup> Nfi, " Ethnic Tensions..p,60 .

<sup>475</sup> See results of 1959 elections into SCHA

<sup>476</sup> See results of 1961 elections into WCHA



consequential to this was a great conflict of interest that broke out in the party between 1962 – 1965 provoking its disintegration hence giving room for shifts in ideology, resignations, defections, and crossing of carpets which altogether exposed the dynamics of militancy in West Cameroon politics.

From a psychological prism, the diversity recorded within the KNDP was to automatically provoke conflicts of interest heavily powered by clash of personality attributes and personal values which were to further influence the practice and conduct of politics as well as militancy in West Cameroon. In effect the diversity within the KNDP represented by the different personalities, of different political extractions and ideology was enough fuel to inflame the ego provoking continuous clash in personal traits and values among the party's militants thereby accentuating disagreements, divisions, resignations and defections which led to shifts in ideology or what we termed the Dynamics of Militancy. In line with the 10 basic values in the Universal requirements of human condition preconized by Schwartz in his theory<sup>477</sup> of Basic Personal Values , Power, Achievement, Stimulation, Hedonism, Self-Direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Security and Conformity<sup>478</sup> are enduring values in personality that influence and direct peoples actions and influence choice. Thus within the KNDP we had militants with personality traits demonstrating values of Power and achievement, Universalism and Benevolence, Tradition, Security and Conformity, Stimulation, Self-direction and Hedonism.

**TABLE VII: DEFINITION OF TEN VALUE CONSTRUCTS AND SAMPLE PORTRAIT VALUE QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS**

<b>Value and Motivational Goal</b>	<b>Sample Items</b>
<b>Power:</b> social status and prestige, resource	“He likes to be in charge and tell others what to do. He wants people to do what he says.”
<b>Achievement:</b> personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.	“Being very successful is important to him. He likes to standout and to impress other people.”

<sup>477</sup> G.V. Caprara, S. Schwartz et.al, “Personality and Politics: Values Traits and Political choice”, in *Political psychology*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 2006, pp. 6-10

<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

<b>Hedonism:</b> pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself	“He really wants to enjoy life. Having a good time is very important to him.”
<b>Stimulation:</b> excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.	“He looks for adventures and likes to take risks. He wants to have an exciting life.”
<b>Self-direction:</b> independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring.	“He thinks it's important to be interested in things. He is curious and tries to understand everything.”
<b>Universalism:</b> understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.	“He wants everyone to be treated justly, even people he doesn't know. It is important to him to protect the weak in society.”
<b>Benevolence:</b> preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact.	“He always wants to help the people who are close to him. It's very important to him to care for the people he knows and likes.”
<b>Tradition</b> :respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self	“He thinks it is important to do things the way he learned from his family. He wants to follow their customs and traditions.”
<b>conformity</b> : restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norm	“He believes that people should do what they're told. He thinks people should follow rules at all times, even when no-one is watching.”
<b>Security:</b> safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.	“It is important to him to live in secure surroundings. He avoids anything that might end anger his safety.”

**Source:** G.V. Caprara, S. Schwartz et.al, “Personality and Politics: Values Traits and Political choice”, in *Political psychology*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 2006, pp. 6

All of this mixture within the same political party was bound to bring about personality conflicts as was the case between A.N. Jua and S.T. Muna in 1963 when the interim period for the cumulating of powers by Foncha as vice president and Prime minister was over thus necessitating his eventual replacement at the Prime Ministry in Buea. This period was one

characterised by great cracks within the KNDP and the CPNC was quick to pronounce itself on the situation by introducing a motion on the floor of the WCHA calling on Ahidjo to dissolve this party and hastily put in place a one party system.<sup>479</sup> These cracks were caused by nothing else than the Psychological disposition of the political actors at the time which greatly motivated and influenced their actions.

For instance in the August 1963 KNDP convention in Bamenda, a strong faction of the party composed of persons with portrait values of Tradition, Security and Conformity (conservatives) led by A.N. Jua openly attacked S.T. Muna and other KNDP cabinet ministers of the Federal government who in their exhibition of value construct in line with Self-direction, Power and achievement (openness to change and adventure) were accused of compromising the autonomy of West Cameroon by giving in to Ahidjo's assimilating policies.<sup>480</sup> To Jua and his followers, the complaisance attitude put up by Muna and Tabi Egbe not excluding Foncha vis-à-vis the Federal government of Ahidjo was tantamount to disqualifying them from the leadership of the party. This personality argument raised by Jua at the convention led to his massive election to the post of Vice president of the KNDP a position that was comforting and secured his eventual accession to the post of Prime Minister as designed at the Kumba convention of 1964<sup>481</sup>.

Muna the man of Self-direction, Power and Achievement who had now been placed together with his allies in a position of minority within the KNDP, was to further get into a personality conflict with J.N. Foncha who in his display of Hedonism (double standards) decided to suspend Muna from the KNDP. This action of Foncha was motivated by the need to reaffirm his personality within the KNDP but at the same time was a strategy to knockout Muna whose personality though downplayed in West Cameroon, was gaining the sympathy of Yaoundé and was a potential threat to his personal ambition of Power and Achievement<sup>482</sup>. Reacting to his suspension immediately after the appointment of Jua as PM of West Cameroon, Muna who had just returned from a journey abroad decided to resign from the KNDP and together with his dismissed allies (E.T. Egbe, W.N.O. Effiom, J.M. Bokwe, W.N. Ndoke, Sam Mofor, Martin Fusi, J.K.N. Tataw, B.T. Sakah, and L.I. Umejoh) they launched their own party

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<sup>479</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, p.147

<sup>480</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p. 139.

<sup>481</sup> Mabile, *Cameroon political Story p. 193-194*.

<sup>482</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 194-196. See, P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo p.*

called the Cameroon United Congress (CUC) where Muna fully exercised his personal ambition of Power and Achievement as the leader of the new party.

This therefore brings us to assert that the personality dispositions of the political actors of West Cameroon accentuated the dynamics of militancy that characterised post-independent Cameroon politics. For in their personal and psychological disposition to accept new challenges, adventures, have things under their control, Muna and Foncha clashed with A.N. Jua who in his personal psychological dispositions rejected any new adventure and was determined to preserve the autonomy of West Cameroon. This conflict in psychological dispositions and personality traits was to end up fuel a personality conflict within the KNDP which caused its disintegration and shifts in ideology by some of its key militants in the likes of S.T. Muna, E.T. Egbe, W.N.O. Effiom, J.M. Bokwe, W.N. Ndoke, Sam Mofor, Martin Fusi, J.K.N. Tataw, B.T.Sakah, and L.I.Umejoh who all left the KNDP for the CUC. Thus giving expression to the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon.

It should however be noted that personality conflicts within the KNDP did not just provoke shifts in ideology within the KNDP party, it also influenced the opposition CPNC party to take a shift in its ideological position. This party whose militants by 1963 had lost all hope of existence in West Cameroon due to the moral and psychological defeat imposed on it by the KNDP to the point of it issuing memorandums to Ahidjo calling on the dissolution of all parties and institutionalise the one party system<sup>483</sup>, was quick to shift or change positions in 1965 following the cracks of the KNDP resulting from personality conflicts.

Following the personality conflicts in the KNDP that led to the resignation and dismissal of a cross section of its militants who adhere to the newly formed CUC, the KNDP position in the WCHA was seriously weakened and thus opened new opportunities for the ailing CPNC to re-emerge, as the party willingly dropped its initial anti-KNDP and pro-UC policy to embrace a KNDP-CPNC coalition in 1965.<sup>484</sup> This new found spirit of unity between the CPNC and KNDP was a product of circumstance animated by militancy dynamics which were greatly influenced by conflicting psychological dispositions of the different political actors of the time. For, we see that the fear of a rising and strong CUC with Yaoundé backings influenced personality traits and values of staunch conservatives like A.N. Jua, who had always remained faithful to the ideals of the KNDP to move a step away from his traditional conformism to try

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<sup>483</sup> See, Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.130. See A. Ndi, *Southern/West Cameroon*, p.146.

<sup>484</sup> See, Mbile, *Cameroon political story*, p. 197.

new adventures even with well-known enemies like the CPNC and Ahidjo's UC whom he earlier resented.

Since these changes in personal traits did not in any way influence the enduring values of the person, Jua and Foncha, stag Federalist who had now crossed the line to adhere to Ahidjo CNU in 1966, were still not trusted by Ahidjo the man of power, Self-direction and Achievement. The outcome of this was the appointment of Muna in 1968 and 1970 to replace Jua and Foncha as PM and Vice president of West/Federal Republic of Cameroon.<sup>485</sup> From all that precedes, it is clear that psychological dispositions of militants within political parties in West Cameroon engendered personality conflicts which provoked ideological shifts in positions and dynamics in militancy which were all sustained by the strong drive for Power, self-direction and Achievement.

## **ii. Ideological inconsistency and Carpet Crossing in East Cameroon Politics**

The initial Republic of Cameroon turned Federal State of East Cameroon in 1961 was not left out in the general trend of post independent politics in Cameroon characterised by consistent shifts in ideology, dissensions, resignations and carpet crossings which have been termed the dynamics of militancy. Unlike the Southern/West Cameroon which had been exposed earlier to political ideas and freedom, the Republic of Cameroon turned East Cameroon in 1961 embraced the conduct and practice of politics from a Jacobinists perspective which greatly limited political freedom, awareness and accountability. In this light therefore, politics in the Republic/East Cameroon seized being a permanent social contract between political actors and their electorate, to become a permanent contract between political actors and their interest. These interest, though ideologically established, they were highly "power" and ethno-tribally sustained and driven. Thus instead of ideology convincing militants and propelling them towards the ladder of power, it was rather "power" ethnicity and tribal Clientelism that pulled militants towards ideology. Under such a dispensation, the ideological foundation of militancy was to automatically give way to other socio-political forces which intend rendered militancy in East Cameroon permanently inconsistent and dynamic.

Having put in place all the outward trappings of an independent republic, East Cameroon before 1961 was ethno-religiously divided between the North and South and strongly manned by the young and vibrant leader of the UC party Ahmadou Ahidjo who ruled as president. The

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<sup>485</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, p.156.

young leader having won great sympathy and support from the North and the Bamoum region of the West, this not on the basis of ideology but by the force of ethno-religious affinity, was greatly challenged by the increasing political force of the South<sup>486</sup>. This political force from the South rendered the political game in East Cameroon before 1961 highly competitive and the results of the April 10, 1960 parliamentary election clearly revealed this, as out of the 100 seats in parliament the UC barely grasp 52 and the remaining 48 seats were conquered by the opposition-controlled South.<sup>487</sup> Ruling the territory with such a slim majority appeared practically impossible for Ahidjo considering that the British Northern Cameroons he counted on to boost his power, was lost to Nigeria in February 1961 and the Southern Cameroons which voted for Reunification was gaining sympathy from the Southern opposition. Thus under such a political configuration that presented itself by 1961, there was serious urgency for the UC party of Ahidjo to push through the ideology of national unity across the territory to avoid an eventual Southern majority that could overturn the political tides in his disfavour.

Since the years preceding 1961 had already established strong foundations for the manifestation of regional and ethnic influences in politics, it was therefore not evident for the UC and Ahidjo to win more militants to its ideal of national unity through mere propaganda of unity. It was therefore at this juncture that Force and intimidation, personality influence, ethnicity and Tribal Clientelism took the central stage thus provoking mass defections, alliances, resignations and carpet crossing from the opposition into the UC party not necessarily due to the pertinence of its ideology of unity but rather because of fear and the strong influence ethnicity and Clientelism imposed on militancy.

Going from an ethno-religious point of view we have come to the realisation that several shifts in ideologies or dynamics in militancy in East Cameroon were animated by ethno-religious and even regional dichotomies; which, when it did not involve the North against the South it was between the ethnic groups of the South. Realising in 1960 the impossibility of ruling the ethno-regional diversities of Cameroon with a slim Northern majority, Ahidjo decided to open his first government of May 1960 to all the geo-political representation of the country.<sup>488</sup> (**See Table below**) This strategy which brought on board the diverse political class

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<sup>486</sup> See, Results of the February 21, 1960 Constitutional referendum where the UC is Plebiscited in the North and Bamoum region with a score of 97.6%. See, P. Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.108.

<sup>487</sup> See, Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, pp.110&111

<sup>488</sup> See J. François Bayart, *L'État Au Cameroun*, Presses de science politique, 1985, Pp. 83-108. See, P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, Pp, 110 – 114.

of Cameroon into some kind of “power broking” for the formation of a union government was to later become an instrument which Ahidjo used to manipulate ethnicity provoking dissensions within the opposition and carpet crossing into the ruling UC party. J.F. Bayart puts it clear when he says;

**TABLE VIII: 14<sup>th</sup> May 1960 First Post-Independent Government of Ahidjo**

SN	Name	Post occupied
1	Ahmadou Ahidjo	President of the republic
2	Chales Assalé	Prime Minister
3	Njoya Arouna	Minister of state the interior
4	Niyin kamdem	Minister of state minister of Public Health
5	Jean Ekwabi Ewane	Minister of finance
6	Charles Okala	Minister of Foreign Affairs
7	Victor Kanga	Minister of Justice
8	Tsalla Mekongo	Minister of National Economy
9	Sanda Oumarou	Minister of Public works and transport
10	Jean Baptiste Mabaya	Minister of armed forces
11	Jean Akassou Djamba	Minister of P&T
12	Talba Malla	Minister of Planning
13	Jean-pierre Wandji Nkuimy	Minister of labour and social law
14	Elie Tsoungui	Minister of Public Service
15	Sadou Daoudou	Secretary of state for information
16	Gabriel Mdibo Mbarsola	Secretary of state for technical education,youth & sport
17	Mohamadou Lamine	Secretary of state for trade and industry
18	Philippe Achingui	Secretary of state for livestock
19	Paul Amougou Nguele	Secretary of state for Production

**Source:** Compiled by Author from field data

*Gouvernement de large union nationale » ouvert à tous les groups de l'assemblée nationale. Ce qui eut été l'ouverture d'une négociation, quelques mois auparavant, était devenu un processus de ralliement. Empêtrée dans ses contradictions, l'opposition ne sut pas répondre à la manœuvre<sup>489</sup>.*

The first victim of this manipulative manoeuvre that instrumentalised ethnicity in appointments and influence militancy, was the *Démocrate Camerounais* party. After standing its grounds throughout 1960 as an uncontested southern opposition party the *Democrate Camerounais* of Andre Marie Mbida was to end up falling in the hooks of Ahidjo'S UC party. Ahidjo, having rallied into his fold a good number of Southern opposition leaders especially from the Bamiléké, East and Littoral regions using ministerial appointments, on the 11

<sup>489</sup> Bayart, *L'Etat au Cameroun*, p.83.

November 1961, well comforted in a new found majority, Ahidjo made a public pronouncement inviting the political class of the territory to adhere to his new vision of a grand national unified party.<sup>490</sup> This call that was harkened to already by a cross section of the political class charmed by Ahidjo's discretionary appointments which so far privileged more of the North, Douala, Bamiléké and East regions to the disfavour of the Centre-South, left several militants of the DC opposition in panic and fear of an eventual occupation of the entire political scene by the UC majority. To this effect, a cross section of overzealous militants within the DC who were no longer comfortable in the small margin Mbida had subjected them and their region as a whole decided to stir up dissensions within the DC so as to broke up with their party the DC and extend a hand of fellowship to Ahidjo with the hope of gaining administrative favour and projecting their ethno-regional identity across the political scene.

Among the DC militants who were frustrated by exclusion and marginalisation within the DC party we had; Henri Effa, Gabrielle Atangana, and Paul-Louis Schummeler who were all MP's of the Nyong and Sanaga Constituency. Realising that their constituency (Ethnic region) had gained nothing by remaining under the opposition umbrella of the DC of Mbida, they decided to stir up dissention in this party leading to their eventual break up and the creation of their own party which they named *Les Indépendants Démocrates*<sup>491</sup>. In justifying their break up from the DC, the three MP's noted that the DC Anti-Ahidjo policy was rather favouring the gradual implantation of a one-party system which was detrimental not only to democracy but also to the common good of their people<sup>492</sup>. Thus the creation of the *ID* was an opportunity to avoid the one-party system encouraged by DC and extending a hand to the Ahidjo's UC and its vision of a grand unified National Party. Since the primary objective of these Three MP's was not just to liberate themselves from the diktats of the DC party which kept them in the dark, but also to gain favour from Ahidjo who had the power to raise them and their constituency (ethnic region) to prominence, they decided in March 1962 to cross over to the UC party of Ahidjo<sup>493</sup>.

From the glaring case exposed above we can strongly established as fact that, the manipulation of ethnic and regional identities for political ends by Ahidjo greatly influenced militancy in post-independent Cameroon. For out of fear of being abandoned and marginalised

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<sup>490</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p. 128.

<sup>491</sup> NAY, *La Press Du Cameroun*, Lundi 5 /02/ 1962 / No 3.537

<sup>492</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>493</sup> NAY, *La Press Du Cameroun*, Mardi 27/03/1962/No 3.597.



politically, the MP's For the Nyong and Sanaga Constituency in the Centre-South region a DC opposition strong hold, decided to quit the DC party and create theirs the I D which they used to cross over to the UC with great expectation of receiving presidential favours which will take them and their ethnic group out of the narrow margin of opportunities which was reserved for them in the DC party.<sup>494</sup> This was clearly expressed in their statement made in the East Cameroon assembly which read;

*Fidel à la ligne de conduit que nous nous sommes tracées depuis que nous nous sommes libéré de la sujétion étroite dans la quelle certains leaders voulaient nous tenir dans le parti des Démocrates Camerounais, nous tenons à informer le public des étapes parcourues jusqu'à ce jour. Dans notre précédente déclaration nous nous étions affirmé « indépendant Démocrates » avec l'intention de former non seulement une tendance au sein du grand parti unifié, mais de constituer un véritable parti pour le renouveau nationale et dont le programme sera l'oeuvre... du plus grand nombre de citoyens possible... Démocrates convaincu le président ahidjo ne s'est nullement opposé à notre projet...<sup>495</sup>*

As if to say H. Effa and G. Atangana's action was an eye opener to the rest of the militants within the DC, the following month April 1962, saw massive defections and carpet crossing of DC militants into the UC party of Ahidjo. Among these new carpet crossers was Ateba Otoa Didier the DC administrative secretary who also resigned to join the UC.<sup>496</sup> Reporting his resignation, the press du Cameroon puts it clear that;

*M. Etaba Didier fait connaître à tous ses anciens camarade du parti que pour compte de ce jour il se désolidarise de la politique des démocrates camerounais et se retire du parti. Il reproche ce parti de tribalisme, et de demagogie... Il met en garde les mal avertis contre ce parti qui ne sert qu'à retarder et détruire l'évolution du Cameroun...<sup>497</sup>*

Besides the manipulation of ethnicity and regionalism in appointments by Ahidjo which contributed in provoking dissention within the DC and carpet crossing to the UC, the ethno-regional political war between the South and the North also played a great role in influencing

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<sup>494</sup> Explaining the motivations for their crossing over to the UC party of Ahidjo in 1962, H. Effa and G. Atangana stress out clearly that amongst other reasons they first wanted to free themselves from the narrow margin of opportunities reserved for them in the DC. Equally they said it was a means to have their own voice and ideas heard within the grand unified national party. To crown it all they considered themselves as sharing the same national aspirations with the UC and as such they made it clear that their focus was not leadership rather they wanted to militate for peace and unity which was the clarion call made by Ahidjo at the time. See, *Press du Cameroon* 03/1962/ No. 3.597

<sup>495</sup> NAY, *La Press Du Cameroun*, Mardi 27/03/1962/No 3.597.

<sup>496</sup> See, NAY *La Press du Cameroun*, 9/04/ 1962/No.3590. See also, *La Press du Cameroun* 27/04/1962/No.3605.

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid.*

shifts in ideology or dynamics of militancy. After Ahidjo's November 1961 pronouncement that set in motion the Grand National unified party, the UC party automatically experienced an exponential growth in its number<sup>498</sup> as the continues influx of militants especially from the South in search of "a place in the sun" kept swelling the popularity of the party.

Mbida, who since 1960 had continuously contested the capacity of the UC northern-dominated party to rule the territory and observing the growing popularity of the party across the territory to the point of sweeping militants even within his party the DC, Mbida had no other option but to play the same ethno-regional card like Ahidjo. In this light therefore Mbida projected across the Southern political landscape the idea of a certain Northern conspiracy to impose its hegemony over the Christian opposition *Sud*.<sup>499</sup>

This idea was immediately bought by some frontline opposition leaders of the South amongst who was; Charles Okala leader of the *partie socialist* who joined Ahidjo's union government as Minister in 1960,<sup>500</sup> and by Mai 1962<sup>501</sup> led the party to openly declare its support for the UC and its Grand National Party ideology. There was also Theodore Mayi Matip, UPC frontline militant and leader who deliberately abandoned rebellion to align with Ahidjo in what they called the UPC legal wing,<sup>502</sup> and lastly Bebey Eyidi opposition leader and co-founder of the *Partie Nationale Travailist Camerounais* (PNTC) who in Mai 1962 had joined the UC of Ahidjo and its grand national party idea<sup>503</sup>. Realising therefore that since 1961 none of them was called up in the new Federal state apparatus and added to this, the rising popularity of the UC-Northern party in the South which had started absorbing existing parties including theirs and their militants, these one-time UC/Ahidjo allies of the South, on purely regional and ethnic motivations decided to turn their backs to Ahidjo their one-time ally to join A.M. Mbida in

<sup>498</sup> Official figures estimated the membership of the UC party above hundreds of thousands in September 1960 following the massive adherence to the party's idea of a *partie unifié* by many political leaders of the south and their followers who in search of "a place in the sun" massively switched over or allied with the UC. This tendency could only be in a permanent rise as by 1961 and 1962 political prominence was to become more and more constrained by adherence to the UC party. To this effect therefore the announcement of the grand unified party in 1961 just like the unified party announced in 1960, was to pull a large following of militants who by now had come to terms with the political reality of the time which strictly conditioned political success and achievement to belonging to the UC Party. See, P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, Pp. 115-116 & 136

<sup>499</sup> See J.F. Bayart, *L'État au Cameroun*, PP.83- 108, See, P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, pp. 130-131

<sup>500</sup> See Ahidjo 1960 government where Charles R. Guy Okala features as minister of foreign affairs

<sup>501</sup> NAY, La Press du Cameroun, Vendredi 11/05/1962/No. 3615

<sup>502</sup> See *Mutation* of 22/01/2003 Published in [www.Cameroon-Info.Net](http://www.Cameroon-Info.Net) accesses on 04/03/2020, 3:30PM.

<sup>503</sup> Bebey Eyidi a long time opposition leader of UPC linings and MP for Wouri who in 1962 Joined Mbandja Malangue another ex-UPC militant in setting up a new party the *Partie Nationale Travailist Camerounais* (PNTC), finally declared his adherence to the UC Grand National party the same year May 1962. See NAY. La Press du Cameroun, 20/05/1962/ No. 3573. See also La press Du Cameroun, 11/05/1962.No. 3615

opposing the Grand National Unified Party. Meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 1962, Mbida, Okala, Matip, and Bebey Eyidi decided to put up a common front against the UC which they named; *Le Front National Unifié*<sup>504</sup>.

This front as they spelled it out in their manifesto was in strong opposition to the build-up of Northern dictatorship over the South and they presented themselves as the defenders of the South's interest against a Northern hegemony.<sup>505</sup> From the above account it is clearly deduced that ethno-regional and selfish interest greatly influenced the conduct and practice of politics in East Cameroon. For we see that because of ethno-regional and tribal selfish interests, the one-time leader of the Socialist party Charles Okala together with Bebey Eyidi of the PNTC and Mayi Matip of the UPC who since 1960 approved of the UC majority and openly gave their support to the *partie Unifié* and later *Grand Partie Unifié* as was the case with Okala and Bebey Eyidi<sup>506</sup>, were the same people in June 1962 who decided to change their political inclination by dropping Ahidjo and his *Grand Partie Unifié* to join Mbida in the radical opposition. There are no two explanations to this change of choice or ideological preference other than the fact in the new grand unified party, the Centre-South as an ethno-regional faction of the territory saw its political class left behind and feared total subjugation and political annihilation by an ever rising Northern influence. The only best way through which they could push through their discontentment was for them to abandon Ahidjo and the UC ideals to join the Southern opposition in a coalition they called *Front National Unifié*. Hence displaying the Dynamics of Militancy in East Cameroon.

Aside ethno-regional/religious influences that shaped militancy in East Cameroon, there was also selfish political Clientelism which dictated the conduct and practice of militancy in East Cameroon there by orchestrating inconsistencies in militancy which we have termed the Dynamics of Militancy. The manifestation of self-interest and political Clientelism was seen in the conduct of some frontline opposition leaders and their militants who in their persistent cravings for political dividends had to loss side of ideological fundamentalism and gave in to political mercantilism which had one single objective; that of maintaining Clientelist links with the ruling majority from where political dividends could easily be tapped. The outcome of this was a persistent inconsistency on the part of the East Cameroon opposition which continuously left the opposition bench to adhere to the ruling majority not because they approved of its

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<sup>504</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, P.130, See. Abel Eyinga, *L'UPC une Révolution Manquée*, Édition Chaka, Paris, Nd.

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid*, p.130

<sup>506</sup> See La Press Du Cameroun, 11/05/1962.No. 3615, P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, Pp.111&112

ideology, but simply because this majority could guarantee them political prominence and survival.

Charles R. G. Okala clearly fits into this Clientelist tendency that characterised East Cameroon post-independent politics; for, this experienced politician that animated the early days of French Cameroon nationalism and politics gradually climbed the steps of the political ladder in Cameroon and attained political prominence thanks to his ability in manipulating ideological fundamentalism with political mercantilism. We see him in the display of his political Art even before independence as was the case in 1952 where he left his opposition role and sided with the French administration to combat the UPC just to benefit administrative tolerance and favours from the French administration.<sup>507</sup> Okala's persistent Inconsistency was again displayed in 1960 just after the April legislative elections where having been elected to the assembly in which the ruling UC party commanded a weak majority, Okala chose to ally with the UC party to form a union government. The outcome of his support for the UC in this coalition gained him the privilege of grabbing a ministerial post in the Ahidjo government of 1960.<sup>508</sup> (See **Table VIII**)

This craving for prominence and political dividends compelled Okala to always down play his Socialist party ideology and adhere to the ruling UC majority and its policies<sup>509</sup>. Displaying the same attitude like Okala, were some militants of the DC party in the likes of Marigo Mbua and Jean Ekwabi who in 1960 resigned from the Mbida led DC party and adhered to the UC with a bulk of their supporters. Their craving for political recognition accompanied by presidential favour and confidence greatly motivated their change of political camp. Consequently their strategy effectively paid off as both were called up by Ahidjo into high office within the government and the UC party.<sup>510</sup>

In 1962, other DC militant like H. Effa and G. Atangana<sup>511</sup> craving for political recognition and visibility on the political scene, a privilege Mbida and his DC party could not offer, compelled this militants to also quit the party creating the *Independent Démocrates* which

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<sup>507</sup> See Eyinga, *L'UPC une Révolution Manqué*, Pp.63-67.

<sup>508</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, Pp.110-112

<sup>509</sup> In September 1960 when the UC launched its *Partie unifié* project the socialist party of Okala quickly adhere, two years after when the UC came up with another project for the grand *Partie unifié*, the socialist party of Okala still rushed to adhere.

<sup>510</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, Pp. 110-112

<sup>511</sup> See, *La Presse Du Cameroun*, No. 3.597, *Mardi 27/03/1962*.

easily adhered to the UC Grand National Party policy<sup>512</sup>. Unlike in the DC party where dissidents simply left and crossed over to the UC party, with the *Parti Socialiste Camerounais*, dissidents who left the party for the UC like Paul Pandahou<sup>513</sup>, did not just go alone but instigated their communities and all who joined the *PSC* because of him to quit as well and follow him in the UC<sup>514</sup>. With time political Clientelism in East Cameroon moved from an individualistic Clientelism to a kind of Ethno-Communal Clientelism. Here, politics had become more of which community supported the president and which community opposed him.

To this effect, defection within political parties in East Cameroon was no longer on individual basis but rather on ethnic or community basis as was the case on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 1962 where natives of the Wouri, Moungo, and Haut Nkam communities unanimously decided to quit the *Partie Socialist* and join the UC of Ahidjo<sup>515</sup>. As if to say it had become a competition, the Diedo Community led by its paramount chief M. Ekwalla Essaka, convened his traditional council and called on all his subjects both within and out of Diedo to follow him and join the UC party of Ahidjo<sup>516</sup> this call was echoed in his convocation of the traditional council on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 1962 which stated clearly that;

*Reunis en grand conseil coutumier ce samedi 5 mai a partir de 15heures sous convocation et sous la presidence du chef superieure M. Essaka Ekwalla Diedo, tous les chefs de quartier, tous les notables coutumiers tous les chefs de famille et une forte delegations de la juenesse Diedo ont eu a ...decide de la ligne de conduite a adopte a l'egard de tous ces mouvement politiques... decide a lunanimité que tous les ressortissants des deux sexes du canton de Diedo digne de ce nom et d'une manière generale tous les compatriotes habitant le territoire dudit canton doivent adhere en bloc au seul parti politiques de l'Union Camerounaise... Innvite tous les autre cantons et chefferies du departement du wouri en particulier et la region administrative... a imiter cette prise de position qui est... indispensable pœur la prosperité de notre pays.<sup>517</sup>*

All this clearly shows that the appetite for political recognition and dividends was so strong to the point of influencing opposition militants and even traditional authorities and their communities into clientelist links with the UC majority, thus contributed in enhancing dynamics in militancy which became the order of the day in East Cameroon politics.

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<sup>512</sup> See, *La Presse Du Cameroun*, No. 3.537, Lundi 5 /02/ 1962.

<sup>513</sup> Paul PANDAHOU was the federal administrative secretary of the *Parti socialiste Camerounais (PSC)*

<sup>514</sup> See, *La Presse Du Cameroun*, No. 3.621, 20 /05/ 1962

<sup>515</sup> *La Presse Du Cameroun* No. 3618, 16/05/1962 « le partie socialiste camerounais du Wouri, Mungo et du Haut-Nkam adhère à l'UC »

<sup>516</sup> *La presse du Cameroun*, No. 3613, 18/05/1962 « le grand conseil coutumier de Diedo invite tous ses ressortissants a adhéré à l'UC »

<sup>517</sup> *Ibid.*

Political power, terror and intimidation was another important aspect linked with Ahidjo's personality which greatly influenced militancy and rendered it inconsistent throughout post-independent Cameroon and in East Cameroon in particular. Following the October 1959 ALCAM parliamentary session which gave Ahidjo *les Pleins Pouvoirs*<sup>518</sup> a kind of exceptional powers which he justified at the time as a necessity to crush UPC terrorism, was to later become the basis on which he built his political hegemony and pre-eminence over the state by 1961. Variousy described as the man larger than life, the Emir of the Republic, the father of the nation, Ahidjo gradually conceived, realised and stamped his authoritarian personality in the minds and hearts of all Cameroonians starting in East Cameroon where his obsession for absolute power led him into designing and imposing the grand unified party on the entire political landscape.

This policy which was considered as an assassination of democracy and a deliberate conspiracy to impose an authoritarian Northern hegemony on the South of East Cameroon was challenged by the FNU of Mbida, Okala, Eyidi, and Matip. Intolerant towards such insubordination and challenge to his authority and personality which he qualified as subversion, Ahidjo hastily arrested and imprisoned these key personalities of the East Cameroon opposition thus sounding a clear message of threat and intimidation to the rest of the political class that he that is not with the UC Party is against it and the state or better still any opposition to Ahidjo and his party was tantamount to subversion<sup>519</sup>. The message was clear and well received by the rest of the political class and the territory as whole who immediately responded to these threats and intimidations by massively resigning and abandoning their original political ideals and choice to adhere and militate in the UC Party of Ahidjo.

Ahidjo's authoritarian personality which transmitted a clear message of terror and intimidation found fertile grounds within the UPC legal wing Party even before the arrest and imprisonment of the 4 dissident opposition leaders. For, following the ruthless and inhumane manner with which Ahidjo used his absolute powers to crush and eliminate the radical UPC freedom fighters, it dawn on the moderate or Legal Wing UPC militants that their life as individuals and their survival as a party depended on Ahidjo. This was again confirmed in

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<sup>518</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun Histoire...*p.334, See *Journal des débats*, ALCAM, session 1959-1960, p.14.

<sup>519</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p. 129.

January 1962 during the third UPC congress that held in Yaoundé precisely at Nkolbison,<sup>520</sup> where in the middle of deliberations that aimed at strengthening the party and its organs, a military intervention ordered by Ahidjo landed and dispersed the militants without them arriving at a final resolution.<sup>521</sup> All of this explains why Emma Otu 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the UPC provisional Bureau (*Bureau National Provisoire*) who had already made known his intension to rally the UPC behind the UC in April, made public a declaration in June 1962 announcing the total adherence of the UPC to the UC Grand national Party<sup>522</sup>. This was a complete shift from the initial position of the *Bureau Nationale Provisoire* (BNP) of the UPC party as held in November 17, 1961 where the party maintained that the constitution of a grand unified party was a good idea but the UC party of Ahidjo could not in any way be or serve as the unifying platform or party.<sup>523</sup> Thus by joining the UC, Emma Otu and the legal UPC had abandoned their ideology and convictions to rally behind Ahidjo and the UC not because they were in accordance with the form of the grand unified party, but rather because they feared to fall victim to Ahidjo's terror. Evidence is that Mayi Matip who refuse to align with the party's new position suffered arrest torture and imprisonment.

Under this dispensation of absolute power exercised by Ahidjo which breathed fear, intimidation and terror in the minds of the people, opposition gradually disappeared in East Cameroon by 1965 as all contradictions had been silenced by Ahidjo systematically. Even his arch opponents like A.M. Mbida, Mayi Matip, C. Okala and Bebey Eyidi after serving their prison term came out of prison politically demoralised with no other option but to also cross over into the UC<sup>524</sup> thus materialising Ahidjo's strategic plan of transforming Cameroon into a one-party state. With this it became very clear that militancy or political choice in East Cameroon was never a function of ideology, for ethnicity, politico-communal Clientelism and absolute autocratic power dictated political choice and militancy which completely lost sight of ideology and became inconsistent thus producing the dynamics of militancy.

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<sup>520</sup> NAY, *La presse du Cameroun*, No 3520 / 01/1962« ouverture du 3eme congrès de L'UPC »

<sup>521</sup> This UPC gathering in Yaoundé which was effectively authorised, was later disrupted before it could get to its end by Ahidjo because the unfolding of its discussions and resolutions pointed in the horizon a stronger UPC with open-minded leaders. Such information reaching Ahidjo at a time he was struggling to weaken all existing political parties and project the pre-eminence of the UC was not welcomed, so he had no option but to immediately authorise the dissolution or disruption of the UPC Congress which had earlier been permitted to hold

<sup>522</sup>Eyinga. *l'UPC : Une Révolution*, p.116, See, *La Presse Du Cameroun*, No 3644/ 18/O6/1962

<sup>523</sup> To the UPC militants at the time they insisted that formation of a grand unified party should be on the basis of all other existing parties losing their initial identity likewise the UC, and not that others all get swallowed up in the UC. See Eyinga A. *l'UPC: Une Révolution*. p.115

<sup>524</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.141, See, Eyinga, A. *l'UPC : Une Révolution*, p. 116

### III. The Uni-Polarisation of Political Competition and The Dynamics of Militancy: 1966-1990

With the total accapuration of the political machinery of the Federal Republic of Cameroon by Ahidjo within the CNU Party in 1966, it became crystal clear that the multi-polarity that characterised post-independence politics and gave political competition its essence had disappeared ceding the political arena to a Uni-Polarity which in its very essence puts to question political choice and objectivity. The Uni-Polarisation of politics in Cameroon by 1966, besides putting to question political choice and objectivity, equally posed a threat and serious challenge to democracy and political competition which even pushed many to swiftly conclude that the birth of the CNU marked the end of democracy and political competition in Cameroon<sup>525</sup>. This is out rightly not correct. Uni-Polarity may have dealt a serious blow to democratic principles but did not stop political competition. According to Luc Sindjoun<sup>526</sup>, the official prohibition of political parties by the regime and the struggle against clandestine opposition was a concrete indication of the existence of political pluralism. To expansiate his point further he says;

The banning of opposition parties, officially designated as enemies of the regime has been partially successful. Nevertheless, the mobilisation of ideological, institutional, and military means against clandestine opposition parties was their implicit recognition<sup>527</sup>.

In fact political competition never ended with Uni-Polarity. It was rather the political arena that changed to take Uni-Polar facet and this in no way stopped competition as political dissidents of the Ahidjo regime who had taken refuge in exile continuously competed for power, and even more serious was the competition within the unique CNU and later CPDM party. This in actual fact attest to the permanence and consistence of political competition in post-independent Cameroon which did not match-up with militancy that had remained permanently inconsistent and dynamic even within the Uni-Polarised context as was seen from 1966 -1990.

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<sup>525</sup> See, G. Moye Bongyu, "Democracy in Cameroon during the Monolithic Period: a Contradiction", in *Cameroon journal of democracy and human rights* (CJDHR), vol.2, NO. 2, of December 2008, pp. 4-16

<sup>526</sup> Luc Sindjoun, "Introduction To Political Parties And Democracy: Africa: Which Makes Which? *In Political Parties and Democracy Vol. IV* (eds) PRAEGER, Oxford, 2010, p, 6.

<sup>527</sup> *Ibid.*



### **i. From Dissidence to Conformism: Crossing the Carpet in a Uni-Polarised Political Arena.**

The Uni-Polarisation of politics in Cameroon following the birth of the CNU party in 1966, had serious ramifications in the practice and conduct of politics across the territory. Not only did it put to question Political Choice and militancy, it equally reduced the latter to an infernal dualism of conformity and dissidence. To be precise and clear, militancy in the single party system was no longer about political choice and engagement guided by ideological conviction<sup>528</sup>, rather it had become subjected to the autocratic pre-eminence of a single individual; Ahidjo and later Biya who prescribed just two options to the ever increasing number of partisans who were to either chose conformism or dissidence (subversion)<sup>529</sup>. Aware therefore of the fate that awaited anybody who took the path of dissidence, militants and political actors who earlier rejected the Uni-polar status quo and its ideals, were to later cross over in their numbers to conform to this status quo thus exhibiting the dynamics of militancy which was maintained even within the one-party framework.

It should be noted that within the CNU party existed a complex diversity of opinion and ideologies which could not easily be silenced. In Anglophone Cameroon as well as in Francophone Cameroon this complex diversity of opinions could be grouped into broad factions of two poles. For instance in Anglophone Cameroon we had Autonomist and Federalist while in the French speaking zone we had Conservatives and Liberals (*les Progresssist*). While the autonomist and the Liberals fall in the category of Dissidents, the Federalists and Conservatives were in the rank of Conformist. These 2 factions animated politics within the CNU and provoked serious competition for power and influence within the party that saw on several occasions the alignment or crossing over of dissidents into conformism, thus exhibiting the dynamics of militancy.

Following the December 1967 elections into the West Cameroon Assembly that came up just one year after the putting in place of the single party CNU, the Jua coalition constituted of staunch Autonomist continuously manoeuvred strategies to dictate their rule within the One-Party frame work. Evidence to this was the humiliating defeat they inflicted on the Federalist largely made up of the former CUC militants by sweeping 31 seats in the assembly leaving just

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<sup>528</sup> See Heywood, *Political Ideologies*: p. 243.

<sup>529</sup> By 1966, the Ahidjo scare compelled everybody to think, speak, act and write just that which was in accordance with the ideology of the CNU and its leader, as failure to do so was tantamount to subversion and a clear indication that one has chosen the path of dissidence.

6 seats to the Federalist.<sup>530</sup> This was a strong signal and even a provocative message to the CNU leader Ahidjo in which the Autonomist made it clear to him that in spite of the Uni-Polarisation of politics and the strong autocratic influence he had over Cameroon, they were still in control of politics in West Cameroon. This could not be pardoned by Ahidjo who had become at the time very intolerant and intransigent with contradiction or dissidence. Thus with immediate effect Ahidjo appointed S.T. Muna as Prime Minister of West Cameroon<sup>531</sup> replacing Jua and his coalition who thought they could contradict Ahidjo and survive in the CNU one-party system. Politically weakened and disarmed, A.N. Jua and E.M.L Endeley had just one choice to make that is to conform to the CNU ideals and survive within the politics of the time. This they effectively did in the Garoua CNU Congress of 1969<sup>532</sup> where they abandoned dissidence and completely conformed to the CNU status quo, hence earning appointment into the Political Bureau and central committee of the CNU.<sup>533</sup> (See **plate XII below**) Thus from dissidence, Jua and Endeley for fear of political annihilation, had to rethink their political position and cross over to conform to the one party status quo.

In the French speaking zone of the country, political competition within the party was essentially animated by conservatives and liberals. The tussle between this two factions in the party was very common and even intensified after the reign of Ahidjo in the mid 1980's when the CNU changed nomenclature to become the Cameroon People Democratic Movement (CPDM). Charmed by the “**Democratic**” emphasis in the new nomenclature of the one and unique party, liberals within the party thought it was time to come out of their reserve and dismantle the old order in the party that drew its legitimacy from state terrorism, political Clientelism, ethno-communitarian manipulations and incestuous links with state oligarchy. To this political class, the dismantling of the old order would be made easy by the new prescriptions and emphasis of the party on liberal democracy which preconized free political competition as the only means to attain power within the one-party framework. To this effect many of these liberals challenged the authority and influence of the party big wigs (conservatives) in all announced elections across the territory.

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<sup>530</sup> See Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p,155-157 , see N.N Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, p,201.

<sup>531</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, p,2

<sup>532</sup> P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p,155

<sup>533</sup> *Ibid*, p, 157.

**PLATE VIII: First CNU Central Committee Bureau following the 1969 CNU Congress of Garoua; Note the appearance of Jua and Endeley in the Bureau**



**Source:** Almanac 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. p, 134.

One of such cases where the liberals openly expressed their non-adherence to old order was in 1986 following the reorganisation of the basic organs of the CPDM party. While many militants and party organs neglected the democratic prescription of the party by endorsing the single list and consensus without contradiction<sup>534</sup>, in the Centre precisely in Yaounde (Mfoundi Section), a strong class of dissidents with liberal ideals led by Ndongo Alega decided to challenge the candidacy of Emah Basile as president of the Mfoundi section of the party.<sup>535</sup> This was a clear demonstration of strength and disapproval of the status quo which was not taken lightly by the top oligarchy of the party and its machinery. After several weeks of campaign that pulled a large following in his favour, it was to the amazement of many that

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<sup>534</sup> As was the case in the Wouri section of the Littoral, the Fako section where behind doors arrangements and consensus were made which totally defeated the purpose of election and political competition. Hence emerged at the helm of the section not the will of the militants but that of the party oligarchy. See, F.E. Boulaga, *Démocratie de transit*, Pp, 40 &41.

<sup>535</sup>. Boulaga, *La Démocratie De Transit* , p, 40.

Ndongo Alega at the last minute of the competition decided to withdraw himself and conform to the status quo he earlier castigated and was ready to challenge in an electoral process of free competition. In his own words he said ;

*Le parti court ver une profonde division et donc la mort. Ma candidature me parait entrainer des réactions qui vont à l'encontre de nos idéaux et objectifs et menacent particulier son unité et sa dynamique de paix par conséquent ... J'ai décidé de la retirer*<sup>536</sup>

By withdrawing his candidature on the day of election it was very clear that Ndongo Alega had officially crossed the carpet from a dissident <sup>537</sup> in the camp of liberals, to a conformist of the old status quo. Thus Alega in his inconsistency in upholding change exhibited the dynamics of militancy in the One-party framework.

Like Ndongo Alega in the Centre province, Jean Jacques Ekindi in the Littoral Province was another outstanding liberal (Progressist) within the unique party framework who clearly and openly showed disapproval of the existing status quo for its persistent obstruction to democratic practices and free political competition. In 1987, following the October 25<sup>th</sup> Municipal elections which created a strong political effervescence across the country especially in the southern part of the country where the Progressist movement (Liberals) was more accentuated than the north<sup>538</sup>, many became hopeful that by their competence, probity, efficiency and active engagement as militants they would make their entry into the councils through free political competition<sup>539</sup>. It was this strong zeal for change, free and fair political competition that pushed militants in the likes of Jean Jacques Ekindi to present a list headed by himself without party scrutiny and in opposition and contradiction of the party hierarchy<sup>540</sup>. This was in effect dissidence and total rupture with the old order characterised by Clientelism, godfatherism, regionalism, and the diktat of party discipline. After having done a fantastic job in convincing the electorate and public opinion who all saw in Ekindi the victorious candidate

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<sup>536</sup> See, *Le Messenger* N° 83 of 18-25 March 1986

<sup>537</sup> Though Alega advanced reasons for last minute declination of his candidature to have been motivated by the need to preserve unity and cohesion within the party which appeared threatened by his dissident action, in actual fact he was not talking out of conviction. For he later made it clear that as the Election Day approached his supporters as well as himself became victims of threats and intimidation from party and even state hierarchy. See. Boulaga, *Démocratie de transit*, p, 41.

<sup>538</sup> The northern part of the territory is not very much involved in this political effervescence because the culture of contradiction, opposition and political competition was not part of the people's culture. That is why since 1966 until 1987 mayors have always been appointed in these parts of the territory of which in the South they emerged through an electoral process though manipulated to the core.

<sup>539</sup> See, *Circulaire numéro 005/RDPC/CC/PN/87* In Cameroon Tribune 19/09/87.

<sup>540</sup>. Boulaga, *Démocratie de transit*, p, 46.

and the man who could successively break the chains of the old order and its monotony, Party hierarchy at the last minutes took everyone by surprise as instead of J.J. Ekindi, they made Emmanuel Dooh Priso the Mayor of Douala I Municipality<sup>541</sup>.

This was indeed the diktat of the party over the electorate, for Emmanuel Dooh Priso who was 6<sup>th</sup> in the list of councillors could not have won elections against Ekindi top of the list if they were allowed to freely compete in elections. Receiving the verdict of the party hierarchy Jean Jacques Ekindi the liberal, instead of remaining faithful and consistent in his contradiction and opposition of such practices within the party, rather accepted the verdict and conformed to the old status quo of the one-party system. Thus from dissidence, Jean Jacques Ekindi moved over into conformism, an action he was later compensated for in the 1988 legislative elections wherein without being a candidate to these elections his name surprisingly featured among the 180 parliamentarians<sup>542</sup>. By wavering in his political engagement, Jean Jacques Ekindi openly exhibited inconsistency in his militancy or better still the dynamics of militancy within the one-party framework.

Besides political competition within the one-party, there was equally a fierce political battle between the Yaoundé regime and the UPC exile wing. Though internal rebellion had been systematically silenced in 1971 following the arrest and execution of Ernest Ouandie, a good number of dissidents who had rejected the extended hand of Ahidjo in 1960 continuously multiplied schemes to overthrow the neo-colonial status quo endorsed by Ahidjo and perpetrated by Biya. Thus throughout the monolithic era UPC dissidents who had taken refuge in exile remobilised their troops and militants for an eventual take-over of political power in Cameroon. Unfortunately these dissidents, in the execution of their political agenda to takeover power in Cameroon, they were faced with a strong diplomatic offensive launched against them by Ahidjo as well as internal dissensions which caused many to abandon the cause while some simply crossed the carpet, joined the one-party and conformed to the neo-colonial status quo. One of such dissidents who had to convert himself to conformism was the Prince Dika Akwa Nya Bonambela. (See **Plate XIII below**)

This descendant of the Akwa Dynasty who by 1951 had started militating within Student Movements in Europe was to later become a key actor of the anti-imperialist movement

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<sup>541</sup> See *La Gazette* N° 593 du 16/11/87

<sup>542</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie de transit*, p, 53.

in Africa and Cameroon in particular. After having petitioned the UN in 1957 requesting Cameroon Independence and Reunification, Dika Akwa had to join UPC radicalism and even led a branch of the UPC rebellion (*Force de Liberation Nationale du Cameroun*) **FNL**CAM.<sup>543</sup> Though he accepted Ahidjo's general amnesty and opted for national reconciliation by integrating the legal wing of the UPC in 1960, Dika Akwa continued to preach anti-imperialism condemning the neo-colonial status quo incarnated by Ahidjo. This led to his arrest and imprisonment in 1961 where after serving 5 years jail term he was freed and decided to vacate back to his university and research career in France<sup>544</sup>. Two years later, Dika Akwa after failing to realise any meaningful success in his anti-imperialism campaign decided to abandon dissidence and reconverted himself to conformism in 1968 by joining the CNU unique party<sup>545</sup>. Through this spectacular action taken by Dika Akwa during an extraordinary section meeting of the CNU party in the Wouri section<sup>546</sup>, it became clear that Dika Akwa had crossed the carpet from a UPC dissident to a CNU conformist. Thus displaying in public his inconsistency in militancy which we have qualified as the dynamics of militancy.

#### **PLATE VIII: Prince Dika Akwa Nya Bonambela: From Dissidence to Conformism**



**Source:** [www.Peuplesawa.com](http://www.Peuplesawa.com) Accessed on 7/04/2020

<sup>543</sup> See Prince Bétoté Dika Akwa Nya Bonambela in *Peuple Sawa* of 21/08/2007, [www.Peuplesawa.com](http://www.Peuplesawa.com) Accessed on 7/04/2020

<sup>544</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>545</sup> See NAY. « Douala, Le Prince Dika Akwa Nya Bonambela Adhere a l'UNC au cours d'une réunion extraordinaire de la Section Départementale du Wouri » in *La Presse du Cameroun* 10/11/1968

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid.*

Another spectacular display of the dynamics of militancy in political competition in Cameroon during the uni-polarised era was exhibited by Woungly Massaga. (See **Plate XII**) Like Dika akwa, Woungly Massaga adhered to UPC anti-imperialist ideology while still a student in Europe. His outstanding engagement as militant of the Union National des Etudiants Kamerunais (UNEK) movement in France propelled him to helm of the movement as president<sup>547</sup>. Together with other young Cameroonian students in France Woungly Massaga animated the UPC section of France, and their activities had serious bearing in Cameroon to the point of provoking Ahidjo to launch a strong diplomatic offensive with French authorities which led to their eventual dismissal and expulsion out of France in the 1960's<sup>548</sup>. Following their expulsion from France, Woungly Massaga and his mates took the direction of Accra in Ghana where the leaders of the UPC party had taken refuge<sup>549</sup>. It was therefore in Ghana that Woungly Massaga integrated the leadership of the UPC party and together with his young comrades, (Ossende Afana, Michel Ndoh, Tchapchet, Njiawe), etc. they injected a good dose of their youthful exuberance and dynamism which in 1962 led to the reorganisation of the party giving birth to a new structure that became known as the *Comité Révolutionnaire*.

The birth of this structure took the party leaders by surprise to a point where Abel Eyinga had to qualify the move taken by this young militants as “*le coup du comité révolutionnaire*”.<sup>550</sup> This sudden transformation within the Exile wing of the UPC orchestrated by the young militants from France, saw the complete relegation of the fundamental UPC leaders to the margin and the total accapuration of the party by these young students from France. Greatly influenced by communist ideals, they launched from exile two military

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<sup>547</sup> S. Kala Lobe et Jean Claude Abena, « Sans Eux, Pas D'Unité ? » in *Jeune Afrique Economie*, N° 152, Février, 1992, Pp, 156-158.

<sup>548</sup> Eyinga, L'UPC Une Révolution Manquée, p. 130.

<sup>549</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>550</sup> *Comité Révolutionnaire* here refers to the new UPC organisational structure that emerged in exile precisely in Ghana where most of the Party Leaders had taken refuge. This new structure which was masterminded and created in Accra by the young UPC militants expelled from France was to serve as the new leadership of the party and was composed of Ernest OUANDIE, Abel KINGUE, Michel Ndoh, Ndongo Ndiye, Njiawe Nicanor, Osende Afana, and WOUNGLY Massaga. To the fundamental leaders of the party the condition under which this structure was put in place could be qualified as a *coup* because they were all taken aback, and did not know of any congress that elected these individuals to such post in the party. The information secretary Jean-Martin Tchapchet in order to give legitimacy to this action, brandish a communiqué said to have been published by Ernest OUANDIE convening a congress on the 13 September 1962 in which 600 representatives of the different branches of the party and defence units of the ALNK took part. Though his name featured in the new bureau, Abel KINGUE casted much doubts on the said commune for it was practically impossible for an assembly of 600 people to meet in clandestinely back in Cameroon and even if it was the case OUANDIE would obviously inform him. Because of such doubts many dissociated themselves from the *Comité Révolutionnaire* provoking serious division within the Exile wing of the UPC.

offensive operations into the Cameroon mainland in 1966 and 1967 respectively with the objective of overthrowing the neo-colonial regime of Yaoundé<sup>551</sup>. While Osende Afana loss his life in the operation of 1966, Woungly Massaga narrowly escaped death abandoning his troops in the Congo forest of the South of Cameroon<sup>552</sup>. Unable to realise the UPC dream and greatly demoralised by the execution of the last UPC homeland commander Ernest Ouandie in 1971, Woungly Massaga relocated to Senegal where he later in 1974 started a new movement known as *Manifest Pour La Démocratie au Cameroun* (MANIDEM)<sup>553</sup>.

This new movement which to Massaga was a reincarnation of the *Comité Révolutionnaire*, continuously militated for free and independent Cameroon and Africa as a whole. Away from the former military approach, Woungly Massaga opted for a new method in fighting the Neo-colonial government of Cameroon which consisted of an aggressive anti-imperialist propaganda disseminated through newspapers, tracts and other forms of literature<sup>554</sup>. The continuous existence of the UPC through the MANIDEM was in effect a strong threat to CNU leader and his government who at the time did not accept contradiction but were constantly opposed and contradicted from abroad by WOUNGLY Massaga and the large following of UPC militants and supporters in exile. All this in effect was to qualify WOUNGLY Massaga as a Dissident who in every aspects opposed and castigated the neo-colonial regime and the institutionalised dictatorship sustained by Ahidjo across the territory.

To the great amazement of the political class in 1982, WOUNGLY Massaga who had in all aspect shown great disgust for imperialism and its continuous advancement in Cameroon through the neo-colonial regime established in Yaoundé, was to openly come out of his dissidence to offer or put himself at the service of Paul Biya the Successor of Ahidjo. This not sufficient enough, he went further in 1990 to resign from the UPC/MANIDEM and pledged his support for the one-party (CPDM) leader Paul Biya<sup>555</sup>. This in effect was a change of view and ideology which many had difficulties to comprehend, for after spending a greater part of his life in opposition, rebellion and total dissidence with the Neo-colonial status quo, Woungly Massaga finally came out in 1982 and 1990 to conform to that same Neo-colonial status quo he

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<sup>551</sup> See EYINGA, *L'UPC : Une Révolution Manquée*, Pp.131-138.

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>553</sup> See *Du Comité Révolutionnaire Au MANIDEM. L'infiltration Et Le Danger Marxo-Stalinien* in erichimi2.free.fr Minidem accessed 08/04/2020.

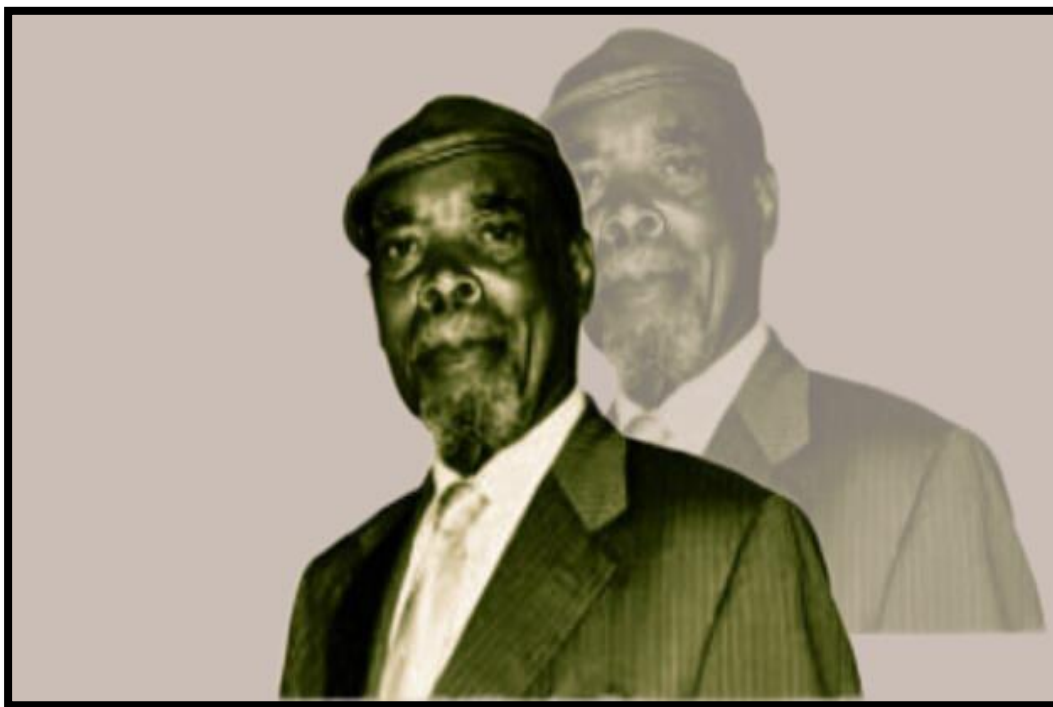
<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>555</sup> S. Kala Lobe et J. Claude Abena, « Sans Eux, Pas D'Unité ? », Pp, 156-158. See, Abel EYINGA, *L'UPC : Une Révolution Manquée*, Pp.131-138



fought for years. Thus, from Dissidence Woungly Massaga cross the Carpet to conform and adhere to the Neo-colonial Status quo, thereby displaying ideological inconsistency in militancy that characterised political competition in the one-party era<sup>556</sup>.

**PLATE IXV: Rene Jacques N’Gouo Woungly Massaga from Dissidence to Conformism**



Source: adapted from <https://dzaleu.net>

**ii. Conformism Abandoned for Dissidence: The Return to Multipartism and the Rise of a Vibrant Civil Society**

Monopartism or the Uni-polarisation of political competition in Cameroon that took effect in June 1966<sup>557</sup> was in total contradiction and violation of the provision of the Cameroon constitution<sup>558</sup> which *de juree* made Cameroon a multi-party state. This constitution stated clearly in its Article 3 that;

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<sup>556</sup> It should be noted that change of camp as displayed by Woungly Massaga was not of an exceptional exclusivity. For, this this spectacular change of side had become a common trend taken by all exiled UPC militants who returned to the country and most especially those from the UPC section of France. For almost all of them who returned to Cameroon immediately had to abandon their cause and joined the unique party. Thus from dissidence which they portrayed in their posture of Nationalist and anti-imperialist while in Paris, they all reconverted themselves to conformist and partisans of neo-colonialism while in Cameroon. This indeed was a clear display of the dynamics of militancy in the one-party era of political competition in Cameroon. See, Abel EYINGA, *L’UPC : Une Révolution Manquée*, Pp.134

<sup>557</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.144.

<sup>558</sup> See Article 3 of the Federal Constitution

(1) Political parties and groups may take part in elections, they shall be formed and shall exercise their activities in accordance with the law. (2) Such parties shall be bound to respect the principle of democracy and of national sovereignty and unity<sup>559</sup>

By these constitutional provisions, political parties were to freely exist and exercise their activities as regulated by the law of 67/LF/19 of June 12, 1967 which established clearly the status of political parties as being Associations, and stated that the “declaration to form an Association shall be made by the founder at the prefecture of the area where the association has its headquarters”<sup>560</sup>. Thus by this legal instrument, there was no administrative impediment to the formation of political parties in Cameroon. Unfortunately, despite this legal enabling facilities and backings no new political party emerged in Cameroon between 1966 and 1990. Rather the existing ones systematically dissolved themselves and adhered to the one and unique CNU party hence conforming to the autocratic and Presidentialist status-quo forced on Cameroonians by Ahidjo and his successor Biya against their wish and against the constitution of the republic.

Fortunately enough, this Clientelist and Presidentialist regime maintained in Yaoundé through autocracy with the sole aim of silencing popular democracy and political contradiction, could only survive until 1990. For, confronted with the dynamics of international politics of the early 1990’s, the Yaoundé regime had no choice but to accept what Samuel P. Huntington called the “Third wave of democratisation”<sup>561</sup>. This new spirit of liberal Democracy which blew across the globe caught many Cameroonians in its web thereby provoking a political transformations of mind-sets which caused many to rise above their fears and challenged the existing old order and forcing it to align with the new order which had become indispensable for the survival of young states in the international community. In doing this, the Cameroon political class had completely shifted or abandoned Conformism to embrace Dissidence which became a strong weapon for effective democratisation and the reinstatement of multiparty politics as well as the affirmation of an independent and vibrant civil society in Cameroon. Thus from Conformism, a cross section of the Cameroon political class moved into Dissidence hence introducing

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<sup>559</sup> Lawson Kay, (Eds) *Political Parties and Democracy*, Vol. IV, PRAEGER, Oxford, England, 2010, p.19.

<sup>560</sup> See, Federal Law N° 67/LF/19 of June 12, 1967. See Herman Touo, *Multiparty Politics and Democratic Construction in Cameroon*, in *Political Parties and Democracy*, (Eds) Vol. IV, PRAEGER, Oxford, England, 2010, p.19.

<sup>561</sup> H. Touo, “Multiparty Politics and Democratic Construction in Cameroon”, p.9. See also, Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

another interesting episode in the dynamics of militancy that characterised post-independent politics in Cameroon.

An episodic drama of inconsistent militancy characterised by perpetual dynamics is a good description of post-independent politics in Cameroon. From Dissidence to Conformism in the late 1970's, militancy in Cameroon was to enter another phase of its dynamism in the early 1990's. This time it was rather the abandonment of Conformism for an active engagement into dissidence. One of the first scenes on which the dramatic switch from conformism to Dissidence was exhibited was in Anglophone Cameroon (former British Southern Cameroons). This territory known to be harbouring "Nice Trusting, Loyal People" as was described by Malcolm Milne<sup>562</sup> were victim of double betrayal<sup>563</sup>. First by the British and later by the Republic of Cameroon who in their determination to assimilate/Annex the territory within the French culture, violated all federal and legal dispositions agreed upon in 1961 that guaranteed some level of autonomy for the territory and its people within the Cameroon frame work. After carrying out many acts of dissidence to affirm its autonomy, the former British Southern Cameroon and its people were compelled through Ethno-Clientelist and Presidentialist manoeuvres by the Yaoundé regime to accept and conform to an ideology of Unity that did not accept diversity and difference of thought and opinion. After several years of peaceful cohabitation in a non-consensual unity<sup>564</sup>, the "Nice Trusting Loyal people" who had accepted and conform to the Presidentialist Status-quo of Yaoundé, later had to abandon such conformism to re-engage into dissident militant activities in the late 1980's.

The switch from Conformism into Dissidence by the nice trusting people of Anglophone Cameroon was provoked by the unilateral decision of Paul Biya to finalise the assimilation/Annexation process earlier engaged by Ahidjo in 1972 in total violation of Article 46 of the federal constitution<sup>565</sup>. In 1984 when Paul Biya passed the constitutional reform that further changed the form of the state from a unitary state to the simple Republic of Cameroon as it was in 1960, the political class in Anglophone Cameroon which had earlier conform to the

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<sup>562</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroons Revisited*, VOL. II p.17.

<sup>563</sup> *Ibid*, p.22.

<sup>564</sup> The 1972 Unitary state that was put in place following the 20th May referendum officially marked the end of the federal system that was consensually agreed upon by the two states. In 1972 Ahidjo unilaterally violated the federal constitution by tempering with the form of the state without consulting the people southern Cameroons who were the direct concern. He rather organised a general referendum which could not objectively and in transparency depict or reflect the needs and aspiration of the people of southern Cameroons which has always been autonomy.

<sup>565</sup> See Federal Constitution of 1961, Article (46).

Yaoundé annexationist policy stood up in total disapproval of this continuous annexation policy, thus engaging into dissident militant activities. Among the first to take a radical move in addressing the issue was Fon Gordji dinka .

On a personal initiative Dinka decided to challenge the annexationist, Clientelist and Presidentialist regime of Yaoundé which had earlier forced them into submission and conformism. In total dissidence, Gordji Dinka officially reacted against the 1984 constitutional reform and called on all Southern Cameroonians to mobilise and come out of the conformism imposed on them so that they can end Annexationism forced on them by Yaoundé. To make things even serious he called for the complete restoration of the independence of Southern Cameroons which he baptised as the Republic of Ambazonia<sup>566</sup>. As if to say his call was harkened to, we immediately saw a strong mobilisation of Anglophone elites in the major cities of Cameroon, and the result was the birth of pressure groups and civil society organisations like the Anglophone Patriotic Alliance (APA) the Free West Cameroon Movement (FWCM) and the Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM).<sup>567</sup> In total defiance of the conformism imposed on them by the annexationist regime, the elites through these organisations reawakened Anglophone nationalism and militancy which continuously contradicted, challenged and threatened the One-Party CPDM regime with separation.<sup>568</sup> Thus from militancy in conformism, Anglophones (elites) switch over to dissidence exhibiting the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon.

One of the emblematic politicians of the former British Southern Cameroons who in a spectacular manner abandoned conformism to engage in dissidence politics was John Ngu Foncha. Being the founder and fervent militant of the KNDP, Foncha was at the centre of politics that brought about the Cameroon federation in 1961<sup>569</sup>. After having secured some level of autonomy in the federal system, Foncha became victim of betrayal by the Yaoundé regime he had given trust. The regime which systematically depossessed the Anglophones of their autonomy through the workings of divide and rule, ethno-clientelism and Presidentialism succeeded to maintain Foncha, the one-time adversary and major threat to Yaoundé in an uncomfortable conformism which he submitted himself to from 1966 -1990<sup>570</sup>. After

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<sup>566</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon* , p.320.

<sup>567</sup> See, Dze-Ngwa, "National Unity pp.176-177.

<sup>568</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>569</sup> See the 1961 Foumban conference

<sup>570</sup> See Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, Pp.119-157.

conforming to the Yaoundé annexationist regime by adhering to Ahidjo's manoeuvres, joining the CNU and later CPDM in which he was compensated with the privileged positions of Vice president of the federal republic, member of the polit-bureau of the CNU, Vice president of the CPDM, and Grand Chancellor of national orders, Foncha in 1990 abandoned Conformism. Caught in the wave of the new Anglophone nationalism of the late 1980's provoked by the 1984 constitutional reforms, Foncha could not be indifferent to the plight of a people he had brought in the union with the Republic of Cameroon. Thus with a heavy heart of frustration and great disappointment, Foncha abandoned his uncomfortable conformism and switch into dissidence by submitting a letter of resignation from the CPDM in 1990<sup>571</sup>. From a militant of the one-party status quo, Foncha crossed the carpet to join the Anglophone civil society in which he promoted dissident militancy and continuously made advocacy for the autonomy of the Former British Southern Cameroons.

As Anglophone nationalism gained grounds in the major cities of Cameroon, so also had emerged anti-conformist ideologies in these cities and especially among the francophone political class which until 1990 had not yet developed the courage to come out of the conformist status quo imposed by the one-party regime of Yaoundé. Maintained in this status quo by fear and ethno-Clientelist links with the regime, many barons and advocates of uni-polarisation lavished incessant praises on the head of state Paul Biya while exposing and brandishing the virtues of monolithism<sup>572</sup>. In spite of all these campaigns which were an anticipated reaction or response to the already perceived anti-conformist ideology gaining grounds within the party and in the public space, it still did not stop anti-conformism from gaining full impetus in the 1990's across the territory. Thus, Exasperated by the curtailment of liberties, frustrated by the non-respect of democratic principles and inspired by the prevailing international dispensation Yondo Mandengue Black openly came out of the silence conformism that had encapsulated many against their wish to set up the *Comité de Coordination pour le Multipartisme et la Démocratie*. This platform which was to steer the movement toward an eventual return to multipartism in Cameroon never had the opportunity to materialise its goal as the leader Yondo Black and its members were all arrested on the orders of the autocratic regime on the 19<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>571</sup> Dze-Ngwa, "National Unity, p.172

<sup>572</sup> We could read on the numerous banners and placards brandished during such demonstrations the following information; "No precipitated Pluralism" "down with the detractors of the New Deal" "no to precipitous multipartism" "freedom without limit is anarchy" "we support Paul Biya FON OF FONS; we say no Multi-party""multi-party killed while single party now heals" "no to suicidal multi-partism" "No to disorder no to adventurers" let us build our country in peace, priority to economic recovery" see, Herman Touo, Multiparty politics, Pp.19 &20.

February 1990.<sup>573</sup> Intended to completely silence Anti-Conformism and consolidate Uni-Polarisation, the arrest of Yondo Black and co. rather provoked a democratic upsurge within the civil society that was effectively exploited by John Fru Ndi who in May 1990 Launched the Social Democratic Front (SDF) Party hence marking the return to multiparty democracy.<sup>574</sup>

From the action taken by Yondo Black, we see the exhibition of the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon, for after accepting the monolithic status quo and conforming to the dictats of the Yaoundé regime Yondo Black decided to take a bold step by abandoning the earlier adopted conformism to embrace dissidence which permitted him to affirm and propagate the anti-conformist ideology which later brought back pluralist democracy and revived the civil society in cameroon.<sup>575</sup>

Like Yondo Black, John Fru Ndi who equally aspired for freedom and true democracy could not remain encapsulated in an imposed conformism. Having embraced the anti-conformist ideology which had gained grounds in the major towns of Cameroon as a result of the Anglophone plight, and his inability to find expression within the CPDM, Fru Ndi decided to abandon conformism by dropping out of the CPDM to challenge the repressive regime of Yaoundé and its unique-party status quo by launching a new party the SDF on May 26<sup>th</sup> 1990<sup>576</sup> to rival the unique-CPDM. This was a strong act of dissidence carried out by an erstwhile conformist hence exhibiting the switch over from conformism to dissidence which in essence puts on the limelight the dynamics of militancy in post independent Cameroon.

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<sup>573</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*, p.63.

<sup>574</sup> Interview with, E. Kah Wallah, President CPP , 55yrs, Yaounde 15/09/2020

<sup>575</sup> See Interview with Yondo Black, Former Batonnier of the Cameroon Bar. Association on *La Verite En face* Equinox TV, Douala, 19/10/2020.

<sup>576</sup> The decision to create the SDF emanated from a working group put in place in 1989 called the “89 study Group”. in the first meeting of this group held in November 1989 the main concern was the writing of a memorandum to the UN exposing human rights violation and discrimination against the Anglophones. Meeting in December 1989 the focus this time was the Anglophone problem after having established existence of the problem the next meeting was schedule for February 1990 it was therefor in this meeting that the idea to create a party emerged. For, the members of the group realised that it was more effective creating a party that would handle all the problem faced by Anglophones than writing a memorandum that was just addressing Anglophone marginalisation. From this meeting the decision to transform the 89study group into a party was taken and the party that emerged from ashes of this group was the SDF launched on the 26 May 1990. See Jerome F. Gwellem, *Fru Ndi and the SDF Revolution*, Unique Printers, Bamenda, 1996. See also Interview with Yondo Black, Former Batonnier of the Cameroon Bar. Association on *La Verite En face* Equinox TV, Douala, 19/10/2020.

**PLATE X: John Fru Ndi: The 1990 Hero of Anti- Conformism**



**Source:** Almanac of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independences.. p.127.

As Fru Ndi set the pace for the return to political pluralism by forcefully launching the SDF in total dissidence and defiance of all “illegal”<sup>577</sup> administrative restrictions and military repression it became clear that the chains of fear which had held Cameroonians captive since 1966 were broken<sup>578</sup>. (See **Plate XVI below**) Evidence to this was the massive adherence of the population who challenged forces of the repressive regime in a public demonstration in Bamenda<sup>579</sup> thus symbolising the beginning of a democratic revolution that caused a massive

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<sup>577</sup> All administrative restrictions on multiparty politics were greatly considered illegal as they were not backed by any legal text institutionalising monolithism. Thus being a *defacto* one-parti state, *dejure*, Cameroon was essentially a multiparty state. Reason why all administrative restrictions on pluralism could simply be termed “illegal”

<sup>578</sup> Interview with Martin Fru, SDF Militant and eyewitness of the May 26<sup>th</sup> 1990 launch, 63Yrs, Yaounde, 26/09/2020

<sup>579</sup> Interview with J. Ngayi, eyewitness of the May 26<sup>th</sup> 1990 launch, 62Yrs, Yaounde, 26/09/2020



switch over of the political class and civil society from an age long politics of conformism to a new politics of dissidence.

**PLATE XVI: Launch of the SDF amidst Heavy Militarisation and Bloodshed in Bamenda**



**Source:** Dibussi Tande, “Memory Lane May 26’ 1990 The SDF is Launched in blood and Tears” in *scribbles from the Den*

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Taking the lead in this dynamics of militancy was the Cameroon Barr association. After several years of complicity with the state by endorsing injustice and remaining silent to the promulgation of obnoxious laws that violated human rights and curtailed civil liberties<sup>580</sup>, the Cameroon Barr Association which had indirectly made its choice of conformism with the one-party status quo and its repressive regime, was to eventually catch the flame of the democratic revolution of the 1990's. Ignited by Bar. Yondo Black, the democratic revolution had to pull the entire Barr Association in a collective synergy out of conformism into dissidence. The first action in challenge and defiance of the system was a sit in strike instigated by Barr. Ben Muna the then President of the Barr Association on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 1990<sup>581</sup> which consisted of boycotting all Public hearings in courts across the territory. The effectiveness of this strike action which besides fragilising the justice system of the state, and enhancing the propagation of anti-conformism, it equally went a long way to expose the weakness of the one-party system and its cruelty. Thus bringing the regime to make concessions starting with the abrogation of the law on subversion, the restoration of freedom of movement and the liberation of political prisoners amongst which was barrister Yondo black and Djeukam Tchameni.<sup>582</sup> This revolutionary dynamics undertaken by the Cameroon Barr. Association, revealed the incontestable influence and role the civil society could play in the democratisation process of the country.<sup>583</sup> Thus the impact of its anti-conformist ideology were felt in other sectors of the society like the press, the academia, the church and among the youths in universities and major cities of the republic who by the early 1980's were all full of exasperation.

As soon as Yondo Black and Fru NDI had posed land mark actions in defiance of conformism in the 1990's, their actions immediately received the blessings of an important institution of the Roman Catholic Church in Cameroon (the Cameroon episcopal conference). After falling out with the state on several political issues throughout the 1960's and 70's<sup>584</sup>, the church which was the only remaining voice of the oppressed decided to remain silent to injustice and conformed to the autocratic status quo and its ethno-clientelist manipulations which found fertile grounds in the metropolitan Ach Diocese of Yaoundé. At a time injustice, oppression, poverty, human rights violation, and autocratic cruelty were the trademarks of the

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<sup>580</sup> See loi d'exemption

<sup>581</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*, p.63.

<sup>582</sup> *Ibid.* p.66.

<sup>583</sup> Interview with Anonymous, Traditional Ruler

<sup>584</sup> See the case between the catholic Bishop of Nkongsamba ( Ndongmo) and the state of Cameroon where the church is accused of fraternising with UPC rebels, P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.161.

Yaoundé regime, the church which ought to stand with the oppressed and cry out loud for the return to democracy and pluralism was rather quick to grace anti-democratic demonstrations of the ruling One-party CPDM with church services( mass)<sup>585</sup>. This in effect was the highest level of the manifestation of state complicity with the church and a sign of perfect conformism with the autocratic status quo. To the greatest amazement of all Cameroonians, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1990,<sup>586</sup> the Cameroon episcopal conference through the voice of its president Cardinal Chistian Tumi officially abandoned conformism against the wish of the Ethno-Clientelist manoeuvres of the Yaoundé arch Diocese<sup>587</sup> and in a dissident tone published a pastoral letter in which the church took side this time around in opposition to the state, castigating state terrorism, corruption, and the gross violation of human rights<sup>588</sup>. This sudden switch or change of political orientation by the church from a long-time conformism to eventually engage in anti-conformism (dissidence) constituted a hallmark in the Dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon. The church now in perfect synergy with the civil society, the new emerging political class and with the strong influence of the Cameroon Barr Association, successfully forced the government to make some democratic concessions in what became known as the 1990 laws.<sup>589</sup>

Though government had made some concessions by the end of the parliamentary session of December 1990, in which important laws on liberties were passed thus guaranteeing freedom of press, Association and the abolition of exceptional laws.<sup>590</sup> This was welcomed with a lot of reservation by the Cameroon Civil Society which still did not see the governments' demonstration of good fate in effective liberalisation<sup>591</sup>. For at the same time they put in place press freedom, censorship of the press still remained the order of the day. For at the same time they put in place freedom of association, NGO's and trade unions could still not operate

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<sup>585</sup> *Ibid*, p.62.

<sup>586</sup> *Ibid*, p. 65.

<sup>587</sup> It should be noted that Ethno-Clientelism which was use as apolitical weapon by Ahidjo and later Biya to consolidate their autocratic and presidentilist rule in Cameroon was equally used on the church, and the Yaoundé arch diocese provided fertile ground for the effective implementation of these divisive manoeuvres within the church. For, it was practically unimaginable and incomprehensive that after the conclave of Bishops (the episcopal conference) made public its communique on the socio-political and economic situation of the country which was bleak, the Arch Bishop of Yaoundé Jean ZOA under ethno-clientelist influences had to organise a press conference to oppose the general position taken by the episcopal conference. This could be seen as nothing else than a desperate move by the ethno-clientelist regime to hold back the democratic wheel which was already on high speed.

<sup>588</sup> See Cameroon episcopal conference pastoral letter of 03/06/1990

<sup>589</sup> See Touo, "Multiparty politics... p.21, see also law N° 90/56 of December 19, 1990.

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>591</sup> Interview with F. Ekane, actor Civil Society, 51yrs Douala 15/09/2020

freely<sup>592</sup>. All this further radicalised the private press in particular who in December 1990 also chose to come out of conformism and embrace anti-conformism (dissidence) which had become the dominant ideology at the time. In total defiance of the press restrictions and censorship institutionalised by the One-party status quo, Celestin Monga and Pius Njawe all of the private press decided to question the “good fate” fate of the Biya regime in a newspaper article which was published on the 27<sup>TH</sup> December 1990<sup>593</sup>. As a litmus test to the new laws on press freedom, the government blatantly failed to respect its own laws by arresting Celestin Monga and Pius Njawe on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1990<sup>594</sup>. As was earlier witnessed with the lawyers there was a rapid mobilisation of the private media and the entire civil society who all cried foul against state terrorism, injustice and human rights violation<sup>595</sup>. For effective mobilisation, a good number of civil society organisations like; the *Comité de Libération de Celestin Monga*, (CLCM) *Organisation Camerounaise de Droits de L’Homme* (OCDH) *Comité d’action populaire pour la liberté et la Démocratie* (CAP-liberté) and Human Rights Watch (HRW)<sup>596</sup> suddenly emerged out of conformism to embark on total dissidence with the Yaoundé regime. To this many civil society organisation was added the dissident voice of Lapiro de MBANGA alias *NDIGAMAN*<sup>597</sup> a music icon and inventor of Lapiroism<sup>598</sup> in Cameroon. Unlike the one-party status quo musicians and artist in the likes of Georges Anderson, Francis Bebey, Manu Dibango, and Ambroise Mbia also known as “*Les artistes de L’UNC de France*”<sup>599</sup>, who had completely conform to the Clientelist manoeuvres of the Yaoundé regime and accepted its oppressive, repressive and autocratic status quo, Lapiro De Mbanga emerged in the 1990’s as a symbol of rupture with the old order, thus taking Cameroon music out of conformism into dissidence.

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<sup>592</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*, p.67.

<sup>593</sup> See *Le Messenger* N° ??? Dec, 27/1990.

<sup>594</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*, p.68.

<sup>595</sup> Interview with P , Labah, Civil Society actor, 57yrs Yaounde, 30/09/2020

<sup>596</sup> *Ibid*, p.73.

<sup>597</sup> *Ndingaman* Simply means guitar player.

<sup>598</sup> Lapiroism is a composite language minted to communicate to the common people in a language they best understand. Lapiroism became popular in Cameroon between 1990 &1992, an era associated with the re-emergence of opposition political parties. Fluent speakers of Lapiroism were mostly taxi men benskinneurs, pushers, hawkers, peddlers, prostitutes, gamblers, prisoners, comen, musicians, and comedians.

<sup>599</sup> These Cameroonian artist with outstanding talents and international reputation who were better placed to used their art not only as a tool of Entertainment but also as a weapon of conscientisation and emancipation, chose to conform to the Yaoundé regime as praise singers. In fact their support to the regime and the frequent spectacular show they put up during CNU congress and political rallies prompted the public press to qualify them as “*Les artistes de L’UNC de France*,” see *Cameroun Tribune* N° 487/of 04 February 1976

The promptness with which the Cameroon civil society mobilised itself in the 1990's and the vigorous engagement of its members in militating against injustice, oppression, and autocratic cruelty, was a strong sign and demonstration of the symbolic abandonment of conformism to engage in Anti-conformist militancy (dissidence)<sup>600</sup>. This in effect was a change in political choice, and a total shift in ideology influenced by political exasperation and the new international dispensation of liberal democracy, which further exposed the dynamics of militancy in post independent Cameroon.

## **CONCLUSION.**

After putting on spotlight the political landscape of Cameroon from 1960 – 1990 one of the most revealing, prominent and evident picture that surface on our analytical lens has been the consistent and permanent inconsistency of political actors in their political engagements and militancy. Greatly influenced by Personality Traits, Ethical Principles, Ethnicity and Communitarian Clientelism, the conduct and practice of politics in Cameroon in its permanent dynamics greatly influenced the territories political evolution throughout post-independence. From the multi-polarisation of political competition to its Uni- polarisation and later liberalisation, political engagement and militancy has remained inconsistent and very dynamic as it kept on wavering between dissidence and conformism. Thus the dynamics of militancy as observed throughout post independent Cameroon was the result of intense political competition manifested both in multi-polar and Uni-polar party politics animated by political actors who in their struggle and zeal to influence policy and control power remained weak and vulnerable in the face of autocracy, ethnicity, and political manipulations. Hence from dissidence to conformism and vice-versa, political actors have permanently been on the move from one political front and ideology to the other as will be examined in the next chapter there by giving expression to the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon.

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<sup>600</sup> Interview with F. Tanga, Civil Society Actor, 48yrs, Yaounde, 27/09/2020

## CHAPTER FOUR

### “GREAT” FIGURES OF POLITICAL COMPETITION IN POST INDEPENDENT CAMEROON: CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DYNAMICS OF MILITANCY

#### INTRODUCTION.

One of the recent debates in Cameroon Historiography for the past years has been the debate around the concept **Great Figures**. Who should be considered great a Figure and who should not? Is the question that has divided Cameroonian Historians, as they all failed to unanimously agree on a common epistemological approach in the usage of the concept. Thus from this Disagreement emerged two schools which for the sake of this study we chose to identify as “Old School” and “New School”. Following the historiographical revolution undertaken by Martin Zachary Njeuma<sup>601</sup> who successfully down played the age-old European classics in favour of the teaching of a more contextualised History that incorporates in its writing the specificity of the African chronology and space, a new historiographical orientation saw light in the (YSH) Yaoundé School of History<sup>602</sup>. Inspired therefore by this new historiographical orientation, several initiatives were taken by Cameroonian Historians aimed at putting on the limelight the history of Cameroon<sup>603</sup>. Prominent in these initiatives was the valorisation of the memory of outstanding personalities who through their actions, “positively” influenced the course of Cameroon History.

Thus from these initiatives emerged the old school which became interested in “Great Figures” of Cameroon History and even institutionalised the teaching of great figures as a

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<sup>601</sup> M. Z. Njeuma (1940-2010), was an erudite Professor of History who made significant scientific contributions as Dean of the Faculty of Arts Letters and Social Sciences and as Head of Department of History of the University of Yaoundé I. As one of the precursors of the Yaoundé School of History, Njeuma made great contributions to Cameroon Historiography. Not only did he give it a bilingual touch, he equally imposed on the teaching and production of Cameroon History a new periodization that valorises African chronology and space., See, Abwa, “*Hommage Au Professeur, Martin Zachary Njeuma , Pofesseur Emérite (avril 1940 – avril 2010)*” in *Figures de L’Histoire du Cameroun XIX-XX Siècle*, Jules Kouoseu, Noubbissi M. Tchouake, (Eds), Harmattan, paris, 2012, See also T. M. Bah, “*Historiography Africaine: Afrique de l’Ouest Afrique Central,*” <https://www.Codesria.Org>, Pp.195-226.

<sup>602</sup> Jules Kouoseu, & Noubbissi M. Tchouake, (Eds) *Figures de L’Histoire du Cameroun XIX-XX Siecle*, Harmattan, paris, 2012

<sup>603</sup> See, Classics on the History of Cameroon by V.G. Fanso, V.J. Ngoh and E. Mveng.

course in the different state universities<sup>604</sup>. Contrary to this old school, emerged a new school of thought which put to question the notion of Great Figures by exposing the guilt of partiality and historical bias involved in the usage of the concept. Inspired therefore by the Works of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre<sup>605</sup> who in advocating “*L’histoire Total*”<sup>606</sup> suggested that a holistic approach to the study of history will be that which incorporates the totality of man, his milieu and activities, adherents of this new school have systematically dropped the word **Great** in the concept Great Figures and prefer to talk of **Figures** or “Great” figures. Agreeing with M. Bloch, who said; “...*plutôt de consulter sans cesse les grands premiers rôles de la pensée, l’historien trouverait peut-être plus de profit à fréquenter les acteurs de second ordre.*”<sup>607</sup> This new school in essence does not see any credible reconstruction of Cameroon’s past while excluding the role played by men and women of the “Second Order” (les *Oubliés*<sup>608</sup>) of which all personalities be it of the top or bottom class in their own way and time influenced the course of Cameroon History.

It is with this epistemological approach advanced by the New School that this chapter while putting on the limelight actors of the “first” and “second” order, examines their individual contribution in the enhancement of the dynamics of militancy in post independent Cameroon.

### **I. Front-line Actors of Competitive Politics and the Dynamics of Militancy in Post-independent Cameroon.**

The struggle for power throughout post-independent Cameroon has often put on the lime light two or several opposing forces who on a daily basis coined policies and ideas to win the support of the masses and control power. In this spirit of competition that exposed the conduct and practice of militancy in Cameroon, emerged a perpetual dualism involving on one hand Idea Bearers and on the other hand the Masses. In this dualist relation that appeared to be condescended, the idea bearers have often distinguished themselves as the livewire that brings vitality to the masses thus influencing their actions and choices. In the same way, the influence of ideas on the masses it should be noted were greatly conditioned by other material and

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<sup>604</sup> See, Abwa, Hommage Au Professeur, Martin Zachary *NJEUMA Pofesseur Emérite*, Avril 1940 – avril 2010.

<sup>605</sup> M. Bloch and L. Febvre were two prominent figures in Historiography and the founders of the Annals School of History in France. Their emphasis on the incorporation of the multi-faceted dimension of man in the writing of history greatly revolutionised historiography across the world

<sup>606</sup> “*L’histoire total*” as suggested by the Annals School of History? Is History that incorporates in its study not only Man but goes further to question his environmental, socio-cultural ,political and economic milieu which all together represent a whole of human activity in its totality.

<sup>607</sup> M.Bloch, *Le Rois Thaumatourges*, Paris Gallimard, p.348 cited in, J. Kouoseu, *Figures de L’Histoire*, p.11

<sup>608</sup> Abwa, « Les hommes de l’histoire : Quel model choisir pour les jeunes d’aujourd’hui ? » cited in Kouoseu, *Figures de L’Histoire*, p. 11.

psychological dispositions which often caused the idea bearer to change or modify their idea for a new one. In as much as the conduct of politics and militancy situates itself within a dualism of actors, that is; the idea bearer and the masses, the individual role played by idea bearer in influencing the masses or in adapting to the response from the masses greatly contributed to the dynamics that characterised militancy in Cameroon. This was the case with Ahmadou Ahidjo.

**i. Ahmadou Ahidjo, Flirting with Federalism and Neo-Colonialism to Secure Unity**

Variouly described as autocratic and pragmatic<sup>609</sup>, Ahmadou Ahidjo was the first to be conferred with the exalting task of presiding over the destiny of Cameroon as a modern state. Born on August 24<sup>th</sup> 1922\*, in Nassarao (Garoua)<sup>610</sup> Ahidjo was among the few and rare pupils from North Cameroon to have gained admission into *L'école supérieure de Yaoundé* where besides gaining professional training as Post & Telecom expert, was also exposed to public administration which eventually brought him into politics. His political career was marked by very challenging beginnings as his first attempts of being elected into the Assembly of the French Union failed<sup>611</sup>. By 1947 he finally made his entry into the ARCAM as delegate a position he held until 1952 where he became parliamentarian at the ATCAM and at the same time councillor in the Assembly of the French Union. In 1956 he was elected into the new ALCAM where he successfully ascended the ladder of power as second Prime minister of French Cameroon and later president of the Republic of Cameroon in 1960 which became Federal Republic in 1961<sup>612</sup>.

In his pragmatism, Ahidjo ruled post-independent Cameroon from 1960 -1982 using several policy orientations (African Socialism, Planned Liberalism, Self-Reliance Development Democratic Governance etc.) which all pointed towards the materialisation of one principal political ideology which was National Unity. Besides being his central ideology, national unity had become for Ahidjo a *credo* which he was determined to uphold with all his energy and against all odds. It was in defence of national unity that Ahidjo went into successive

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<sup>609</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.9.

<sup>610</sup> *Ibid*, p.24.

\*Contrary to other sources which situate Ahidjo's date of birth in 1924, There are several indicators that rather point to 1922 for instance his various official documents used to run elections in to the territorial assembly, the French Union assembly, and French national assembly all carry the year 1922. Added to this his first document established through court decision to establish his date of birth so as to enrol in school carries still the year 1922. Based on this authoritative documents and family member's accounts the date 1922 is very close to historical truth than the other date. See, Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p24, Ngoh, *History of Cameroon since 1800*, p.349, see also Encyclopedea Bitanica.

<sup>611</sup> See CNOC, ALMANACH of the 50th Anniversary of Independence and Reunification of Cameroon, p.65.

<sup>612</sup> *Ibid*.

confrontations with the Anti-imperialist UPC Ideology and the Autonomist ideology of the KNDP and Federalist of the former British Southern Cameroons. These confrontations in effect, were among the many political battles that characterised competitive politics in post-independent Cameroon, and Ahidjo in the quest and defence of national unity remained permanently inconsistent (dynamic) in his engagement and militancy, thus positioning himself as an actor that sufficiently gave expression to the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon.

**PLATE XI: President Ahmadou Ahidjo in between Power and Imperialism**



**Source:** Lawrence Chi Nyamngoh Photo Archives

Ahidjo between 1960 and 1982 has been very inconsistent or better still very dynamic in his conduct of politics in Cameroon. Ascending to power at a time colonialism was under high criticism and African nationalist upsurge at its peak, Ahidjo who had been following political developments at the time chose to align with the colonialist against the nationalist. His



identification with colonialism in 1960 which gained him the privilege of seating at the helm of power was a clear indication of his adherence to the Neo-colonial ideology. This ideology which nationalists had fought and were still determined to fight with their life and blood was to unfortunately find fertile grounds in Cameroon and this was against the wish of the UPC nationalists who raised up the Anti-imperialist ideology to fight Neo-colonialism. This therefore marked the kick-start of competitive politics in post independent Cameroon and the competing ideologies were Neo-colonialism against Anti-imperialism.

While Ahidjo mobilised the political class and state institutions to consolidate the Neo-colonial status quo, the UPC Anti-imperialists who until now had been banned and forced to go underground and be operating clandestinely, equally mobilised militants with whom they multiplied acts of rebellion against the Neo-colonial state. This in effect brought about a clash of ideas with resounding sparks of violence on both sides, and each of the sides determined to consolidate its ideology, win mass support and of course control power. Ahidjo, for the sake of consolidating power in the guise of National Unity decided on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1960 to uplift the ban that had long been slammed upon the UPC by the colonialist<sup>613</sup>.

This decision which was received by the Anti-imperialist with a lot of scepticism was to become a great mark of political calculation on the part of Ahidjo who by the decree did not only provoke dynamics within the UPC Anti-imperialist camp<sup>614</sup>, but equally shifted himself away from his Neo-colonial ideology to embrace Anti-imperialism. Though it was clear that by uplifting the ban and permitting the UPC to participate in national politics, Ahidjo was indirectly giving legitimacy to his power which was seriously contested in a large portion of the territory controlled by the UPC militants, this did not still cancel the fact that Ahidjo technically shifted away from the Neo-colonial ideology to reason with the Anti-imperialist UPC. Thus from a Neo-colonialist background, Ahidjo shifted in his ideological principle to embrace and incorporate the Anti-imperialists in his policies all in the guise of achieving National Unity. So we can say therefore that, for the sake of power in the guise of national

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<sup>613</sup> The uplifting of the ban on the UPC by Ahidjo on the 25th February 1960 was accompanied by a general amnesty in May 5th 1960 which pardoned all political crimes committed by the UPC militants and permitted them to come out the bushes and engage in national politics within the UPC as a legal party. See A. Eyinga, UPC: *Une révolution manquée*. p.111.

<sup>614</sup> To the fundamentalist UPC militants the legalisation and general amnesty granted to the UPC by Ahidjo was simply a means to an end and so in their scepticism did not yield to Ahidjo's call. While the fundamentalist remained in the bushes a cross section of their militants accepted the extended hand of Ahidjo, thus provoking great dynamics within the UPC which persisted throughout the political evolution of Cameroon.

unity, Ahidjo successfully moved from Neo-colonialism to Anti-imperialism hence giving expression to the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon.

After exhibiting political dynamism by “abandoning” the colonial status quo to embrace the anti-imperialist ideology of the UPC and consolidate unity, later events came to prove that Ahidjo’s decision and action was power motivated and so lacked every element of ideological conviction. For this reason, it would be erroneous to conclude that Ahidjo had abandon neo-colonialism for anti-imperialism. Rather in his incessant quest for power which could only be consolidated in a United Cameroon, Ahidjo persistently flirted with ideological principles. Thus from a pro-imperialist who did not accept anti-imperialism and its contradictions, Ahidjo in mid-1960 moved away from the neo-colonial ideology to embrace the anti-imperialist UPC and its contradictions. This was to only last as long as power and unity were consolidated, for by the end of 1961, Ahidjo was again going to move away from the anti-imperialist status quo he had accepted to return to the Neo-colonial Jacobinist status quo he earlier inherited in 1960 from France at independence.

The return of the UPC (legal wing) on the political scene in 1960 after legitimising Ahidjo’s power, was to later become a major threat to him and his power. For though he accepted the UPC anti-imperialist ideology to thrive on the political scene of Cameroon, he did not in any way tolerate a strong and organised UPC party in Cameroon<sup>615</sup>. Having already emitted the idea of a Grand Unified National Party, tolerating the growth and emergence of strong opposition would mean jeopardising the neo-colonial status quo and the Jacobinist power-oriented state that was in construction. Thus in line with his policy of making the UC the only prominent party in the territory, Ahidjo decided in January 1962 during a UPC congress in Yaoundé, to put a halt to the activities of this party<sup>616</sup> and enjoined its militants to renounce Anti-imperialism thus integrate the grand Unified National party where they were to all contribute in consolidating Unity. This drastic measure taken by Ahidjo in 1962, was to mark his official return to the Neo-colonial imperialist ideology which militants of the UPC legal wing had thought he abandoned earlier<sup>617</sup> for collaboration with Anti-imperialism. Though some UPC militants like EMMA OTTU conformed to this Neo-colonial status quo imposed by Ahidjo others like Mayi Matip put up a strong objection and opposition to this Neo-colonial

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<sup>615</sup> See Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo* p.129.

<sup>616</sup> Eyinga, *L’UPC : Une Révolution Manquée*, p.114.

<sup>617</sup> Ema Ottu one of the front line leaders of the legal wing of the UPC was the first to openly adhere to the call for a unified party by Ahidjo thus provoking dissensions within the legal wing of the UPC which caused great dynamics within the party.

ideology imposed by Ahidjo. The result was the start of another political struggle between Neo-colonialism and Anti-imperialism. Though Mayi Matip of the legal anti-imperialist UPC wing had joined forces with the rest of the radical opposition<sup>618</sup> in French Cameroon to maintain Ahidjo in the anti-imperialist ideology, their efforts were all futile. For Ahidjo through the well-conceived repressive state machinery, successfully forced Matip and his allies into conforming to the Neo-colonial status quo, thus allowing the political scene in 1966 completely in the hands of the Neo-colonial regime. This in essence was an affirmation of Ahidjo's Neo-colonial and Jacobinist ideology which consistently changed or experienced dynamics each time Power and Unity were on a balance.

Thus as an initial advocate of the Neo-colonial ideology, Ahidjo in 1960 for the sake of power in the guise of unity conformed to the exigencies of Anti-imperialism. After consolidating power, realising again with the rise of opposition and the growth of the Anti-imperialist ideology which still had to threaten his power, Ahidjo instead of conforming to the democratic exigencies of the Anti-imperialist rather chose to re-appropriate his initial Neo-colonial ideology and its Jacobinist status quo. This therefore puts Ahidjo on the lime light of the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon. For at one point we see him operating within the Neo-colonial status quo, at another point we see him renouncing Neo-colonialism to adhere to the exigencies of Anti-imperialism and later again we see him renouncing anti-imperialism and its exigencies to adhere back to Neo-colonialism and its Jacobinist status quo. Such inconsistencies were at the base of several dynamics that characterised competitive politics in post independent Cameroon.

Besides his inconsistency in addressing the UPC anti-imperialist ideology which had become a major concern for the regime, Ahidjo was equally confronted with reunification question from which emerged the Anti-annexationist ideology propagated by Southern Cameroons Federalist and advocates of the Autonomy status quo.

Ascending power in 1960, Ahidjo had position himself as a veritable instrument for the advancement of French neo-colonial interest in Cameroon. Concluding independence with France within the framework of the French Union, Ahidjo in 1960 had automatically closed every possibility of an eventual reunification as was clamoured for by the UPC Anti-imperialist militants<sup>619</sup>. This position of Ahidjo was politically calculated and justified by the fact that

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<sup>618</sup> This radical opposition was championed by Andre Marie Mbida, Bebey Eyidi and Mayi Matip who jointly put up the *Front National Unifié* (FNU) to effectively fight Ahidjo the neo-colonial status quo he was gradually establishing in Cameroon.

<sup>619</sup> See, Eyinga, *L'UPC : Une Révolution Manquée*, p.44.

reunification as demanded by the UPC would mean associating British Southern Cameroons in the independence negotiations which automatically would jeopardise French Neo-colonial interest. For there could not be any reunification without a renegotiation of independence accord since British Southern Cameroons could not join French Cameroon within the framework of the French Union<sup>620</sup> as this would clearly imply annexation. It was in the face of this complex political issue that Ahidjo chose to adopt inconsistent politics that is; wavering from Pro-reunification (Federalism) to Anti-reunification (Annexationism) just to secure absolute power in the guise of Unity.

From the moment French Cameroon became independent in 1960 under the Neo-colonial status quo Reunification with its federal exigencies became an impossibility as Ahidjo determined to uphold the Neo-colonial status quo rejected all attempts for a renegotiation of independence and reunification terms. Between February and May 1960 Ahidjo turned down 3 initiatives taken by officials of British Cameroon to discuss reunification with him<sup>621</sup>. After affirming his Anti-reunification stance and upholding the Neo-colonial status quo, Ahidjo suddenly realised that his party had been put in a minority following the April 10, 1960 parliamentary elections<sup>622</sup>. These results which put Ahidjo's power on the balance forced him to come out of Anti-reunificationism to adopt reunification officially by concluding talks with Foncha in October 1960 whose result were published in a joint communique in which both parties agreed to reunify Cameroon within a Federal Sovereign State where each Federated state will enjoy full Autonomy<sup>623</sup>.

This indeed was the first shift in ideology by Ahidjo vis-à-vis Federalism which he long resented for fear of jeopardising the Neo-colonial status quo and most especially his power. Confronted therefore with fear of losing power Ahidjo had to rush and embrace reunification and its Federal status quo so as to secure some more support from the British Northern Cameroon which was expected to increase his political base hence consolidate power which was gradually threatened by a Southern (*Sud*) majority<sup>624</sup>. Thus from Anti reunificationism, Ahidjo crossed the line to join pro-reunificationism and the Federal status quo just to secure Power in the guise of Unity.

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<sup>620</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>621</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p.244.

<sup>622</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.110.

<sup>623</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p. 244.

<sup>624</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p119.

Having endorsed Reunificationism and the federal status quo which was materialised with the putting in place of Federal constitution on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1961 it became clear that a new Cameroon had emerged with new ideological principles based on Federalism. This ideological orientation adopted by Ahidjo in October 1960 it should be noted loss its essence from the moment British Northern Cameroons was lost to Nigeria<sup>625</sup>. Thus Federalism which was seen as a means of uniting Cameroonians and consolidating power, rather gave birth to another strong pole of power in the British Southern Cameroons with whom reunification was concretised.

Realising the determination with which Southern Cameroonians wanted to affirm their Autonomy within the Federal status quo, Ahidjo who did not have a very strong influence on them feared an eventual “Great Southern Alliance”<sup>626</sup> that could be a threat to his power. It was in the face of this fear that Ahidjo who had earlier affirmed himself in favour of Federalism had to drop the federalist agenda and started talking of National Unity with the aim of annexing the former British Southern Cameroons and imposing his authority and power throughout the territory. By violating the terms of the Federal constitution in appointing Federal inspectors<sup>627</sup> for the Federated states Ahidjo had officially turned his back against reunification and the Federal status quo. This sudden change of ideological orientation which produced great dynamics in the state of West Cameroon was to be finalised in 1972 with 20<sup>th</sup> May referendum where Ahidjo finally left the Federal status quo to consolidate power in the Guise of National Unity.

Thus from an Anti Reunificationist/Federalist, Ahidjo crossed the line to embrace Pro-Reunificationism/Federalism, an ideology he barely supported until December 1961. When through a decree<sup>628</sup> he officially made his return to Anti-federalism/Reunificationism. In flirting with the idea of Federalism, Ahidjo had just one objective; that is consolidating Power in the guise of Unity. This in essence highlights the inconsistency of Ahidjo in the conduct and practice of politics in Cameroon which altogether gave expression to the dynamics of militancy that became a major characteristic of competitive politics in post-independent Cameroon.

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<sup>625</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>626</sup> By a “Great Southern Alliance” we imply the coming together of all political organisations in both the south of French Cameroon and the British Southern Cameroons thereby creating a strong opposition against the North which was completely dominated by the UC party of Ahidjo.

<sup>627</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, Vol. II, p. 133.

<sup>628</sup> See Decree N<sup>o</sup> 61-DF-15-Dec/20/1961.

## ii. **John Ngu Foncha: Architect of Reunification Wavering with Autonomy**

Recognised by many as the father of reunification, John Ngu Foncha was “a nice little man in his own lights and quite sincere”<sup>629</sup>. Son of a prince in the *Nkwen* Royal family, Foncha was born on June 21, 1921 in Bamenda<sup>630</sup> where he attended primary school from 1926 -1931 before moving to Nigeria where as a student he got exposed to politics and militancy which greatly influenced his political conduct upon his return to Cameroon. His first steps in militancy in Cameroon were made within the Bamenda Catholic Teachers Union (YSH) which he was the founder. He later integrated the Cameroon Youth League (CYL) and was made secretary of the Bamenda Branch<sup>631</sup>. After participating with Endeley in several initiatives like the setting up of the Kamerun United National Congress, (KUNC) the Cameroon National Federation (CNF) and the Kamerun National Congress (KNC) which became the political platform for the expression of Kamerun nationalism, Foncha was to finally fall out with Endeley and the KNC on the basis of ideological differences<sup>632</sup>. The result of this break up was the founding of the KNDP in 1955 by Foncha which became a veritable weapon at the service of a political cause which was secession and autonomy for the British Southern Cameroons with eventual prospects of reunification.<sup>633</sup>

This political agenda that was well designed by the KNDP, became of top priority to J. N. Foncha, a priority for which he dedicated his entire political career pursuing. Worth noting is the fact that, in pursuing the above political agenda, Foncha persistently wavered with his political conviction and militancy thus criss-crossing ideological lines of autonomy and conformism all in the hope of securing Federalism. This altogether triggered serious dynamics in militancy which Foncha contributed in giving expression.

The ascension of Foncha to power as PM of Southern Cameroons in 1959<sup>634</sup> was a great mark of trust given to him by the majority of the territory who were convinced by his political agenda and trusted him as the one to liberate them from the bondage of political servitude and subservience hence affirm their right to self-determination and statehood. This perception of the man was to suddenly change by 1960 when Nigeria was to become independent and no arrangements had been done in the same line to determine the fate of the Southern Cameroons.

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<sup>629</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, Vol. I, p.310.

<sup>630</sup> *Ibid*, p.279.

<sup>631</sup> Ebune, *The Growth of Political Parties In Southern Cameroon 1916-1960*, p. 149.

<sup>632</sup> See, ALMANACH of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of independence and reunification of Cameroon. p.69.

<sup>633</sup> See, Secession Charter of the Kamerun National Democratic Party

<sup>634</sup> Aka, *Southern Cameroons*, p???

It was here that the fervent advocate of Secession and Autonomy for Southern Cameroons with prospects of Reunification got trapped into the conspiracy theories of Britain which at the time discarded any thought of independence for Southern Cameroon or Reunification with the Republic of Cameroon<sup>635</sup>. The conspiracy was to ensure a total integration of the British Cameroons into Nigeria.<sup>636</sup> Caught in a conspiracy which contributed in imposing a two-option plebiscite on the people of Southern Cameroons in 1961 thereby eliminating every possibility of autonomy and statehood, Foncha the Autonomist had to criss-cross ideological lines to conform to the dictats of the conspirators who imposed on him Reunification.

**PLATE XVIII: John Ngu Foncha in between Power and National Unity**



**Source:** ALMANACH of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of independences.

Knowing so well that Reunification was not a plebiscite winning option<sup>637</sup>, Foncha still conform to the plebiscite that eliminated autonomy as an option and reconverted himself to a

<sup>635</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon*, Vol. I, p.255.

<sup>636</sup> Ibid.

<sup>637</sup> Aka, *Southern Cameroon*, p.230.

Reunificationist<sup>638</sup>. This action which he displayed in a double standard politicking,<sup>639</sup> secured him victory with the reunification option at the plebiscite and of course highlighted a great mark of inconsistency in his militancy which in effect triggered serious dynamics in militancy throughout the Southern Cameroons.

Having negotiated a way out of the impasse with the plebiscite victory recorded in February 1961, Foncha was to again find himself at the crossroad of two ideological orientations which competed or contradicted the KNDP Ideal of autonomy which he was still bent on achieving with reunification. These competing ideologies were Federalism and Annexationism. Assured of Ahidjo's good fate as was expressed throughout the pre-plebiscite consultations with the Republic of Cameroon, Foncha did not doubt at any instance that a victory at the plebiscite will be a first step towards consolidating an autonomous and sovereign Southern Cameroon with equal status as the independent state of Cameroon. This assurance of equality, autonomy and sovereignty which Ahidjo persistently mentioned as the basis on which Federalism was to be conceived with eventual reunification, ended up in a mirage by July 1961.<sup>640</sup>

Foncha who was already convinced together with his party leaders of the setting up of a loose Federation (confederation) following their consultation talks in Yaoundé 22-24 May 1961, surprisingly saw their proposed draft put aside and the highly centralised constitutional draft prepared by Jacques Rousseau tabled for discussion<sup>641</sup>. In total disapproval, Foncha and his cabinet with the assistance of B.G Smith (attorney general) proposed a counter proposal which adhere to the form of Federation published by Foncha prior to the plebiscite<sup>642</sup>. Following the stalemate that characterised the Yaoundé talks and the Buea Tripartite Conference, Foncha had to convene the Bamenda All Party Conference where the aim of reconciling Southern Cameroons delegates behind a unique Federal constitutional project was successfully attained. At the Bamenda Conference, all controversial issues of sovereignty emanating from the constitutional draft co-signed by Foncha, Ahidjo and Assale were evoked and a consensual

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<sup>638</sup> It should be noted that Foncha's conformism to Reunification and abandonment of autonomy was not well received within the KNDP party. Some of his subalterns called on him to resign as leader of the party for not being able to stand for the party's ideal of autonomy at the UN and for succumbing to an imposed plebiscite with just two options which exclude independence. See V. J. Ngoh, *Constitutional Developments in Southern Cameroons 1946-1961*, CEPER, Yaoundé, 1990, p.168.

<sup>639</sup> See, Awah, "Party-Politics and the dynamics of militancy". p.97.

<sup>640</sup> See, Summit Magazine, The Reunification story, special edition, N° 22, Oct- Dec 2013, pp,24-27.

<sup>641</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.122.

<sup>642</sup> See Patrick Johnson, Report CO554/2249 XC 3406 of 19 July 1960 and PRO CO554/2188 XC 3406 of June 26, 1961, cited in Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon*, Vol. I, p.231/232



constitutional project was prepared and carried to Foumban where to the greatest dismay and consternation of the Southern Cameroons delegates, a constitutional draft prepared by the Ahidjo's government was imposed on them for discussion. This unacceptable reality which appeared unimaginable in the eyes of the Southern Cameroons delegates, was to end up prevail as all they could do was to ask for more time to go through the Ahidjo-centralised constitution and make their observations. Foncha who had all along militated for a sovereign Southern Cameroons states at this point in time was expected to weigh-in for a balance and equitable discussion at Foumban, but for reasons that can only be registered under the prism of political calculation especially as he was faced with the rising pressure from the CPNC opposition<sup>643</sup> and the urgency to concretise reunification, Foncha had to surrender the fate of Southern Cameroons to the "good will" and "good faith" of "our francophone brothers" massively led by Ahidjo<sup>644</sup>.

In fact, Foncha suddenly diverted from his initial ideology of autonomy for Southern Cameroons in a loose Federation to conform to a Yaoundé made Federalism that corresponded to nothing else but Annexationism. In outright criticism of Foncha's attitude, Nde Ntumazah blames him for not standing up against Ahidjo and for being subservient to him. He even dismisses all excuses later advanced by Foncha such as the need for peace, the fear of his safety, and maintains that Foncha as a true militant and leader had to stand up for his ideas even to point of making the supreme sacrifice<sup>645</sup>. Thus in essence from the political conduct displayed by Foncha we see the sudden switch from the camp of Autonomist to the camp of Conformist, hence putting on the limelight the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon.

Having compromised and conform to the Yaoundé-made Federalism forced on the Southern Cameroons by Ahidjo, Foncha still emerged from Foumban as a hero on the simple basis that he could still secure equality and sovereignty for Southern Cameroons in the highly centralised Federal constitution. The ability of Foncha and his delegation to insert important clauses like Article 9(1) which ensured the executive national president was elected by universal suffrage in direct and secret ballot, Article 18. Which imposed a 50% (simple majority) of votes in each of the Federated states for a law to be promulgated, and Article 46(1)<sup>646</sup> which was a permanent safeguard of the Southern Cameroons interest as a minority within

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<sup>643</sup> See, Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, pp. 154-160. See also. Nfi, "Ethnic Tensions During the 1961 Plebiscite and Reunification, p. 64

<sup>644</sup> See NAB Press Release No 1468 of July 1961

<sup>645</sup> See, Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, Vol.I, p.143. see also *Ntumazah Auto biography*, pp.169-173

<sup>646</sup> See, 1961 Federal Constitution in its Article 9, 18, and 46.

the centralised federation, remained a land mark victory for Foncha in his struggle for an Autonomous Southern Cameroons. This ideal for which Foncha militated all through his political career persistently clashed with Ahidjo's Annexationist ideology, and each time such a clash emerged, the intrigues of political competition and calculation always caused Foncha to compromise his struggle for autonomy and conform to Annexationism. A good case in point was the signing of the 20<sup>th</sup> December 1961 decree by Ahidjo that divided the two state Federation into 6 administrative units placed under Federal Inspectors.<sup>647</sup> This decree that completely subverted the Federal constitution in all dimensions was received with bitterness in the entire Southern Cameroons and the KNDP in particular, not only did it exposed the people to the cruelty and barbarism of the Federal *Gendarmes*, it as well put to question the sovereignty of Southern Cameroon as the Presidentialist Neo-colonial regime was now reigning supreme over the Federated states<sup>648</sup>.

Placed under serious criticism from within the KNDP and the CPNC opposition, Foncha and his federal ministers who were accused of complacency with Ahidjo had to multiply encounters with Ahidjo within the UC-KNDP Working group<sup>649</sup>. Unfortunately their efforts to push forth reforms from within the Working Group did not yield fruit, rather Annexationism kept on gaining grounds with the intensification of emergency laws and the putting in place of the Grand Unified National party idea.

Highly criticised in West Cameroon and perceived as a nuisance to Ahidjo's Annexationist project, Foncha was politically isolated on two camps and with the outbreak of the KNDP crisis of 1965 which polarised the party causing the emergence of the CUC, he completely lost control of the KNDP party.<sup>650</sup> Realising the gradual downfall of his political legacy achieved in Fomuban and the increasing rapprochement between Ahidjo and Muna, Foncha chose to abandon the struggle for Autonomy to conform to Annexationism by dissolving the KNDP in the Unique CNU Party in 1966. This act of conformism displayed by Foncha, was dictated by the intrigues of political competition and calculation and as such kept him in a compromising situation which dealt a serious blow not only to Federalism but also the Autonomy of Southern Cameroon that was completely dissipated in the 20<sup>th</sup> May 1972 "peaceful" revolution. Thus like Fonlon, Foncha had to "leave the war to be fought by their

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<sup>647</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroons*, vol. II, p.133.

<sup>648</sup> See, Justice Nyo' wakai, *Under the Broken Scale of Justice : The Law and my Times*, Langhaa, Bamenda, 2009 pp.22-24

<sup>649</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.139.

<sup>650</sup> See Ngemasong, "Crisis within the KNDP

forbearers”<sup>651</sup> with total conviction that “sweeping and hiding dirt under the carpet does not solve any problem but rather postpones it for the day of reckoning”.<sup>652</sup>

In total conformism, Foncha the one time brave patriot was suddenly converted into a “Hand clapping *Alleluia* boy”<sup>653</sup> endorsing Annexationism against Autonomy until 1990 when he decided to come out of his conformism in lamentations<sup>654</sup> to embark on an Anti-Annexationist campaign. We therefore see from the above analyses a brave Foncha who having been shaped by the nationalist struggle in British Cameroons, strived for the Autonomy of the territory but each time faced with the intrigues of political competition he persistently wavered away from the struggle for autonomy to conform to Annexationism dictated by the Neo-colonial status quo implanted by Ahidjo since 1960. Thus from Autonomy, Foncha Embraced Annexationism and Later reconverted himself to the Autonomy cause hence giving expression to the dynamics of militancy that characterised politics in post-independent Cameroon.

### iii. Solomon Tandeng Muna: The Federalist Turned Unitarist

Born in 1912 in Ngye-mbo, Momo Division of the present North West region of Cameroon, S. T. Muna was a front-line actor and architect of the modern Cameroon State we have today. Particularly noted to be inconsistent in the conduct of partisan or competitive politics<sup>655</sup>, Muna all along his political career flirted with so many distinct political ideologies thus giving significant bearing to the dynamics of militancy that characterised competitive politics in Cameroon.

Having passed through the local Authority school in Bali to the Government school Bamenda which opened to him the doors of GTTC Kake in Kumba, Muna was to finally embrace the world of ideas and politics after travelling out for studies in London and Nigeria where he came in contact with nationalist sentiments in the early 1950’s.<sup>656</sup> Being at the centre of the Southern Cameroons Nationalist Movement that gained momentum with the 1953 Eastern Regional crisis, Muna’s dismissal from the Eastern Regional Government of Nigeria was to become one of the principal motivation for the struggle for an independent and

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<sup>651</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, vol. II, p.67.

<sup>652</sup> Ibid.

<sup>653</sup> See A. Mukong, *What is to be done*, Bamenda, July 1985, p.4. Cited in Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon*, Vol. I, p.152.

<sup>654</sup> See Foncha’s Resignation letter from the CPDM

<sup>655</sup> See, Awah, “Party-Politics And The Dynamics of Militancy. p.98.

<sup>656</sup> M. Dike Delancey, Rebecca Neh Mbuh, M. W. Delancey, *Historical Dictionary Of The Republic Of Cameroon*, Scarecrow press, Plymouth UK, 2010, p. 255. See also Ebune, *The Growth of political Parties*. p.140.

autonomous Southern Cameroons. His engagement to this struggle led him to participate in the setting up of the KNC party in which he militated for autonomy which he later compromised to stick with Endeley because of Ministerial advantages even after the latter had completely reversed the ideology of the KNC to be in favour of autonomy but by returning to Nigeria.<sup>657</sup> It was only until 1958 that Muna, for Ethno-Clientelist motives crossed the carpet<sup>658</sup> to re-embrace full autonomy for Southern Cameroons by adhering to the KNDP platform of Secession, independence and later reunification.<sup>659</sup> His engagement with the KNDP as a front line militant opened for him several doors of opportunities first within the KNDP government of Southern Cameroons in 1959 as (minister of Trade and Industry) and later in the Federal government of the Federal Republic of Cameroon from 1961 – 1968 as (minister of Transport, Mines, Post and Telecommunications)<sup>660</sup>

**PLATE XII: S.T Muna, Flirting with Autonomy and Annexationism**



**Source:** ALMANACH of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of independence

Deeply rooted in the KNDP ideology, S.T. Muna was at the for front of the 1961 plebiscite campaigns and the post plebiscite conference which finally ended with the reunification of Southern Cameroons with the Republic of Cameroon in a sealed deal reached

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<sup>657</sup> See. Awah, "Party-Politics and the Dynamics of Militancy. P 99.

<sup>658</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>659</sup> See KNDP Secession Charter,

<sup>660</sup> See, ALMANACH of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of independence and reunification of Cameroon. p.139.

at Fouban which institutionalised a new Federal Republic of Cameroon in October 1, 1961. The advent of the new Republic was the beginning of a new struggle in the political career of Muna who as KNDP frontline militant was privileged to gain appointment as minister in the Federal government. This position he occupied in Yaoundé, to many KNDP militants was considered strategic and a great opportunity for the party to secure its ideological interest, that is; the sovereignty of Southern Cameroons by influencing Government policy at Federal level. Unfortunately Muna and the rest of the Southern Cameroons Federal ministers fell short of these expectations of the party and its followers who in August 1963 at the KNDP Bamenda Congress openly accused Muna and the other Federal ministers of collusion with Yaoundé to completely Annex Southern Cameroons<sup>661</sup>.

These accusations which were glaring and evident weight seriously on Muna to the point of jeopardising his chances of being elected to the helm of the party. Put on the margin as one who had given up on the Southern Cameroons struggle for autonomy and equality within the Federal system, Muna, faced with the intrigues of political competition was to finally affirm his position as an Anti-autonomist in 1965. This position which was pro-unitarist and opened for him opportunities to be made PM of West Cameroon by Ahidjo, did not immediately yield fruits as the cautious Ahidjo in his manipulative tendencies rather maintained Jua his fervent critic. Unable to read the mind of Ahidjo Foncha who was playing Double Standards finally took side with autonomy as a means to clear his image which was already tarnished as one who had conform to unitarism and Pro-Annexationism. To fix his reputation in the party Foncha chose to play the wrong card of expelling Muna from the party, a decision which instead officially caused Muna to cross the carpet into the Newly formed CUC party and further isolated Foncha in the KNDP as the expelled Muna became Ahidjo's favourite and the man through whom the KNDP was to lose influence in the FRC<sup>662</sup>.

Thus, rising to power in 1968 as PM of West Cameroon, Muna was to hence forth execute Annexationism through unity which he had earlier endorsed in 1966 by dissolving his CUC into the UC of Ahidjo to form the CNU which finally swallowed up the KNDP forcing all its militants to join Muna in conforming to unitarism. Having endorsed Annexationism through Unity against autonomy, Muna became a veritable instrument in the hands of Ahidjo to permit him realise his annexationist ambitions in Southern Cameroon<sup>663</sup>. With the success

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<sup>661</sup>. Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*. p, 139.

<sup>662</sup>. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroons Revisited*, p, 152

<sup>663</sup> *Ibid*.

recorded in annihilating the KNDP, it became clear that the time had come for Ahidjo to take the last step in annexing Southern Cameroons, and he could best do so with Muna reason for which he decided to drop Foncha and make Muna Vice president of the FRC<sup>664</sup>. Best placed now to concretise the wish he had earlier emitted at Fouban in favour of Southern Cameroons Autonomy where he argued,

Unification between Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroon might take the form of a loose federation with the aim of preserving the individuality of the Southern Cameroons state and the union should be a union from which both sides draw strength<sup>665</sup>

Muna in 1972 was instead the first to justify the abolition of Federalism to endorse unitarism in what became the 20<sup>th</sup> May 1972 peaceful revolution. The complete absorption of Southern Cameroons in a United Republic of Cameroon which totally violated the equality and sovereignty provisions of the Federal constitution under the watchful eyes of Muna as Vice president of the Federal Republic was the highest height of Conformism displayed by a one-time staunch Autonomist. Thus from a dire-heart advocate of autonomy Muna gradually and persistently wavered with autonomy in Federalism to adhere to Annexationism in Unity.

As a politician and militant of the KNDP, S.T. Muna did not remain consistent in the struggle for the advancement of the KNDP ideology. Joining the party in 1958 after having flirted with the idea of Autonomy ( with Nigeria and Reunification with Cameroon) Muna finally chose to militate for Autonomy in Reunification with Cameroon, an ideological position he held with a lot of inconsistency as was expressed in his conduct and practice of politics which all along post-independent Cameroon was Conformist. For, we see Muna in 1961 strongly in the fight for autonomy, but by 1963 his active engagement is swallowed up in a complacent silence amidst the expansion of Ahidjo's Annexationist ideology into Southern Cameroons. This conformist attitude of Muna which was dictated by "Power" Politics and other intrigues of competitive politics led him into finally abandoning Autonomy in 1965 to adhere to Annexationism in Unity which was endorsed by him in 1972 hence silencing completely the Southern Cameroons Struggle for Autonomy. Thus from Autonomy to unitarism and back to the search for Autonomy in the 1990's, Muna effectively gave expression to the dynamics of Militancy in Cameroon as his conduct and practice of politics produced serious dynamics in the

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<sup>664</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.155.

<sup>665</sup> See the case for Southern Cameroons, eds. A.W. Mukong, CAMFECO, USA p, 21. Cited in Ndi, *Southern West Cameroons*, Vol. II, p, 157.

political scene and of course influence the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon.

#### iv. Paul Biya: From Autocratic Conformism to Liberal Conformism

Popularly recognised as the man of the “new deal”, Paul Biya was born on February 13, 1933 in Mvomeka’a, Meyomessala Sub-division in the Dja-et-Lobo division of the South Region of Cameroon.<sup>666</sup> Set aside and raised for priesthood by his parents Etienne Mvondo and Anastasia Eyenga, the young Biya grew up to embrace a different path reserved for him by destiny and this path was not in the “Priestly order” but rather in the “Sovereign order” of modern state leadership. Having sailed through all the different strata of the academic ladder in Cameroon, Paul Biya left for France after obtaining the *Baccalaureate série philosophie* in 1956. Enrolling in the University of Paris Sorbonne, Biya took interest in law and obtained a *Licence* in public law in 1960 and a *Diplomes d’études supérieures* in public law in 1963, to further broaden his academic background and intellectual know-how, he integrated the *Institut d’études Politiques* (IEP) in 1961, the *Institut des Hautes Etudes d’Outre Mer* (IHEOM) in 1962 where he successfully graduated and regained his country Cameroon to be immediately *appointed Chargé de Mission* at the Presidency in October 1962.<sup>667</sup>

As a young civil servant Paul Biya made a successful career in top public administration where he evolved from 1964 as Director of cabinet for ministry of national education to Secretary General in the same ministry in 1965. In 1967 he was appointed Director of Civil Cabinet at the Presidency and later raised to the rank of Minister and Minister of State Secretary General of the Presidency of the republic, a post he held until June 1975 when he became Prime Minister. By virtue of Law No. 79/2 of 29 June 1979 which made the PM the constitutional Successor of the President of the Republic, Paul Biya by Constitutional provisions became the second president of Cameroon on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 1982 following the Resignation of Ahmadou Ahidjo on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 1982.<sup>668</sup>

Described in 1968 by Ahidjo as a man without any political ambitions,<sup>669</sup> Biya in docility and total discretion won the confidence of Ahidjo who decided in 1975 during the UNC congress of Maturity in Douala to integrate him within the high spheres of the CNU party

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<sup>666</sup> See Biography of President Paul Biya in <https://www.prc.cm> Accessed on May 19, 2020.

<sup>667</sup> Almanac of the 50th Anniversaries, p.159.

<sup>668</sup> Biography of President Paul Biya.

<sup>669</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.158. see also Germaine Ahidjo’s testimony about Biya’s lack of political ambition as recounted in Alain Foka’s Documentary *Archives d’Afrique*, RFI.



as member of the party's political bureau, and five years after he was raised to the post Vice President of the CNU during the third congress of the party in Bafoussam<sup>670</sup>. It should be noted that until 1982 Biya was not a member of the CNU Central committee and Ahidjo only realised this after he had already transferred power to Biya and in precipitation had to convene a meeting with the barons of the party to immediately integrate Biya in to the Central committee of the CNU<sup>671</sup>. Now deeply rooted in the philosophy and ideology of the CNU party, Paul Biya was to engage fully in politics and militancy at the top of the CNU one-party status quo. In total loyalty and conformism to the autocratic Neo-colonial regime, Biya served and defended the Jacobinist ideals of Ahidjo and the CNU party until 1983 when the fervent and loyal militant of the CNU decided to reverse his jacket and launched hostilities against his own party and its leader Ahidjo who was determined to reign supreme over the state and its institutions even after having resigned as president of the republic

**PLATE XX: President Paul Biya in between Neo-colonialism and liberalism**



**Source:** ALMANACH of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of independence

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<sup>670</sup> Ibid., p.191 & 193

<sup>671</sup> See Archives D'Afrique Documentary on AHMADOU AHIDJO by Alain Foka



Adopting a completely different and Anti-conformist attitude towards the CNU Ideology and against the 31<sup>st</sup> January 1983 declaration of Ahidjo to Cameroun tribune in which he said;

*Il n'y a pas de dualisme ou bicéphalisme dans l'exercice du pouvoir. Le parti et le Gouvernement ont chacun un domaine de responsabilité bien défini et distinct. Le parti définit les orientations de la politique nationale. Le gouvernement applique celles-ci compte tenu de nos possibilités et des aménagements qu'appellent des réalités concrètes et les circonstances*<sup>672</sup>

Biya, on June 18, 1983 decided to challenge the Neo-colonial Autocratic status quo by reshuffling his cabinet without prior notification from Ahidjo the president of the CNU party who had successfully imposed the pre-eminence of the Party over the state<sup>673</sup>. This action which was considered by Ahidjo as an open declaration of hostilities by Biya was to become recurrent. Few months after the challenging cabinet reshuffling, Biya went further to petition Ahidjo to resign as president of the CNU party. This not enough Biya had Ahidjo's closest collaborators arrested and jailed for complicity against the state, then finally high-jacked the CNU party in the Congress of Yaoundé September 7, 1983 where he was massively elected president of the CNU following the forceful resignation of Ahidjo.<sup>674</sup> The ascension of Biya to the presidency of the Party officially marked the end of his submission and Conformism to the Autocratic status quo thus opening the transition into a new political era founded on liberal ideas.

Addressing the CNU militants in the Yaoundé Congress, Biya made it clear that the time had come for Cameroon to experience a more authentic democracy in a more open and liberal society<sup>675</sup>. This in effect was his reengagement to the ideals of liberal democracy which he had earlier announced in 1982<sup>676</sup>. To effectively turn his back to the old Neo-colonial autocratic status quo of the CNU Biya convened the 1985 Bamenda congress in which the CNU was abolished and replaced with a new political party called Cameroon People Democratic Movement (CPDM). The birth of the CPDM which was a symbolic step in the liberalisation

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<sup>672</sup> See Cameroon Tribune No. January 1983

<sup>673</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.221.

<sup>674</sup> The resignation of Ahidjo on the 27th August 1983 it should be noted was under duress. Having been served a letter by Biya while in his sick bed in Nice France, the latter made clear to Biya that his absence does not in any way hamper the functioning of institutions because in his absence Biya has full delegation of powers thus resignation for Ahidjo was not an option. Abandoned by many of his loyal militants who now increasingly paid allegiance to Biya, Ahidjo found himself greatly isolated as his faithful followers were all incarcerated. Realising therefore that the Yaoundé congress convened by Biya was going to unseat him as president, Ahidjo swiftly announced his resignation on *Agence France Presse*. Thus keeping to his words declared on the same media where he said "*je veux quitter ma fonction volontairement, sans qu'on me force la main*"

<sup>675</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p, 235.

<sup>676</sup> See, Paul Biya Inaugural speech November 6, 1982 in [www.Sinotables.com](http://www.Sinotables.com), accessed on 22/05/2020

and democratisation of politics in Cameroon, was equally a significant indication of Biya's total renunciation of Autocratic conformism to embrace liberalisation which in itself was at the time not an option but a strong force to which every modern state had to conform. Being a visionary leader, Biya saw the imperatives of democratisation and liberalisation since 1982 but could not engage fully into this ideology due to total conformism to the Neo-colonial autocratic status quo. In displaying the dynamics of militancy in political competition, Paul Biya had to later on abandon autocratic conformism to adhere fully to liberal conformism which was to henceforth determine the conduct of politics and militancy throughout the 1980's and 1990's, as many political actors and militants started abandoning conformism to engage in liberal political activism with the goal of pushing the new deal regime to embark on veritable democratisation of the country.

## **II. Political Actors of the Second and Third Order (*Les Oubliés de l'histoire*) And The Dynamics Of Militancy In Cameroon**

In the dualism that characterises political engagement and militancy, it should be noted that the dualist relation and interaction between the frontline actors and the Mass of militants and supporters is often influenced by a second and even third category of political actors who with little or no connection with the political class and apparatus successfully determined and influenced ideas that were exposed on the political arena. Such actors are usually referred to as opinion leaders and their distinguished activism and militancy was often expressed within political parties and the civil society. In the reconstitution of the History of Cameroon which gave pride of place to great Men ( great figures) these category of actors were usually reserved little space and some have been deliberately neglected and even forgotten thus placed in the category of actors which Prof. Abwa calls the *les oubliées de l'histoire*<sup>677</sup> . Though not celebrated and valorised as national heroes, these actors greatly influenced the course of Cameroon history and most especially the dynamics of militancy that characterised the conduct and practice of politics in post independent Cameroon. Among the few of such actors selected for the purpose of this study, we have; Theodore Mayi Matip, Henri Effa, Gabriel Atangana, Bate Bessong, Mola Njoh Litumbe Cardinal Christian Tumi, Lapiro de Mbanga, and Pius Njawe.

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<sup>677</sup> Abwa, « Les hommes de l'histoire : Quell modeles choisir pour les jeunes d'aujourd'hui ? » cited in J. Kouoseu, *Figures de L'Histoire*,

### **i. Theodore Mayi Matip: from Anti-Colonialism to Neo-Colonial Conformism**

Born in 1923 in Eseka a locality of the Nyong et kelle Division in the Centre region of Cameroon, Mayi Matip is one of the most inconsistent figures of post independent politics in Cameroon<sup>678</sup>. After attending the prestigious *École Normal De Foulassi* Mayi Matip was to finally integrate the French colonial administration in Cameroon precisely in the police department where he served as secretary<sup>679</sup>. Caught in the nationalist upsurge that characterised post- World War II era, Mayi Matip decided to join the nationalist movement championed by the UPC. Though his wish to join the party was rejected by Felix Roland Moumie who saw his proximity to French Secret service incompatible with the nationalist cause, his close friend and relative Um Nyobe instead saw his admission into the UPC as added advantage to the nationalist movement as this would permit them get reliable information on the manoeuvres of the French colonial administration<sup>680</sup>. Playing his role very well as the UPC spy within the French colonial administration, Mayi Matip was suspected and finally caught in his double standard game by the French administration who decided to suspend him of his duty in 1950.<sup>681</sup> Following his suspension in the administration, Mayi Matip was immediately made the administrative secretary of the UPC party where he later took active part in the 1955 UPC riots which led to his imprisonment.<sup>682</sup> While in detention, Mayi Matip made attempts to negotiate with A. M. Mbida and A. Ahidjo a possible reconsideration of the UPC ideology but unfortunately his attempts were futile, thus pushing him to join the *Maquis* at the end of his two year jail term.

Joining Um-Nyobe in the bushes to fight colonialism, Mayi Matip became one of the closest collaborator of Um Nyobe and a miraculous survivor of the French colonial attack of 13 September 1958 which led to the brutal assassination of Um Nyob. His proximity to Um Nyobe and his sudden disappearance on the day of Um Nyobe's assassination has prompted S. Kala Lobe and Augustin Frederick Kodock to accuse him of complicity with the French secret services and betrayal of Um Nyobe on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 1958.<sup>683</sup> His sudden reappearance at the end of the French military expedition in Bassa land and his eventual adherence to the French

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<sup>678</sup> Mbanga-Kack, « Mayi Matip: L'immortel L' a Emporté » in *Mutation* www.Cameroon-info.Net, 22 January 2003.

<sup>679</sup> S. Kala Lobe, « L-UPC Peut-elle Ressusciter? » In *Jeune Afrique Economie* No. 152 of February 1992, p.157.

<sup>680</sup> Mbanga-Kack, « Mayi Matip: L'immortel L'a Emporté.

<sup>681</sup> S. K. Lobe, « L-UPC Peut-elle Ressusciter? p.157

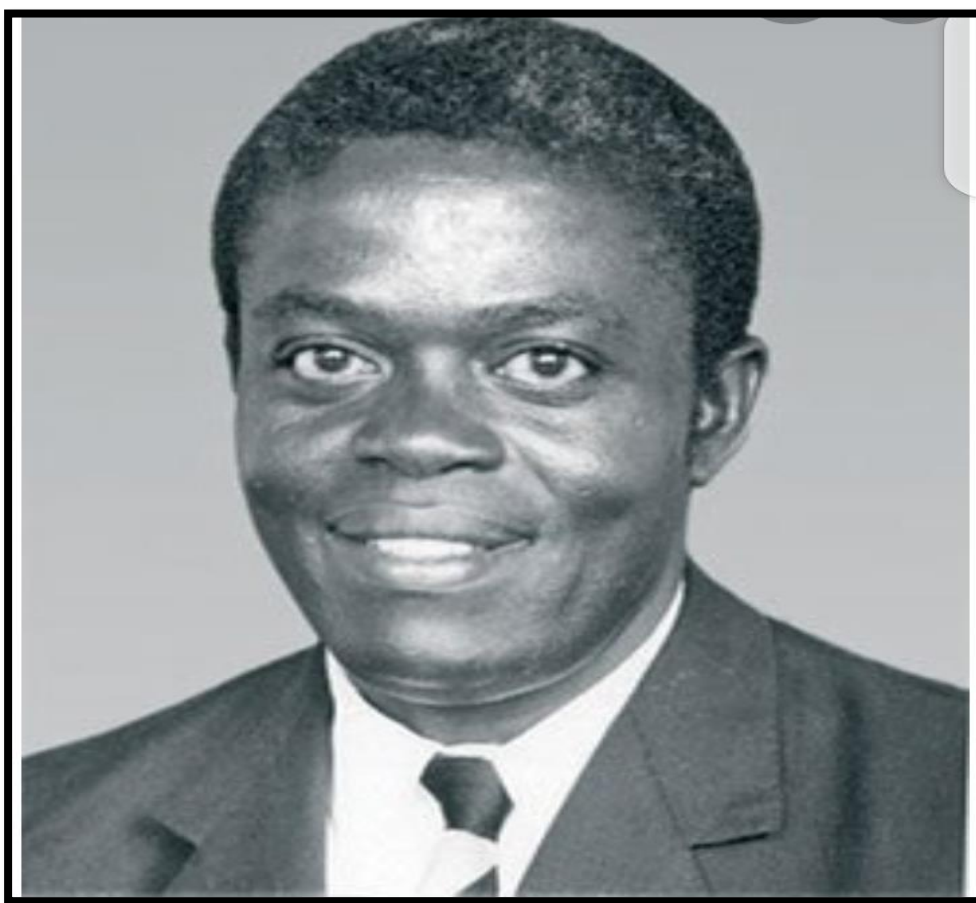
<sup>682</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>683</sup> *Ibid.* See Eyinga, *l'UPC Une Révolution*. p.100, see also Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.131.

terms of independence he earlier castigated raised many questions within the UPC radical wing as to what exactly were his ideological convictions.<sup>684</sup>

His integration of the ATCAM assembly following the February 14<sup>TH</sup> 1959 elections led to the creation and integration of a new UPC within the French Cameroon political platform known as the legal UPC. The birth of the legal UPC championed by Mayi Matip was the beginning of a long journey in inconsistencies that provoked dynamics not only within the UPC party but as well within the post independent Cameroon political landscape.

**PLATE XXI: Theodore Mayi Matip Wavering between Neo-colonial Conformism and Anti-Imperialism**



**Source:** Lawrence Chi Nyamngoh's photo archives

Adhering to the nationalist cause in 1950, Mayi Matip affirmed himself on the side of Um Nyobe as An anti-colonialist, a true militant determined to fight colonialism and ensure the triumph of the anti-colonial ideology in French Cameroon. This ideal for which Mayi Matip

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<sup>684</sup> Interview with Grace Ateh, UPC Militant, 63yrs, Bamenda, 01/10/2021

went as far as sacrificing his job with the colonial administration to uphold, was finally dissipated in colonial repression and the numerous torture he underwent in detention and the hardship experienced in the Marquis. All these unfortunate experiences, instead of forging in Matip a veritable Combatant of liberty, rather produced a conformist. Emerging out of the Marquis in 1958 following the death of Um Nyobe, Mayi Matip decided to abandon the Anti-Colonial idealism propagated by the UPC to embrace a pragmatic Conformism to Neo-colonialism hence legitimising the independence of French Cameroon on Neo-colonial basis, a kind of independence he had earlier castigated and fought fervently to avoid.

By his spectacular switchover from the Anti-colonial ideal to conform to Neo-colonialism, Mayi Matip, not only did he display dynamics in his conduct of politics, he as well gave expression to the dynamics of militancy in post independent politics as his action went as far pulling many other UPC militants out of the fundamental UPC to join him in legitimising Ahidjo's independence policy through a new UPC structure that became known as Legal UPC.

Convinced of the effectiveness of a pragmatic approach in fighting colonialism which consisted of abandoning violence by adhering and conforming to the Neo-colonial status quo, Mayi Matip believed in the force of argument rather than the argument force. He effectively demonstrated this in his different outings as leader of the UPC parliamentary group throughout 1960 and 1962. In 1960 as member of the consultative organ put in place by Ahidjo to examine the Constitutional project of the newly independent Cameroun, Mayi Matip and other UPC delegates in the Assembly simply resigned from the organ as a sign of their disapproval of the constitutional project which had a strong Neo-colonial character. This not enough Mayi Matip and the legal UPC mobilised the electorate of the UPC strongholds in the territory to vote NO in the French organise constitutional referendum of February 21, 1960.<sup>685</sup> All these were tolerable action which had little or insignificant incidence on the Neo-colonial status quo already well-conceived by France, implanted and piloted by Ahidjo. This internal opposition that had been fabricated within the Neo-colonial status quo, though with relatively no influence on the institutions of the new state, was to gradually become a major obstacle to the materialisation of the Jacobinist Neo-colonial ambitions of Ahidjo. Realising that the MPs of the legal UPC amongst which we had Mayi Matip, Ngue Ngue Elie, Owono mimbo etc. were increasingly becoming Anti-Conformist, immediate repressive measure were taken against

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<sup>685</sup> Eyinga, *l'UPC Une Révolution*. p.111.

them<sup>686</sup>. To worsen the already bad situation of the legal UPC, Mayi Matip and Emma Otu went ahead to organise a UPC congress in Jan 1962 with the goal of revamping and strengthening the basic organs of the Party<sup>687</sup>. This initiative that could be of hindrance to the putting in place of the Grand Unified National Party was immediately stopped by Ahidjo who by his action made it clear that strong rival opposition parties were no longer needed at the time as he had call on all parties to work with UC in the building of a Grand Unified National Party.<sup>688</sup>

While the other members of the legal UPC bureau led by EMMA Otu immediately conform to the Grand unified national party of Ahidjo, Mayi Matip in an Anti-Conformist posture decided to abandon the legal UPC stance to integrate the *Front National Unifié* of Okala Mbida and Bebey Eyidi. This in effect was a drastic switch over by Matip from Neo-colonial conformism to Anti-conformism which further gave expression to the dynamics of militancy, as a significant stronghold of conformist opposition leaders suddenly aligned with him to propagate the anti-conformist ideology and challenge the Jacobinist order in construction. Faced with such intolerable act of subversion, Ahidjo did not relent to slam Matip and the other members of the FNU a Three year jail term.<sup>689</sup> After undergoing serious moral and physical torture in detention, Mayi Matip came out of prison greatly weakened politically with no other alternative but to conform to the Neo-colonial Jacobinist order by adhering to the UC which became CNU in 1966 and lone political party in the entire territory. By adhering to the UC he earlier rejected and challenged, Mayi Matip further magnified his inconsistency in politics and the dynamics of militancy in post independent Cameroon.

As if to say inconsistency was Mayi Matip's political trademark, after spending over 23 years in Conformism with the Neo-colonial Jacobinist order, his persistent inconsistency was again manifested in 1990 following the reintroduction of Multi-party politics where he decided resign from the CPDM and reintegrate his first party the UPC. This further crossing of the carpet which was motivated this time by disgruntlement and frustrations experienced within the CPDM,<sup>690</sup> pushed Mayi Matip the Neo-colonial Conformist to re-integrated the UPC opposition of Dika Akwa in 1990 to propagate anti-conformism with the aim of resurfacing in

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<sup>686</sup> *Ibid*, p.112

<sup>687</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.129.

<sup>688</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>689</sup> *Ibid*, p.130.

<sup>690</sup> With the democratic touch given to the electoral process within the CPDM where by the designation of MPS was now subjected to an election at the base made it impossible for Matip to return to parliament as he was knocked out in elections by Nlep Bitong, hence frustrating all his political ambitions within the CPDM. A good reason to move out with the advent of Multi-party politics in 1990. See *Mutations* 22/01/2003

the political arena and upholding his political career. By this further shift in ideology and militancy from Neo-Colonial Conformism to Anti-Conformism Mayi Matip again displayed how inconsistent he was in the conduct of politics and he continued in this inconsistency even within the UPC wavering from One UPC faction to another thus giving expression to the dynamics of militancy in post-independent politics in Cameroon.

## **ii. Henri Effa and Gabriel Atangana Flirting with Anti-imperialism and Neo-colonial Conformism**

Born on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 1920 in Kumasi Ghana, Henri Effa (see **Plate: XIX**) was raised up in Cameroon precisely in the Upper Sanaga regions of the territory where he grew up<sup>691</sup> to become the first Cameroonian journalist and member of the East Cameroon Parliament for the now Mfoundi constituency.<sup>692</sup> Like his parliamentarian Colleague Gabriel Atangana (See Plate XX) of the Nyong region, they both became very important political elite of the then *grand sud* or South of East Cameroon. Evolving in politics at a time the South was considered a major contending force against the rising Northern Ahidjo supremacy and hegemony, these two politicians identified strongly with leading Southern opposition party of Andre Marie Mbida the *Democrates Camerounais*. Having been privileged to win the 10<sup>th</sup> April 1960 elections into the first Parliament of the independent Republic of Cameroon<sup>693</sup> on the *Democrates Camerounais* ticket, these two parliamentarians who beside defending the interest of the Southern Communities which were increasingly threatened by the Northern domination also had the great task of opposing the Neo-colonial status quo which was heavily propagated by Ahidjo.

They were among the relevant Southern opposition leaders who condemned and rejected the 1960 constitutional project of Cameroon<sup>694</sup> which they considered as Neo-colonial in character and had to do everything to ensure that the independence of Cameroon declared on 1<sup>st</sup> January was genuine and well consolidated in strong institutions. Unfortunately their aspirations which conflicted directly with those of Ahidjo who was bent and determined to uphold neo-colonialism and consolidate power around his person at the detriment of institutions, had to unleash on the southern opposition an aggressive policy of divide and rule

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<sup>691</sup> See, « Henri Effa: un Monument de l'histoire du Cameroun », in [www.africanewshub.com](http://www.africanewshub.com), accessed on 19/11/20

<sup>692</sup> See, *Programe obseques de papa Henri Effa*

<sup>693</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>694</sup> *Ibid.*

that gave expression to Clientelism which became the order of the day in Cameroon politics. Thus through this policy of discriminate nomination and appointments which systematically excluded many communities of the South and precisely those of the centre who had become stag opponents of the Northern hegemony and Ahidjo's policy, political Clientelist and opportunist in the likes of Charles Assale, Ekwabi Ewane, Hans Dissake, Mayi Matip, Marcel Marigo Mbua etc. who conformed to the Ahidjo Neo-colonial status Quo and hegemony were all compensated with important appointments into the new government<sup>695</sup>.

**PLATE XXII: Henri Effa from Anti-imperialism to Neo-colonial Conformism**



Source: adapted from *Necrologie: Effa Henri*

Henri Effa and Gabriel Atangana who continuously opposed under the banner of the DC of Mbida came to the realisation that their rigid and aggressive position against the UC of Ahidjo was counter-productive as not only did it exclude their regions from development, it as well deprived its elites of the privilege of participation in government and public administration. Unable to convince Mbida the leader of the party to drop his anti-colonial ideology and embrace the unity platform proposed by Ahidjo for a more stable and harmonious democracy, these two former opposition leaders of the *Democrate camerounaise* decided to abandon the Southern

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<sup>695</sup> W. R. Johnson, *The Cameroon: Political Integration in a Fragmented Society*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1970, p, 229.



opposition platform of Mbida to create their own party with which they envisaged to cross the carpet and integrate the UC ruling majority and secure for themselves better privileges which Mbida's party could not guarantee for them.

**Plate: XXIII. Gabriel Atangana from Anti-imperialism to Neo-colonial Conformism**



**Source:** adapted from *La presse du Cameroun*, N0. 3537, Lundi 5Fevrier 1962.

In February 1962 Heri Effa and Atangana decided to quit the DC and launch the *Idependant Democrates* ID<sup>696</sup> which they expressed its objectives to be that of Fostering Pluralist Democracy, denounce the one-party rule system and advocate for grand unified party where different political parties and ideologies can participate in nation building. The objectives of this party as they clearly expressed was designed for the common good thus affirming clearly that the DC party was not inclusive and did not benefit the common man<sup>697</sup>. Since their plan

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<sup>696</sup> NAY, « trois députés créent une nouvelle formations politique camerounaise : les Indépendant Démocrates » In *La presse du Cameroun*, N0. 3537, Lundi 5Fevrier 1962

<sup>697</sup> *Ibid.*

was not just leave the DC but to as well gain prominence and gain privileges for their communities they felt was abandoned, these two parliamentarians in March 1962 openly crossed the carpet and adhered to the UC unity platform<sup>698</sup>. Thus from anti-imperialism Henri Effa and Atangana switched over to Neo-colonial Conformism which eventually guaranteed them Clientelist rewards as the few of the federal post allocated for the south all went to them who had deserted the opposition.<sup>699</sup>

### **iii. Mola Njoh Litumbe: from Autocratic Conformism to Anti-Annexationism**

Born on February 4, 1927 Mola Njoh Litumbe was a prominent politician and activist who greatly influenced political development and militancy in post-independent Cameroon. The fearless whistle blower and advocate of autonomy for the Former British Southern Cameroons attended the Famous St. Joseph College Sasse where he enrolled in 1941<sup>700</sup>. Graduating with a Cambridge Senior School Certificate, He immediately got a job as junior account clerk in the CDC, where he eventually built a rich and successful career in accountancy<sup>701</sup>. The Southern Cameroons senior citizen as he was popularly known, was one of the Cameroonians that had remained very vocal on the question of Anglophone marginalisation. Well-schooled on the decolonisation process of the British Southern Cameroon, he became determined to right the wrongs of the 1961 reunification which he qualified as illegal union. Unfortunately his strong urge to raise awareness and mobilise Southern Cameroonians to rise against French Cameroon domination met with the brutal and repressive autocratic regime of Yaoundé who since 1966 had put an end to ideological pluralism and became very intolerant with any form of political contradiction. Under such conditions of terror and one-party dictatorship, the Southern Cameroons activist was forced to conform to the Status quo by abandoning the Anti-annexationist ideology to militate within the CNU<sup>702</sup> which was later transformed to CPDM by Paul Biya in 1985.

With the relative democracy introduced within the One-party CPDM by Paul Biya, Mola Njoh Litumbe became actively engaged in the Fako section of the party where he participated in many electoral competitions. Dissatisfied with the outcome of most of these

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<sup>698</sup> See, "Opposition disappearing" in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report Wednesday 20 June 1962 foreign radio broadcast*, p.14

<sup>699</sup> Johnson, *The Cameroon: Political Integration in a Fragmented Society*, p, 229.

<sup>700</sup> R. Elume, Mola Njoh Litumbe is dead," long live Mola Njoh : the man, his life and thoughts" in Time csape magazine <http://timescapemag.com>

<sup>701</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>702</sup>. Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*. p.54.see Journal Officiel N° 2 du 30/04/1988

elections which were always influenced by the party hierarchy and its list system, Mola N. Litumbe openly protested the 1988 legislative election where his list composed of Martin Luma, Gwendolyn Burnley, and Ewolo Mukete was systematically knock out of which they benefited huge popularity compared to their competitors who were relatively novices.<sup>703</sup>

Unable to realise his political goals within the single party system which was heavily manipulated from Yaounde, Mola N. Litumbe decided to redirect his energy in civil society activism in the early 1990's by organising meetings and gatherings to sell and propagate the Anti-annexationist ideology. On several media platforms and institutions of international reputation, Mola N.Litumbe has remained consistent in rejecting Annexationism which he considered a crime against Humanity. As an instigator and participant in several Anglophone protest movement, Mola Njoh Litumbe has continuously maintained that

**PLATE XXIV: Mola Njoh Litumbe: Flirting with Unity and Autonomy**



**Source:** <http://cameroonconcordnews.com>. 28/05/2020

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<sup>703</sup> *Ibid.*

There is no documentary evidence at the UNO as required, that Southern Cameroon and *la République du Cameroun* legally yoked together to become one country... Southern Cameroon has never got independence from Britain we simply changed our slave master from Britain to *la République du Cameroun*.<sup>704</sup>

His determination to see Southern Cameroon free pushed him to join the Alliance for Change alongside the SDF in 1992 with the aim of uniting all Anglophones behind the Southern Cameroon cause<sup>705</sup>. Unfortunately the SDF he thought could play the role of the leading Anglophone party in the era of multi-party politics and articulate the plight of the marginalised Anglophones rather gave preference to national issues at the detriment of the minority problem the Anglophones were facing<sup>706</sup>. This was to therefore cause Mola N. Litumbe to back out of the Alliance with SDF in 1992 to launch in 1993 The Liberal Democratic Party which articulated clearly in article 1 of its manifesto the necessity to renegotiate the terms of union between Southern Cameroon and *La République du Cameroun*.

From a politician to a civil society activist and back to militant politics in 1993, Mola Njoh Litumbe exhibited inconsistency in the pursuance of his ideological convictions. As one who made important inquiries to debunk the 1961 reunification and raise consciousness on French Cameroon Annexationist policies in the British Southern Cameroon, Mola N. Litumbe when faced with French Cameroon tyranny and the repressive policies of the single party regimes of Yaoundé had to conform to the annexationist status quo. This was seen in his active engagement within the Fako section of the one party CNU/CPDM. Frustrated by the limitations of the One-party democracy which fell short of all democratic rules and principles, he had to abandon conformism to engage in anti-conformism as a human rights activist and defender of the rights of Anglophone minorities, a cause he actively engaged himself to uphold until his death. Thus in his political and civil activism, Mola Njoh Litumbe brought new dynamics in the Anglophone Anti- Annexationist propaganda by so doing gave expression to the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon as he was able to pullout many militants from conformism into active

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<sup>704</sup> See Konings & F. B. Nyamnjoh, *Negotiating an Anglophone identity the study of the politics of Recognition and Representantio*

<sup>705</sup> R. Elume, Mola Njoh Litumbe is dead," long live Mola Njoh : the man, his life and thoughts" in Time scape magazine <http://timescapemag.com>

<sup>706</sup> C. A. Taku, Mola Njoh Litumbe : in him Southern Cameroon rose to fall no more, in Cameroon Concord news, <http://cameroonconcordnews.com>. 28/05/2020

civil society activism and later pulled them into militant politics with the launching of The Liberal Democratic Party in 1993.

#### iv. Jean Jacques Ekindi and the Dynamics of Political Engagement in Conformism and Dissidence

Born in January 1945<sup>707</sup>, Jean Jacques Ekindi remains one of the figures of post-independence politics in Cameroon, whose contribution in enhancing and sustaining the dynamics of militancy cannot be undermined. Growing up as a young boy with multiple ambitions of making a career in teaching, later medicine, and finally engineering where the polytechnique graduate of the Ecole Polytechnique de Paris was to build for himself a rich professional career, Jean Jacques Ekindi still did not feel accomplished until when he effectively followed his dream and strong urge for social activism which paved the way for him to ascend to the cameroon parliament as a legislator.<sup>708</sup> (See **Plate: XXV**)

Developing a strong urge for social activism and militancy as a student in Paris, Jean Jacques Ekindi was to finally enrol in the famous Union Nationale des Etudiats Kamerunais (UNEK) a branch of the exiled UPC party based in France and principally composed and animated by Students. This UPC oversea movement which had become a refuge ground and an effective platform for the dissemination for UPC ideals, carried high and effectively pursued with great determination the UPC struggle against imperialism through its multiplication of conferences and publications on Anti-colonialism. By his strong engagement and expression of great zeal and passion to fight imperialism, Jean Jacques Ekindi rapidly grew within the Rangs of UNEK to occupy the office of Vice President<sup>709</sup>. Being in charge of Communication and the Editor in chief of the UNEK Scientific Review named "*L'Etudiant Du Kamerun*" he on a daily basis multiplied the publication of contestant and anti-conformist articles which revealed him as a veritable anti-conformist of the Cameroonian regime headed by Ahidjo. Returning to Cameroon in 1970, Jean Jacques Ekindi unlike other Cameroonians and members of UNEK who upon stepping foot in Cameroon reconverted themselves into conformist, he

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<sup>707</sup> See interview with Jean J. Ekindi conducted by Rene Narcisse Motto on *Entretien avec..* Stv Program

<sup>708</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>709</sup> P. Ekwe & Karl Ekindi, Biographie de Jean Jacques Ekindi

rather remained very vocal and maintained his anti-conformism which was to immediately cause his arrest and imprisonment by the Yaoundé régime for a period of 16months<sup>710</sup>.

Weakened by his incarceration, Jean Jacques Ekindi travelled back to France where he focused attention on his career for a few years only to resume politics again in full by 1980<sup>711</sup>. With the rise to power of Paul Biya replacing Ahidjo J.J. Ekindi who had earlier demonstrated a strong zeal to fight the neo-colonial status-quo, convinced by the democratic emphasis of Biya and his “new deal” regime had to drop his anti-conformist activism to embrace conformism by enrolling into the unique CPDM party in 1986<sup>712</sup>. As if to compensate an erstwhile dissident so as to have full grips on him and maintain him in total submission and conformism, Jean Jacques Ekindi who had just joined the party was by an electoral consensus mixed with ethnicity within the party voted President of Wouri Section of the CPDM party in Douala dislodging well established party barons like Koloko Levis.<sup>713</sup>

**PLATE XIIIIV: Jean Jacques Ekindi: Founding president of Movement Progressiste (MP) in Perpetual Dynamics**



**Source:** adapted from Afrik.com

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<sup>710</sup> Interview with Jean J. Ekindi conducted by Donald Brice Kamgang on *Dimanche avec vous* 24/05/2020, Equinox TV program.

<sup>711</sup> P. Ekwe & Ekindi, Biographie de Jean Jacques Ekindi.

<sup>712</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>713</sup> Boulaga, *Cameroon: Démocratie de Transit*.p,40.

Having secured a place of prominence within the one-party status quo, it was now time for J.J. Ekindi to explore and give relevance to the democratic propaganda of the CPDM by affronting the October 1987 Municipal elections where he believed with the free hand of democracy and its equal opportunity guaranteed to all he could effectively impose himself as the clear expression of the democratic advances of the New deal regime. Investing himself together with his campaign team to mobilise the electorate for a massive vote in his favour at the helm of the Douala 1 council, J.J Ekindi completely neglected the age-old principles of the pre-eminence of the party over the electorate. As a result he was unfortunately disappointed to realise that after being endorsed by the electorate in massive popular votes, it was rather Emmanuel Dooh Priso that the party had found worthy to occupy the seat of mayor of Douala I and not J. J. Ekindi who was topping the municipal list<sup>714</sup>.

Greatly disappointed by this democratic farce J. J. Ekindi immediately launched and intensified his struggle against the status-quo, which he did, not by defection but rather by creating within the party a pool of contradiction and opposition which affirmed itself as a progressive faction against the old conservative faction<sup>715</sup>. His reconversion to anti Conformism kept on taking effect even while he was still within the unique party, and with the rise in the pro-democratic movement that was gradually gaining steam in the major cities of the country, it became clear to Ekindi that his struggle could never be attained within the CPDM especially as the CPDM instead of aligning with the new democratic exigencies which in effect constituted an essential part of its manifesto, rather chose to counter democracy by mobilising its militants against democracy as was seen in the many anti democracy rallies and manifestations organised in Yaoundé and Douala. Though the actor has totally denied all affirmations about him taking part in what was called anti-democracy and multi-party demonstrations, he rather qualified these demonstrations of May 1991 as marches organised to support the president of the CPDM at the time who was greatly attacked by the rising pro-democracy movements. So as a leader of the CPDM Wouri Section he had no choice but to organise this manifestation as was instructed by the party hierarchy<sup>716</sup>. (See **Plate XXVI**).

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<sup>714</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>715</sup> Igrid Alice Dipita TONGO, « Jean Jacques Ekindi le Chasseur de lion » in *Journal du c ameroon.com*.

<sup>716</sup> Interview with Jean J. Ekindi conducted by Donald Brice Kamgang on *Dimanche avec vous* 24/05/2020, Equinox TV program

**PLATE XIV: Jean Jacque Ekindi Leading the CPDM Wouri Section in a Manifestation That Has Been Popularly Termed “the Anti-Democracy and Anti-Multiparty Demonstrations of 1991”**



**Source:** Adapted from 237Online.com

Greatly dissatisfied with the party hierarchy which did not give room for free expression and compelled militants to abide and follow its instruction without contradiction, J.J. Ekindi in May 1991 following the triumph of the pro-democratic movement against the CPDM anti-democracy movement, decided to defect the CPDM and return fully to dissidence and opposition to the status quo he earlier defended and effectively conformed to.<sup>717</sup> By abandoning the CPDM to create the *Movement Progressiste MP* Jean Jacque s Ekindi officially left conformism to embrace dissidence in opposition to a regime he earlier paid allegiance to. Worth noting and subject of great curiosity is the fact that defecting from the CPDM in 1991, J.J.Ekindi who had been a strong militant and activist in the UPC UNEK branch did not return to the UPC which at the time was largely divided and even with rise of the SDF which had gained popular legitimacy as the flag bearer of change and democratic transition, J.J Ekindi still did not see the need of joining this rising force of democracy but rather chose to create a new party which leaves much interrogations as to what exactly were his political goals in the

<sup>717</sup> P. Ekwe & K. Ekindi, Biographie de Jean Jacques Ekindi



cameroon political arena? Was it still all about the triumph of democracy or the triumph of personal power ambitions? This has remain the question which the illustrious activist and political actor has often answered by the simple phrase;

*Je cherche les possibilités pour moi de contribue au développement de mon pays si elles sont offert par l'UPC je fonce tête baissé a l'UPC si elles sont offert par le RDPC je fonce tête baissé dans le RDPC...*<sup>718</sup>

His latest resignation from the MP in recent times to return to the CPDM has only clearly demonstrated the figures ambiguous role in the political landscape of post-independent Cameroon. Thus from UPC anti-imperialism to CPDM neo-colonial conformism and later out of CPDM conformism to embrace anti-conformism and dissidence in MP which has again recently been abandoned by Jean Jacques Ekindi for conformism back into the CPDM only depicts one fundamental aspect that characterised the conduct and practice of politics in Cameroon and that is no other thing than the dynamics of militancy. As a political actor and figure of post-independent politics in Cameroon, J.J. Ekindi through his inconsistency in political engagement has greatly enhanced and given expression to the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon.

#### **v. Lambo Pierre Roger *Alias* Lapiro de Mbanga Deviating from Conformist Musical Art to Anti-Conformist Music for Political Engagement**

Competitive politics in post independent Cameroon, besides being characterised by ideological confrontations was equally characterised by great moments of festivity and artistic display or exhibition. The peak of such moments were usually experienced during major political gatherings such as political rallies and party congresses which brought together huge crowds of militants and sympathisers of political parties pulled from different end of the territory usually to celebrate their achievements, propagate their ideology and strategize for future challenges and the consolidation of their hegemony. Within such contexts of great celebration and jubilation, the role of musical artist and their music was of utmost significance and importance, but more important here was the content of the message vehiculated in the music. It was in this light therefore that artist or musician as depositories of inspiring messages of conscientisation, mobilisation, and elevation of spirits, became principal actors of the political game and militancy in post independent Cameroon. One of such artist or depository of inspiring messages

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<sup>718</sup> Interview with Jean Jacques Ekindi conducted by Donald Brice..

who influence not only the musical industry of Cameroon but also its political landscape and gave expression to the dynamics of militancy was Lapiro de Mbanga.

Born on April 7, 1957 in Mbanga, a locality of the Mungo Division in the littoral region of Cameroon, Lambo Sandjo Pierre Roger known by his artistic name Lapiro de Mbanga<sup>719</sup> was a young Cameroonian who was privileged to have been raised up in a wealthy home.<sup>720</sup> Dropping out of school in 1973, the talented young Lapiro was to follow his passion in music which brought him in contact with Kademchi Kadembo his spiritual father and the man who opened the doors of the musical career to him.<sup>721</sup> As a member of Kadembo's orchestra Lapiro perfected his skills in different musical instruments and took special interest in the guitar which became his favourite instrument earning him the name *Ndingaman*.<sup>722</sup> Rising from an instrumentalist to a singer, Lapiro performed in many shows with the orchestra where he joined in the conformist music of the time by doing playbacks and interpretations of the music which was qualified as "guarded praise" for a regime which had become highly Jacobinist and autocratic in all dimensions

#### **PLATE XV: Lapiro de Mbanga from Conformism to Anti-Conformism**



**Source:** Adapted from <http://www.indexoncensorship.org>

<sup>719</sup> See Exclusive Interview on Protest Politics and the Art of Satire given to Daniel Brown by Lapiro de Mbanga, July 2010, in <http://www.indexoncensorship.org>

<sup>720</sup> Vankuntah Peter Wuteh, *The Life and Times of a Cameroonian Icon : Tribute to Lapiro de Mbanga NgataMan*, African books collective, 2014, p.7

<sup>721</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>722</sup> Guitarman or guitar player

In fact one could affirm with confidence that Lapiro had conformed to the dictatorial regime of Ahidjo and the neo-colonial status quo which tolerated neither dissidence nor defiance.<sup>723</sup> Like the veteran musicians of the 1960's in the likes of Manu Dibango Francis Bebey, Ambroise Mbia, and many others who animated CNU rallies and congresses to the point of being considered as *Les Artiste de L'UNC de France*<sup>724</sup>, Lapiro de Mbanga had remained a purely entertainment musician conforming to neo-colonialism until 1980 when he travelled to Nigeria and got influenced by the anti-colonial and neo-colonial philosophy of Fela Anikulapo Kuti.<sup>725</sup> This anti-colonial and neo-colonial philosophy of Kuti expressed in Protest Music opened the eyes of Lapiro to the Inequalities and hardship that characterised the milieu he grew up. For, in his interview with Vakunta, Lapiro makes it clear in his own words that;

My father was a billionaire. So I was a little spoiled boy I had tons of stuff but other kids in the vicinity had nothing thus it dawn on me that our world is a world of inequalities... Inequalities exist everywhere but the thing that borders me the most is the fact that my own African brothers: Cameroonians for that matter have become instruments that the “Northerners” use to oppress us<sup>726</sup>.

It was against this backdrop of inequality and political oppression that Lapiro got inspired to engage into a veritable musical career in 1985 based on protest music which was to introduce new dynamics not only in the Cameroon Music industry but also in the country's conduct and practice of politics. In a very unique satirical style encoded in the *Mboko* language<sup>727</sup>, Lapiro engaged very pertinent and serious socio-political questions of the time amongst which was marginalisation, oppression, dictatorship, neo-colonialism and the abuse of fundamental human rights and democracy. Knowing so well that the neo-colonial status quo and its dictatorial policies did not tolerate contradiction nor opposition as the unique party system compelled everyone to conform to a single and unique ideology, Lapiro's switch from entertainment and conformist Music to embrace music for political engagement, was a clear sign that militancy in Cameroon was to undergo serious dynamics. Emerging at a time president Biya Ahidjo's successor was increasingly talking of democracy and liberalism but practicing authoritarianism which imposed conformism, Lapiro refused to conform to the neo-colonial status quo by releasing his first title in 1986 captioned “*No Make Erreur*” followed by “*kob*

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<sup>723</sup>. Vankuntah, *The Life and Times of a Cameroonian Icon* p. 41

<sup>724</sup> see *Cameroun Tribune* N° 487/of 04 February 1976

<sup>725</sup>. Vankuntah, *The Life and Times of a Cameroonian Icon* p.14.

<sup>726</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>727</sup> See Exclusive Interview on Protest Politics and the Art of Satire, p.127.

*Nie*” in 1988 where he uses allusions, innuendos and metaphors to expose the daily travails of the down trodden he referred to as *Mboko* and *Sauveteurs* who have remained victims of an oppressive regime that upholds neo-colonialism at the detriment of the country and its people<sup>728</sup>. He got to the summit of his art in the early 1990’s following the release of the title “*Mimba we*”. This album that confirmed Lapiro as a Protest Musician<sup>729</sup> became a veritable rallying song for the masses and a call to the political leaders to abandon neo-colonialism for a more humane policy and ideology that puts the people at the centre.

*“You wan Dammer you mimba we  
You wan souler you mimba we  
You wan nyoxer you mimba we-oh  
Oh mimba we-oh tara”*<sup>730</sup>

These satirical lyrics directly served to the Biya regime equally challenges the oppressed masses who have resigned to their fate in total conformism to the neo-colonial status quo and have refused to take bold steps in denouncing the system and installing a new order.

*“We no wan kick-oh  
We no wan go fo ngata  
We dey daso fo ndengwe  
Abeg mimba we-oh yes tara  
We no wan problem para  
We no wan go fo ndengui  
We de fain daso gari for helep we own family”*<sup>731</sup>

Lapiro therefore calls on these masses to overcome the daily fears of assault, imprisonment, and economic malaise imposed on them by the neo-colonial regime, urging them to stand up for their rights and join the pro-democracy movement for a veritable change to take place. From then on Lapiro became the mouthpiece of the oppressed people, the voice of the voiceless and was even given the name “*president du bas people*”<sup>732</sup>. His anti-conformist music galvanised a huge crowd of supporters and by his endorsement of the courageous initiative of Fru Ndi in 1990 which saw the birth of the SDF, the crowd of supporters he had behind him courageously came out of their conformism to militate for change. Though not on the frontline of party-politicking, Lapiro greatly influenced the new emerging opposition that burst-out with the forceful liberalisation of the political landscape. In one of his interviews with Vankuntah

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<sup>728</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>729</sup> See Nyamnjoh and Fokwang, “Entertaining Repression: Music and Politics in Postcolonial Cameroon”, in *African Affairs*, 104/415, pp. 251-274

<sup>730</sup> Vankuntah, *The Life and Times of a Cameroonian Icon* p.46.

<sup>731</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>732</sup> See Exclusive Interview on Protest Politics and the Art of Satire, p.127.

Lapiro made it clear that prominent opposition leaders of the early 1990's in the likes of Fru Ndi and Ndam Njoya became known to the population thanks to him and all of their actions and initiatives to change the system became successful only because he was behind the mobilisation of militants through his anti-conformist music. In his own words he said;

No one knew Fru Ndi or Ndam Njoya or any other folks in the opposition in Cameroon. The only person who had the attention of Cameroonians at the time was Lapiro de Mbanga... members of the opposition were cognizant of the fact that what they were doing had attraction only because Lapiro stood behind them<sup>733</sup>

Thus by his courageous switch over from guarded praise singing and entertainment to embark on anti-establishment music, Lapiro de Mbanga did not just exhibit change and dynamics in his artistic engagement, he as well gave expression to the Dynamics of militancy in Cameroon. By opting for anti-conformist and liberation music against guarded praise singing and entertainment which was characteristic of the neo-colonial status quo, Lapiro awakened the consciences of Cameroonians who had long resigned to their fate as people destined for doom. The liberating effect of his music challenged Cameroonians to come out of their conformism and engage the neo-colonial status quo with a contrary and rival ideology that upheld freedom democracy and good governance.<sup>734</sup> The outcome of this was a general rise in the steam and need for democratic reforms which pushed many erstwhile CNU/CPDM militants in the likes of Fru Ndi, Ndam Njoya, J. J. Ekindi etc to cross the carpet into the opposition, hence stepping out of conformism into anti-conformism. With this it became clear that Lambo Sanjo Pierre Roger *alias* Lapiro de Mbanga influenced political competition in Cameroon and gave expression to the dynamics of militancy in the territory.

#### **vi. Bate Besong: Shunning Neo-colonial Conformism to Articulate Anti-Annexationism in Cameroon's Political Space**

Political space in post independent Cameroon heavily suffocated by the enduring presence of authoritarianism, systematically became unreceptive to all other ideologies which challenged

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<sup>733</sup> Vankuntah, *The Life and Times of a Cameroonian Icon* p.34.

<sup>734</sup> The liberating effect of Lapiro's Music did not just bring change or dynamics within the political landscape, it well brought dynamic within the Cameroon music industry as it open doors for the expression of revolutionary and resistance music also called rebel music which had long disappeared with the crackdown on the UPC and the institutionalisation of the one-party system. The influence of Lapiro's music went as far as inspiring a new breed of artist who have devoted their artistic talents in addressing the disfunctionalities of the regime by attacking its neo-colonial ideology in all spheres of governance. Among these new breed of artist we have Dony Elwood, Valsero, and to an extent Longue Longueu. See Anti-Establishment Lyrics of Lapiro, Valsero and Elwood in, Vankuntah, *The Life and Times of a Cameroonian Icon* pp.69-85

the Neo-colonial status quo and inhibited its full deployment in the socio-economic and political spheres of the territory. Unable to penetrate this political space which had become highly totalitarian and refractive to political liberalisation, political dissidents now frustrated in conformism started exploring other avenues beyond political parties to manifest their disapproval of Neo-colonial governance and propagate Anti-conformist militancy. One of such avenues was finally discovered in literature and Bate Besong is one of those writers who amply made use of this new found political space to give expression to the dynamics of militancy in post independent Cameroon.

Bate Besong, a native of Ndekwai village in Mamfe Division of the then Southern Cameroons was born on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1954 in Ikot-Ansa, Calabar, of the then Eastern region of Nigeria.<sup>735</sup> Returning to Cameroon with his parents after the 1961 reunification, Bate Besong enrolled at St. Bede's college in Ashing-kom. From St. Bede's college he went to Hope Wadell training Institute in Calabar where he obtained the Advanced level certificate and enrolled in the University of Calabar for a degree course in literary studies. In 1980 after his degree and youth service he moved to the University of Ibadan for post-graduate studies where he earned a Master's degree in African Literature.<sup>736</sup> Returning to Cameroon in 1982 just after Ahidjo had resigned giving way for new leadership at the helm of the state of Cameroon, Bate Besong joined in the jubilant ecstasy and euphoria of the time to endorse and approve neo-colonial governance coated with the slogan Rigour and Moralisation.<sup>737</sup>

To manifest his approval of Paul Biya and total conformism to new Neo-colonial republic, Bate Besong committed a newspaper article titled "Roses which were stymied by desert jackals now flower. A thousand Roses, now will bloom" this write-up which was an optimistic projection into the future, celebrated the Biya regime which only ended up to be nothing else but a different side of the same coin called Neo-colonialism. Holding firmly and abiding faithfully to the neo-colonial ideal, Biya the symbol of hope and liberation for Cameroon was to suddenly become the symbol of oppression, exploitation, terror and marginalisation for many Cameroonians. Like his predecessor, Paul Biya upheld the Jacobinist status quo and effectively institutionalised the unique-ideology and party system at a time many were looking forward to political liberalisation.

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<sup>735</sup> E. Fru Doh, *The Obasinjom Warrior : The Life and Works of Bate Besong*, African Books collective, 2014, p.3

<sup>736</sup> Ibid. See also Ashutang Joyce and Dibussi Tande, *Their Champagne Party Will End; Poems in Honour of Bate Besong*, African Books Collective 2008.p.vii.

<sup>737</sup> Doh, *The Obasinjom Warrior*.p.7

Bate Besong like many other Cameroonians and Anglophones in particular who had conformed to the New-deal regime in anticipation of reforms was greatly saddened by the precarious situation in which Anglophones had been abandoned. Unable to challenge the status quo through party competition due to the one-party dictat and its repressive machinery, Bate Besong decided to explore other means where he could freely channel his anti-establishment protest and militancy, and this other means was literature (drama and poetry).

The above strategy is corroborated and endorsed by the Ivorian author who said;

*Dans un pays où il n'existe pas de libertés d'expression encore moins de la presse, les homes et les femmes ne se taisent pas autant. Lorsque sur le plan institutionnelle on n'a pas droit à la parole publiquement, ont se cherche d'autres moyens en créant des cadres forcements « clandestine » de peurs de la répression étatiques pour donner cours a des opinions qui rompes avec la langue de bois des gouvernantes »<sup>738</sup>*

#### **PLATE XVII: Bate Besong: Abandoning Conformism for Anti-Annexationism**



**Source:** ALMANACH of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of independences

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<sup>738</sup> Sidiki, Bamba, « *Presse écrite et émergence de l'espace public en Côte d'ivoire : entre idéal démocratique et propagande politique* », Thèse de Doctorat en Sciences de l'information et de la communication, Université de Bordeaux3, 2010, p.220.

As an Anglophone who had experienced rejection, marginalisation and oppression, <sup>739</sup>Bate Besong who erstwhile approved of the Biya regime developed strong hostility against the system and its neo-colonial ideology which he decided oppose with anti-Annexationism, an ideology he Militated for and propagated in his writings.

From an admirer and supporter of the neo-colonial status quo coated in the “new deal”, bate besong was to later embrace anti-conformism using literature as his new found political space to militate and propagate anti-Annexationism. Among the numerous works he wrote to protest against the status quo we had; “the most cruel death of a talkative zombie” “obasinjom warrior with poems after detention” “requiem for the last Kaiser” and “Beast of no nation” of all the above works beast of no nation was the play that brought him into direct confrontation with Yaoundé regime. The staging of this play on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 1991 at amphi 700 of the University of Yaoundé I was to immediately lead to his arrest. This play which addresses the systematic annexation and alienation of Anglophones within the French dominated republic of Cameroon wreaked havoc within the ruling circles as it was coming at the time to add to the already agitated political scene the radical awakening of the Anglophone nationalism. Besides his literary works, Bate Besong equally published extensively in newspapers where he continuously unleashed his literary venom to strike the oppressive neo-colonial regime and awaken the consciences of Cameroonians and Anglophones in particular who had, in total docility and conformism surrendered their fate to the Yaoundé regime. Describing Bate Besong’s writings, Emmanuel .F. Doh says, his;

Scholarly articles... were political eye-openers to a public petrified into dormancy by fear engendered by the techniques employed by Ahidjo’s discernible and subsequently Biya’s less obstructive gestapo<sup>740</sup>

The outcome of Bate Besong’s new-found platform for literary engagement and militancy was the spontaneous fertilisation of a fresh stock of Anglophone nationalist in the early 1990 who were at the origin of several Anglophone protest movements of the 1990’s. Thus his literary prowess in articulating the Anglophone plight and anti-Annexationism in Cameroon’s political landscape earned him several followers who, inspired by his works had

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<sup>739</sup> Returning from Nigeria with Master’s degree with aspirations of being recruited in the lone state university of Yaoundé, bate Besong had his first frustration as he was rejected this not enough, he finally gets recruited in the ministry of national education and posted to teach in the north precisely in Mayo Oulo village of the Mayo Louti division where the learners barely understand French not to talk of English. Going for several years without a salary was another serious difficulty and frustration the system imposed on him. All of this created in him spontaneous bitterness and hatred for the regime which he confronted in his literary works

<sup>740</sup> Doh, *The Obasinjom Warrior*.p.11.



to abandon conformism to engage the Biya regime in political confrontations throughout the 1990's with the birth of Anglophone pressure groups and protest movements. From the aforementioned, it is very clear and evident that Bate Besong as a post independent prolific writer and award winning author, greatly participated in the political evolution of Cameroon and gave expression to dynamics of militancy in the territory. From admiration and optimistic conformism to the New deal status quo Bate Besong was to eventually shun away from such dormancy to embrace Anti-Conformism and propagate Anti-Annexationism which spur up many Anglophones to come out of the Yaoundé imposed docility to protest for the restitution of their rights. Hence if militancy experienced such dynamics from conformism to anti-Annexationism, Bate Besong contributed in giving it expression.

**vii. Pius Njawe: The Shift from Complacent Conformism to Propagate Liberal Democracy for a Free Press**

The media landscape in Cameroon since independence has been heavily dominated and influenced by the neo-colonial ideals widely propagated by an infantilised press which could neither think nor act independently without constant parental control ensured by neo-colonial institutions. Cameroon in its political evolution from 1961 to the early 1990's was heavily influenced and accompanied by the print media (Press). As the lone media outlet of the time, the press made substantial contributions in the advancement of institutions and the ideals of the post-independent Cameroon state. In fact the relationship between the press and the state was a condescending one where by the press amidst its capacity to inspire, generate and animate important issues of political interest, was to remain in perpetual subjection to state authorities who firmly believed that it was the role of the state authorities and not the press or journalist to set political agenda<sup>741</sup>. Thus to the post independent governments the press or journalist were to remain mere instruments or “machines” designed to propagate the will of the governing authorities.<sup>742</sup> The media landscape in Cameroon which, until the early 1990's was dominated by the state press organ *La Presse du Cameroon* which later became *Cameroon Tribune* also witnessed the emergence of private press organs like *L'effort Camerounais*, *le Bamileke* and *le*

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<sup>741</sup> Djegni felicien kengoum, *REDD+Politics in the Media: a case study from Cameroon*, Working Paper51, CIFOR, BOGOR, Indonesia, 2011. p.3.

<sup>742</sup>See, Adrien Bitond, « Titraillles, Interaction Et Construction de L'espace Publique Autour de La Presse Ecrite : Une Analyse Ethnosociologique du Kiosque A Journaux Au Cameroun, Thèse de Doctorat, Université de Grenoble Alpes, 2006, p.42.

*Messenger*.<sup>743</sup> Of all these press organs the state press was very prominent with visibility attested nationwide while the others remained in constant quest for visibility and legitimacy. While the other private organs systematically disappeared with time, le messenger of Pius Njawe has stood the test of time as the oldest and surviving private press organ in post independent Cameroon and French speaking Africa.<sup>744</sup>

Founded by Pius Njawe a native of babouantou born in 1957<sup>745</sup>, *Le Messenger* came into existence on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 1979<sup>746</sup>. At the time Pius Njawe introduced le Messenger in the Cameroon media landscape, journalism was reduced to praise singing. The journalist work in essence was to merely magnify the achievements of the regime, propagate its ideology and uphold authoritarianism<sup>747</sup>. Added to these functions the journalist could again be permitted to treat information pertaining to entertainment and sports<sup>748</sup>. Thus any deviation from the above prescriptions was systematically considered subversion and the victims of such deviations experienced the ruthless arm of the repressive machinery of the regime. In this context of authoritarianism characterised by the strict enforcement of censorship, only a Conformist Press could survive. In effect private press organs like *la gazette*, and *l'effort Camerounais* which had been in operation earlier before le *Messenger* only existed and survived as long as they were able to conform to the neo-colonial status quo upheld by the Yaoundé regime.

Coming-in therefore in 1979 with *Le Messenger* and his strong determination to address the national plight, Pius Njawe whose newspaper was still negotiating its institutional and financial stability could not dare to challenge the status quo, as his first attempt to do so in May 1980 caused the systematic ban of the paper.<sup>749</sup> Thus like other existing press organs Pius Njawe conformed to the autocratic exigencies imposed on journalism when he re-launched publications in 1985.

Favoured by the new deal regime of 1982 which permitted the reinsertion of his newspaper in the media landscape, Pius Njawe automatically adjusted his editorial line to conform to the neo-colonial autocratic exigencies. Glorifications and praises to the new deal regime became

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<sup>743</sup> See, Jean F. Bayart, *L'état au Cameroun*, Paris Press de la fondation nationale de sciences politique, 1985. Cited in Adrien Bitond, « Titraillles, Interaction Et Construction », p.43.

<sup>744</sup> See, T. Atenga, *Gabon : La Presse en sursis*, Paris , Edition Muntu, 2007, p.24.

<sup>745</sup> Encyclopedia britannica in <https://www.britanica.com>.

<sup>746</sup> Atenga, « Pius Njawe, (1957-2010) : Portrait Posthume d'un Journaliste de Combat » in *Politique Africaine*, Edition Kartala, No. 119, Octobre, 2010, p.207.

<sup>747</sup> A. Bitond, « Titraillles, Interaction Et Construction », p. 42.

<sup>748</sup> Atenga, « Pius Njawe, (1957-2010) », p.207.

<sup>749</sup> *Ibid*, p.208.

permanent headlines of *Le Messenger*. When confronted on the raison-d'être of his loyal conformism to Biya and the new deal regime he had this to say:

*Soutenir le renouveau et son promoteur c'était donner une seconde chance à ce régime que le putsch manqué de 1984 a fragilisé*<sup>750</sup>

*C'est donc parce que nous croyions au changement et que l'orientation donnée à celui-ci par le nouveau leader rejoignait nos préoccupations, que nous avons décidé librement, c'est à dire en toute indépendance de mettre notre plume à contribution, non seulement pour rendre ce processus irréversible, mais surtout pour apporter notre soutien à celui qui portait en lui les espérances de tout un peuple ».*<sup>751</sup>

Seduced by the New Deal propaganda, Pius Njawe increasingly devoted his newspaper to serve the interest of the neo-colonial status quo. This Neo-Colonial regime that was celebrated by Pius Njawe's *Le Messenger*, over the years remained very much inert and woefully failed to translate its captivating and seductive liberal rhetoric into concrete action.

**PLATE XXIX: Pius Njawe; Dropping Conformism for Anti-conformism and Liberalism**



Source: adapted from [www.cahiersdujournalisme.net](http://www.cahiersdujournalisme.net)

<sup>750</sup> *Ibid.*, p.209.

<sup>751</sup> See, Cameroun : « Le Combat du Messenger, entretien avec Pius Njawe », p.87

Exasperated by the prolonged reluctance of the new deal regime to effect liberal and democratic reforms, a new breed of courageous actors who constituted what became known as the progressive forces started abandoning institutional conformism to clamour for change.<sup>752</sup> Pius Njawe and *Le Messenger* which was solicited by these progressive forces to articulate and propagate the aspiration of the masses found himself trapped in-between two ends that is; remaining loyal in serving the interest of the new deal and joining the progressive forces of change to speed up the institutionalisation of liberal democracy in Cameroon.<sup>753</sup> In the face of these two alternatives Pius Njawe chose to shift away from his complacent conformism to the Biya regime and embarked on the noble struggle for a free society where liberal democracy prevails. Therefore, *Le Messenger* which before now was serving Neo-Colonial interest and legitimised Biya's authoritarianism, now took side with the forces of change and became the only private press organ available and capable of vulgarising the aspiration of the oppressed masses before *Challenge Hebdo* and *La Nouvelle Expression* came to existence. Thus the erstwhile praise singer of Biya and his new deal was to become one of his most Ardent critic. To manifest his disappointment and total rejection of the new deal and its Neo-Colonial status quo, Pius Njawe published in his newspaper the venomous open letter of Celestin Monga to Paul Biya in which he said;

*Comme tous les camerounais j'ai été choqué par le ton outrageusement condescendant, paternaliste et prétentieux que vous avez employé à l'assemblée nationale le 03/12/1990 pour vous adresser au peuple. Comment pouvez-vous vous permettre de dire à onze million de camerounais : j'ai amené la démocratie. Dans ce pays où tous les jours les droits les plus élémentaires sont bafoués, où la majorité n'ont pas de quoi vivre alors que une poignée d'arrivistes se partagent les richesses du pays ?... le pouvoir judiciaire est à la botte du pouvoir exécutif... la Justice Camerounaise... Condamne en priorité ce qui n'ont pas pu corrompre le tribunal.*<sup>754</sup>

This letter that was articulated by Celestin Monga in a well selected diction to castigate the democratic rhetoric of Paul Biya was unique in its kind and the first ever contradiction given to presidential speech in post independent Cameroon. According to Atenga, this Open Letter marked the beginning of a new era the press Media landscape in Cameroon as he says;

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<sup>752</sup> See, F. E. Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*, pp.63-67

<sup>753</sup> Thomas Atenga, « Pius Njawe, (1957-2010), p. 210.

<sup>754</sup> See, Célestin Monga, « Lettre Ouvert au Président Paul Biya: La Démocratie Truqué » Published in *Le Messenger* No 229 of December 1990, cited in Adrien Bitond, « Titraillles, Interaction Et. p. 58.

*Cette lettre ouvre une ère nouvelle dans l'écriture de la presse au Cameroun. Sa tonalité est inédite dans les journaux camerounais. La contradiction qu'elle porte au discours du président de la république a beaucoup influencé le style éditorialisant des journaux camerounais*<sup>755</sup>

The letter received great approval from the masses and systematically radicalised the Cameroonian population who increasingly abandoned conformism to militate with progressive forces of change for freedom and democracy. Following the publication of the issue which according to Erik Essoussé (deputy director of political affairs at the ministry of territorial administration) did not respect procedural rules of censorship, Monga and Njawe were arrested and charged with contempt for the President of the republic, the members of the national assembly, the courts and Tribunals.<sup>756</sup> Their arrest and trial which contradicted not only the 1990 liberty law No. 90/052/ of December 19, 1990<sup>757</sup>, but also the end of year speech of Biya in which he said no Cameroonian was to worry henceforth about the ideas or opinions they expressed,<sup>758</sup> had mobilised progressive forces in a vibrant civil society to demand justice and freedom. This trial which became known as the “*le process de la liberté*”<sup>759</sup>, gave a fresh and new impetus to militancy in Cameroon as the erstwhile docile and dormant Cameroonians who had resigned their fate to autocracy and Neo-Colonial exploitation, courageously came out of their conformism to militate in the numerous civil society movements of the time to advocate freedom, democracy and the respect for human rights.

In effect, Pius Njawe's radical change of editorial line to adhere to the progressive movement for rapid democratisation and freedom did not only revolutionised the post-independent press in Cameroon, it equally injected new and fresh dynamics in political engagements or militancy. Thus from complacent conformism, many Cameroonians like Pius Njawe crossed the lines to adhere and militate for rapid democratisation for a more free society that upholds the respect for human rights and fundamental liberties. The exponential growth in the number of civil society organisations and defiant opposition political parties that surfaced following the arrest and trial of Pius Njawe and Monga, was a clear indication that Pius Njawe

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<sup>755</sup> Atenga, *Cameroon, Gabon: la presse en sursis*, cited in Adrien Bitond, « Titraillies, Interaction Et Construction », p.58.

<sup>756</sup> See Human Rights Watch Report, “Cameroon: Attack against the Independent Press”, 12 February 1991 in <https://www.hrw.org>

<sup>757</sup> See Law No. 90/052/of 19 December 1990 on Freedom of social communication, See also Valentin Simeon Zinga, “Cameroun: Une Liberté de la Presse Précaire. De la Chape de Plomb Politique a l'état Economique” in *Les Cahiers Du Journalisme* No. 09, 2001, p. 103.

<sup>758</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*, p.68.

<sup>759</sup> *Ibid.*

as founder of *Le Messenger*, and actor of the post-independent media landscape, made considerable contributions to political development in Cameroon. By shunning complacent Conformism to join the struggle for freedom and democracy which pulled a huge crowd of militants out of conformism, he indeed contributed in giving expression to the Dynamics of Militancy that characterised the conduct and practice of politics in post-independent Cameroon.

**viii. Cardinal Tumi and Political Theology: Stepping out of the “Zones of Liberty” to Articulate Liberal Democracy for a Just Society**

Politics as the naked struggle for power<sup>760</sup> in post independent Cameroon has brought on board several actors who in different capacities and engagements have influenced and sustained the flames of the struggle. One of the age-old actors in this struggle has been the church. As the moral vanguard of the society, the church has in different historical epochs participated and influenced the political game. The church, by virtue of its moral authority has at one moment influenced, constructed, institutionalised and legitimised political power just as in another moment it has deconstructed, criticised and challenged political power in vicious ideological battles. This frontline role of the church in the society and within politics in particular, has established a strong nexus between religion and politics which some theologians have termed political theology<sup>761</sup>. This established relation between politics and religion, to some theologians could be likened to the mixture of oil and water which chemically do not combine<sup>762</sup>. Beyond this theological perspective of the subject matter which associates political theology to theology of politics<sup>763</sup> emerged liberation theology<sup>764</sup> which clearly demarcated the line of action of religion in politics by articulating its avant-gardist moral role in the consolidation of both celestial and earthly salvation. It was therefore in a bid to fully fill this dualistic role of religion that Christian Cardinal Tumi distinguished himself within the Cameroonian religious and political landscape as one who greatly influenced political evolution and gave expression to the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon.

Since independence in 1960/61, the relationship between the church and the state or religion and politics has been fluid. Despite some isolated dissident voices within the Catholic

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<sup>760</sup> Heywood, *Political ideologies*.p.2

<sup>761</sup> See, Tanya Van Wyk, “Political theology as critical theology”, in *HTS Theological studies*, No. 71(3), 2015.

<sup>762</sup> See, Alistair Kee, *The scope of Political Theology*, SCM Press, London, 1978,p.2.

<sup>763</sup> While political theology seeks to study the relation between religion and politics, theology of politics has to do with the direct involvement of religion in politics.

<sup>764</sup> See, G. Gutierrez, *A theology of Liberation*, Orbis Books, Maryknol, 1988, p.29&30.

Church that often emerged and challenged the political order, as was the case with Bishop Ndogmo and verdzekov, religion and politics in post independent Cameroon have continuously enjoyed cordial relations until the early 1980's. This cordial relation, besides being sustained by Ethno-Clientelist manipulations, was consolidated by a theodicy that greatly rendered Cameroonians comfortable and indifferent amidst post-independence authoritarianism expressed in the neo-colonial oppressive and tyrannical regimes of Ahidjo and Paul Biya<sup>765</sup>

**PLATE XXX: Cardinal Tumi: From a Conformist Church to a Militant and Liberal Church**



**Source:** ALMANACH of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of independences

In effect the post-independent state had completely transformed religion into an ideal technology which it used in maintaining the poor and oppressed masses in total docility and

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<sup>765</sup> See, Achille Mbembe, *Afrique Indocile : Christianisme, Pouvoir Et Etats En Société Postcoloniale*, Paris, Karthala, 1988.

conformity, a phenomenon which Richard Joseph has referred to as the "zones of liberty".<sup>766</sup> It was against this backdrop that Christian Wiyghansai Shaagan Cardinal Tumi born on October 15, 1930 in Kikaikelaki Nso, Bui Division of Northwest Region<sup>767</sup>, became the first Cameroonian cleric to have influenced religion and the Christian church in particular to shift away from an oppressive religion to preach a religion of the oppressed. In effect as a Vatican II Cleric<sup>768</sup>, Cardinal Tumi has been fully committed to the teachings of the church for a new day. Like the biblical messiah, who said; as recorded in the bible gospel of Luke 4: 18-19;

The spirit of the lord is upon me, he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken hearted and announce that the captives will be released and the blind shall see, that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors...<sup>769</sup>

Cardinal Tumi has greatly appropriated the salvationist dimension of the Christian religion and Gospel on which he built a political theology that did not just challenge the political order but as well liberated the docile, indifferent and oppressed Cameroonians from neo-colonial authoritarianism and conformism. Stepping into the political landscape of Cameroon in 1973, when the 1962 laws on subversion were still very much enforced with every manifestation of intellectual life subjected to check and control, meetings prohibited, and publications judged subversive forbidden<sup>770</sup>, Cardinal Tumi unlike Bishop Ndogmo who simply challenged the political order and neo-colonial status quo, he went further to galvanise not just the Roman catholic church, but also brought together Cameroonians in an ecumenical fellowship of diverse denominations into examining the conduct and praxis of politics in Cameroon from a theological prism<sup>771</sup>. This ecumenical reflection group that was baptised the Christian Study Group (CSG)<sup>772</sup> became an ideal laboratory for cardinal Tumi where he designed and propagated a political theology for the liberation of Cameroon.

The critical analyses and vulgarisation of the 1977 pastoral letter of the Buea and Bamenda Bishops by the CSG was a first step towards engaging Cameroonians into a deep reflection and examination of the precarious condition imposed on them by the autocratic and

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<sup>766</sup> See, R. Joseph, "The Christian Churches And Democracy In Contemporary Africa"; in J writer (eds), *Christianity And Democracy In Global Context*, Co Boulder, Westview Press, 1993, pp. 234.

<sup>767</sup> <sup>767</sup> Elias Kifon Bongmba, "The Church and Politics in Cameroon: The Political Theology of Christian Cardinal Tumi", In *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 2016, Vol. (51)3 p. 289.

<sup>768</sup> *Ibid*, p. 300.

<sup>769</sup> See, New International Version of the Bible text ; Luke 4 :18- 19

<sup>770</sup> See, J. Marc Ela, *African cry*, Maryknol, NY, 1980, p.6.

<sup>771</sup> E. K. Bongmba, "The Church and Politics in Cameroon. p.286.

<sup>772</sup> *Ibid*, p.286. See also, Summit Magazine, Remember Cardinal Tumi; The Prelate, The Peace Crusader And His Legacies, Issue N°36, September 2021.



corrupt neo-colonial regime. By discussing and expressing in clear terms the corruption crisis in Cameroon as was exposed in the bishop's pastoral letter which laid emphasis on the role of religion and the Christian church to serve as the light, Cameroonians were challenged by Tumi to take action against this ill by denouncing it and showing the good example by taking action on the daily basis which are corruption free. This in effect was critical political theology in praxis. Though it didn't directly preach liberation, its application had a liberating effect on the people. Realising the liberating effect of the activities of this theology propagated by Tumi, the CSG became victim of government repression<sup>773</sup>. Few years later in 1979 Tumi was appointed Bishop of Yagoua in North Cameroon<sup>774</sup>. While there, he didn't give up on his political theology as he persistently called on the Christian community in general to translate theological teachings into action on the daily basis by so doing engaging themselves in the transformation process of a society greatly affected by oppression, poverty and corruption. Realising still the liberating effect of his theological teachings, Tumi was called to order this time by the Governor of the North. In total rejection of conformism which the regime wanted to impose on him he wrote directly to Ahidjo denouncing a built up hegemony that does not give room for religious freedom in north Cameroon<sup>775</sup>.

In spite of the numerous threats he received from the administrative officials, his engagement for a free liberal and democratic society was in no way deterred. Rather with the political transition from Ahidjo to Paul Biya his engagement intensified and this time around pulled with him huge fold of supporters not just within the Roman Catholic Church but nationwide who had now defeated fear and were ready to be the light of freedom equality and justice in a corrupt, autocratic neo-colonial regime. Elected at the helm of the Cameroon national episcopal conference in 1985, Tumi had successfully won the confidence of catholic Bishops nationwide and in 1988 under his leadership the episcopal conference issued a pastoral letter engaging Cameroonians to abandon conformism and take action for their liberation from corruption and neo-colonial governance<sup>776</sup>. In the letter the Bishops argue that political engagement is a biblical obligation for every Christian. By so doing many Cameroonians abandoned conformism to press for justice freedom and equality by adhering and spearheading

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<sup>773</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>774</sup> *Ibid.*, p.287.

<sup>775</sup> *Ibid.*, p.288.

<sup>776</sup> R. M. Akoko, T. Mbuagbo, "Christian Churches and the Democratisation Conundrum" in *Africa Today*, Vol. 52 No. 3, 2006, p. 202.

the creation of vibrant civil society movements which militated for a free and democratic society in Cameroon.

The 1988 Letter was later followed by another declaration by the national episcopal conference in 1990 in which the Bishops still under the leadership of Cardinal Tumi addressed the socio-political and economic plight in Cameroon. In this letter the Bishops emphasised on the role of the church in announcing in word and action the dualistic dimension of salvation. In other words the liberation from sin was directly link to the liberation from social injustice, corruption and neo-colonial authoritarianism, just as the aforementioned plights were the direct resultant of sin. The liberation effect of this episcopal epistle echoed far and wide across the major cities of the country and galvanised both the Christian community and the entire Cameroonian society as a whole behind a common ideal which was freedom, justice and democratisation.

In its effort to continuously maintain the people in post-colonial captivity, the autocratic regime besides deploying its repressive machinery and anti-democratisation propaganda, equally instrumentalised ethnicity within the church to discredit and counteract the political theology of Cardinal Tumi which had already gained ferment across the territory. Mgrs. Jean Zoa of the Yaoundé archdiocese who had remained in the “liberty zone” of the Christian gospel and refused to join the liberal bandwagon became the centre of ethno-Clientelist manipulations within the RCC. His Sympathy for the Biya regime associated to his Beti ethnic connection with the regime rendered him very vocal in articulating anti-liberalism and in providing mediatised contradictions to the political theology of cardinal Tumi. One of his first outings against liberalisation prone by the cardinal and the progressist forces for change was In April 1990 when he organised in the Yaoundé cathedral a worship service to dissuade Cameroonians from adhering to the liberating teachings of the cardinal and the call for democratisation<sup>777</sup>. This was followed by another mass celebrated five days later in Obala for the same purpose by Mgr. Jerome Owono Mimboe<sup>778</sup> In the same logic like Cardinal Tumi, Archbishop Jean Zoa organised a press conference in June 3, 1990 just after that of the National Episcopal Conference to contradict Cardinal Tumi and the rest of the Bishops and of course dissociate himself from the episcopal letter issue by the Cardinal as President of the National

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<sup>777</sup> *Ibid*, p.207

<sup>778</sup> Summit Magazine Remember Cardinal Tumi,p,11.

Episcopal Conference.<sup>779</sup> This did not in any way deter the cardinal as he stood his ground in defense of freedom and most especially Multiparty politics which he argued that;

We believe theoretically that within the one party there was democracy but the experience has proved otherwise...I believe that it was an error for us to have abolished the multiparty system. Admittedly there was something wrong with it. But rather than abandon it we should have rectified what was wrong<sup>780</sup>

As if this was not enough Mgrs. Zoa went further to organise another worship service just after the one organised in Bamenda to honour the memory of the 6 militants who died following the launching of the SDF. Describing the Bamenda organised service as unholy his own organised in Yaoundé was to cleanse the church of such an unholy service.<sup>781</sup> The deploying of ethno-Clientelism manoeuvres within the Roman Catholic Church by the state to oppose cardinal Tumi's theological teachings and declaration was in effect evidence attesting to liberating effect of his political theology which completely turned the tides of post-independent politics in Cameroon with many stepping out of the liberty zones to actively militate for democracy, justice and freedom. Thus by the transformational effect of his political theology cardinal Tumi liberated Cameroonians and the church from neo-colonial conformism to massively adhere to liberal democracy hence giving expression to the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon.

## CONCLUSION

Man as a principal actor of history has continuously shaped the course of history and significantly determined the path of progress and failures of human society through various decisions and actions taken on a daily basis. The political evolution of post-independent Cameroon which has known great and significant developments in the conduct and practice of politics was seriously influenced by human action. By investing themselves and engaging themselves in very crucial issues of national interest, Cameroonians at the dawn of independence in their diversity took and adopted diverse political positions and ideologies which were to shape the life course of the new independent nation. While some were privileged to take position and engagement from the top of the political ladder as decision makers, others from the bottom though not privileged to be at the top of the political sphere still expressed

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<sup>779</sup> Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*, p. 65.

<sup>780</sup> See, Summit Magazine; Remember Cardinal Tumi, p.11.

<sup>781</sup> <sup>781</sup> R. M. Akoko, "Christian Churches and the Democratisation p.207.

their opinions and ideas which all together influenced post-independent politics in Cameroon. Of the various positions and ideologies taken in determining the life course of post-independent Cameroon, one thing has remained unique and peculiar about the different actors of Cameroons post-independent history and this was nothing but their permanent inconsistency in engagement and militancy which we have qualified as dynamic militancy. Unable to hold firmly to their various ideas and political opinions in a young and challenging democracy in construction, the political actors and opinion leaders of post-independent cameroon continuously wavered in their political engagement and militancy which effectively gave expression to the dynamics of militancy which had become a symbol and character per excellence of the conduct and practice of politics in post-independent Cameroon.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE DYNAMICS OF MILITANCY IN CAMEROON: IMPLICATIONS ON POLITICAL PLURALISM AND DEVELOPMENT

#### INTRODUCTION.

The inseparability of cause and effect in Historical discourse has systematically imposed on historiography a causality chain which has rendered practically impossible the reconstruction of the past without its full integration and consideration in the sequence of events that build up this past. By logical philosophical inference nothing happens for nothing and nothing happens with nothing or in nothing<sup>782</sup>. Thus for every cause there must be an agent of causality whose existential relation or interaction with the cause must always produce an effect. Therefore for every cause there will be an effect and every effect which is the result of a cause could possibly be the causality of another effect. It is in this perspective that the consistency in the dynamics of militancy that shaped political evolution in Cameroon since independence, challenges the historian in his craft of restituting the past to interrogate not just the basis of the phenomenon, but also its implications. By so doing, an appropriate platform is established for the engaging and integration of History in policy making and development strategies. In effect, History which has as mandate to inspire the present<sup>783</sup>, cannot be dead to that present. For, Fanson a great Cameroonian Historian once said;

“History is an interesting but delicate subject because the past we are writing about is never dead to the present and also because it is written and re-written. Whoever thinks the dead do not bite and that the past is gone for good does not think history<sup>784</sup>”

This chapter that puts on board the causality chain in History, discusses the relevance of the dynamics of militancy in the historical construction of Cameroon’s democracy as well as in its socio-economic welfare as a nation-state from 1961 – 1992. In other words the chapter assesses the effects of the dynamics of militancy on political pluralism and development in

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<sup>782</sup> See, C.E.M.JOAD, *Teach yourself Philosophy*, English University Press, London, 1965, p. 23.

<sup>783</sup> See “Historiography, A Brief Note about History” in A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroons*, Vol. II Pp. 171-175

<sup>784</sup> See open letter: Professor Fanson on Professor V.J. Ngoh’s Reaction to his valediction address of Friday 23 September 2011, p.3. Cited in *Southern West Cameroons*, Vol.II, and p.175.

Cameroon. Starting with effects on Pluralism, the dynamics of Militancy has greatly consolidated political difference and significantly influenced the electoral process and democracy in Cameroon.

### **I. The Fate of Political Pluralism When Militancy Gets Versatile and Inconsistent**

Political pluralism which has been a permanent construction in the democratic process and political evolution of Cameroon before independence<sup>785</sup>, had its smooth and safe ride into the Post-independent era and successfully shaped the political institutions of the new independent Cameroon state in 1960/1961. Faced with the challenge of preserving the multifaceted diversity of the new independent state, its first President Ahmadou Ahidjo, instead of capitalising on the erstwhile consolidated democratic advances of the past, chosed to adopt a Jacobinist-styled Presidentialist system of governance which in every dimension suppressed pluralism to magnify autocracy.<sup>786</sup> With the triumph of autocracy in an apparent democratic republic, political pluralism gradually ceded the political scene to a *de facto* autocratic and dictatorial regime that fully affirmed itself in 1966 with the dissolution of all political parties to uphold the one and unique CNU ruling party<sup>787</sup>. The advent of the one-party system which consolidated autocracy in Cameroon for close to 3decades only realised by the end of 1980 the emergence of a strong liberal upsurge which imposed itself on the autocratic regime provoking the re-emergence of “political pluralism”<sup>788</sup> which has remained consolidated since 1992. In this episodic survival of political pluralism since independence, political activism and militancy has remained active, vigorous and consistently dynamic in its expression and manifestation. This in effect brings us to take a deep reflection on the Dynamic character of Political Militancy in Cameroon since 1961 thereby assessing its impact on liberal democracy, on political pluralism and in the conduct and practice of electoral competitions in Cameroon.

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<sup>785</sup> See Awah, “Party-Politics and the Dynamics of Militancy

<sup>786</sup>See; Gaillard; *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, pp., 103 116, see also International Crisis Group report, “Cameroon: a fragile State, p.7.

<sup>787</sup>*Ibid*, p, 116.

<sup>788</sup> Political pluralism it should be noted goes far beyond multiple political parties to articulate differences and the acceptance of this difference in all dimensions by all within a political system. In political pluralism we see Freedom and the triumph of democracy which are essential elements in political competition and great determinants of an effective electoral process. See Interview with Charlie Gabriel Mbock on *Laverite En Face*, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Equinox TV.

**i. The Consolidation of a Permanent Quest for Freedom in a Liberal and Democratic Society.**

The dynamic nature of political militancy in Cameroon since 1961 characterised by the criss-crossing of ideological lines and changes in partisan affiliation has provoked a remarkable incidence in the democratic constructions of Cameroon since independence and this incident has been the permanent struggle in defence of liberal democracy in the country since 1961. Coming out of several decades of colonial subjugations, Cameroonians of the former French and British Trust Territories, perceived self-determination and independence as the beginning of a new era of freedom and democracy where fundamental values of liberty and Human dignity will at last be upheld for the prosperity of the new sovereign state and its people<sup>789</sup>. These aspirations that caused Cameroonians to explode in jubilant ecstasy in January 1960 and February 1961, became short lived as the reality they experienced was far short of their expectation.

From 1961 to 1966, existing political parties in both East and West Cameroon through their ideologies and political engagements had laid a strong foundation for an inclusive and open democracy where pluralism, tolerance, liberty and respect for human dignity were to direct the conduct and practice of politics. This pluralist dimension of politics that encouraged dissensions, disagreements, resignations and even carpet crossing (dynamics of militancy) greatly contributed in upholding liberal democracy and maintained within the territory a strong urge to defend liberalism and the values of freedom<sup>790</sup>. In East Cameroon we saw several *UPC* militants disagreeing and abandoning the bushes to join the new *UPC* (Legal wing) and even forming completely different parties as was the case with Bebey Eyidi and Malangue who founded the *PNTC*<sup>791</sup>, all because for them the fight for genuine independence and freedom in the bushes rather curtailed their freedom and in no way advanced liberal democracy. Thus by crossing the lines into the new *UPC*, they were automatically manifesting their freedom and contributing in advancing liberal democracy by participating in national politics and making their voice heard in the nation building process. By so doing the dynamics of militancy experienced in the *UPC* rather heightened the urge and quest for freedom, democracy and the respect for human dignity. Aside the dissensions within the *UPC* that led to the legal wing

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<sup>789</sup> See, KNDP Secession charter as well as article 1 of the *UPC* standing orders as established in the Eseka congress of 1952.

<sup>790</sup> Interview with W. Tagne, Former Militant of PCRN party, 45yrs Douala, 15/09/2020

<sup>791</sup> See, *La Presse du Cameroun*, 20/05/1962, No.3573

faction, even with the new legal faction of the party the quest for freedom and liberal democracy remained an ideal. As such many of those *UPC* (legal wing) militants who still remained closed in the posture of radical opposition to the regime like Mayi Matip, were systematically abandoned by a cross section of the party who rather saw such posture as working against the sovereignty of the country. According to Emah Otu<sup>792</sup>, every *UPC* militant should refrain from opposing national policies of government and rather remain vigilant to combat and thwart the plans of all those who are conspiring against the sovereignty of the nation.<sup>793</sup> To him standing in opposition to government policy was a way of fragelising state institutions and rendering its leader vulnerable to further imperial incursions which had significant effect on the freedom and sovereignty of the people. For this reason we can conclude that the crossing over of Emah Otu and a cross section of the Legal *UPC* into the *UC* was to an extent motivated by the quest to consolidate pluralism, liberal democracy and guarantee the sovereignty of the people of Cameroon and their institutions, as he personally declared in 1962;

*la décision prise, non par opportunisme politique, mais en tout connaissance de cause et en tout liberté et rendue publique le 26 Avril, 1962 reste valable aujourd'hui comme hier tant que l'exigera l'intérêt supérieur de la nation*<sup>794</sup>

This position held by Emah Otu was further corroborated by Hans Gouet another former *UPC* militant in France who chose to move over to the *UC* of Ahidjo in 1962. To him the purpose of the *UPC* militancy which was independence had already been achieved thus there was no need for discrediting and dividing national efforts which only weakened the institutions of the new state and its economy thus rendering them vulnerable to imperial interest and of course jeopardising the sovereignty and freedom of the people.<sup>795</sup> Jealous therefore of their sovereignty and the quest for freedom, these militants had every reason to be inconsistent with the *UPC* as such the dynamics of militancy enhanced the consolidation of this quest for liberty which remained an ideal in Cameroon's political landscape since 1961.

Just as the aspirations for a sovereign and free Cameroon republic divided the *UPC* and sustained the dynamics of militancy within the party, the Quest for freedom and democracy also caused dissensions within parties like the *Democrate Camerounais* and *Parti Socialist*

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<sup>792</sup> Emah Otu was first national secretary of the legal branch of the *UPC* also called Legal *UPC*

<sup>793</sup> NAY, « L'UPC accepte la constitution du parti Unifié » La Presse du Cameroun 18/06/1962 No. 3644.

<sup>794</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>795</sup> NAY, « L'un des anciens responsables de l'UPC de France Démissionne pour adhérer à l'UC » in La Presse du Cameroun 7/06/1962 No.3636.



*Camerounais*. In 1962 H. Effa and G. Atangana abandoned the *DC* of Mbida to create the *Independent democrats ID* on the argument that their former party did not foster freedom and veritable democracy.<sup>796</sup> Moreover, in the quest for freedom and democracy which they could no longer exercise as a party because of their small size and the growing authoritarianism of Ahidjo and the *UC* the *Parti Socialiste* militants chose to all move into the Grand *UC* where they saw better avenues for freedom and democracy which they could not exercise out of this grand *UC* party.<sup>797</sup> Thus the consistent mobility of militancy throughout this period greatly helped in keeping alive the democratic values of freedom and liberty.

In the West Cameroon where liberal democracy was far advanced than East Cameroon, the dynamics of militancy only came to heighten and consolidate a permanent quest for freedom as militancy in the territory all along 1961-1965 gradually shifted from Anti-Annexationism to Autocratic Conformism. When the erstwhile autonomist like EML Endeley and Mbile chosed in 1961 to abandon Autonomy for integration with Nigeria they were motivated to a high extent by the desire to enjoy freedom since to them Cameroon could not offer such freedom and democracy. In the same way Foncha the erstwhile Autonomist later gave in to Reunification as it was the only open door left for Southern Cameroons to negotiate its freedom and consolidate its democratic values achieved over time. Equally the decamping of CPNC militants to join the KNDP after the 1961 parliamentary elections<sup>798</sup> was partly sustained by the quest for greater freedom and democratic participation which had been systematically restricted within an opposition which could not in any way propose or influence Changes in government. Again the resignation of Muna and other KNDP militants to form the CUC in 1965<sup>799</sup> was also in line with the quest for a better avenue for freedom and unrestricted liberty which they could no longer enjoy in the KNDP. All in all, the consistent mobility in militancy across West Cameroon politics from 1961 -1966 did not just reveal the in-born zeal among the people to be free, it as well consolidated in the territory a strong urge to uphold and defend the values of liberal democracy and Freedom.

Though by 1966 all political parties and militants for fear of repression crossed into the one party CNU, the motivation was to stay alive and enjoy freedom and democracy which had

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<sup>796</sup> NAY, « Trois députés crée une nouvelle formations politique camerounaise : les indépendant démocrates » in La Presse du Cameroun 05/02/1962 No. 3537.

<sup>797</sup> NAY, « le parti socialiste camerounais se prononce à son tour en faveur d'un regroupement nationale » in La Presse du Cameroun 11/05/1962 No. 3615.

<sup>798</sup> See Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*. p, 184

<sup>799</sup> See, Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo p*

been restricted within the confinements of the unique State-Party, CNU. Thus Mbida, Bebey Eyidi, Okala, A.N. Jua, EML Endeley, B. Fonlon, and Foncha who had all conformed to the one-party status quo after opposing it, realised it was the only place to keep the hope of freedom and democracy alive. This was clearly expressed by Bernard Fonlon who cautioned his West Cameroon peers on the futility of further resistance to Ahidjo's autocracy and Annexationism which could only spark a civil war in which they will all be crushed so in prescribing Conformism as a guarantee for their freedom in a stifled democracy he said **“let's leave the war to be fought by our forbearers”**<sup>800</sup>; it was in this logic that they conformed to the status quo and even led the 1972 campaigns in West Cameroon to terminate the federal system and institutionalise the United Republic which they all hailed as a new opportunity for freedom.<sup>801</sup> One of them; the West Cameroon Secretary of Education Mr Luma in his own words said;

We can regard the new constitution as a great Magna Carta more suited to our society because it guarantees basic liberties and fundamental human rights. It is a constitution which reflects the Cameroons people deep seated desire to form one nation<sup>802</sup>

To confirm that the massive cross over into the one-party status quo was to keep the hope of freedom and democracy alive, all who had moved in freely expressed their political rights and could even disagree on issues of policy as was the case in the early 1980's where dissensions broke out within the unique party creating a conservative and progressist factions: while the progressists in the likes of Ndongo Alega, and Jean Jacques Ekindi continuously deviated from the status quo to manifest the zeal for liberal democracy, the conservatives remained determined to uphold the status quo. Out of the one party status quo such freedom could not be exercised, thus in their inconsistency which took them into the CNU, pluralism was safeguarded and freedom consolidated.

Away from party lines, the civil society, awoken from its docility by the wind of change from, the East, challenged the authoritarian status quo of the one-party system to propagate liberal democracy in Cameroons' literature, music, newspapers, and even through religion. This in a knot shell attest that the dynamics of militancy which persisted even with the one-party greatly influenced liberal democracy in Cameroon. Not only did it render permanent the

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<sup>800</sup>See A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, Vol, II p.65&66 Emphasis mine

<sup>801</sup> NAY, “what West Cameroon Politicians say about the Unitary State for Cameroon” *La Presse du Cameroun*, 19/05/1972, No. 6387.

<sup>802</sup> *Ibid.*

quest for freedom and democracy, it consolidated in the spirit of Cameroonians, strong liberal values.

## **ii. The Proliferation of Political Parties for a Weak Opposition and Dominant Ruling Majority**

According to Khabele Matlosa and Victor Shale, political migration or better still the dynamics of militancy is not in itself necessarily undesirable in a democracy. The veritable problem with the phenomenon is in its management within a political system, for when not well managed, it accentuates the proliferation of political parties which in turn produces an adverse effects on competitive politics.<sup>803</sup> Since 1961, competitive politics in Cameroon has remained a major determinant in the political evolution of the country. It has been a veritable platform for democratic exhibitions that often attained their heights during electoral encounters with results that usually shaped and reconfigured the country's political system or regime. This platform that has continuously provided Cameroonians with avenues for free exhibition of democratic values such as tolerance, freedom, accountability and good governance has often generated power tussles throughout the country's political evolution provoking disagreements, dissensions, resignation and defections which often led to political migrations or the dynamics of militancy. The effects of such migrations or dynamics on a Presidentialist "pluralist" democracy like Cameroon has been largely detrimental in the building of a strong pluralist democracy. Instead of consolidating pluralism for an effective and strong democracy with strong institutions, it rather consolidated pluralism to weaken opposition and render democratic institutions ineffective and weak in the face of a dominant ruling majority party.<sup>804</sup>

Between 1961 and 1966, the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon largely fragelised opposition and built up strong hegemonies for the KNDP and UC parties in West and East Cameroon respectively. Taking the case of West Cameroon, political evolution in this part of the territory was large dominated by 4 political parties; the KNDP, KPP, KNC (CPNC) and CUC. Though the dynamics of militancy in territory before 1961 had favoured the birth of over 10 political parties<sup>805</sup>, these parties have remained permanently weak and unable to overturn the rising supremacy and dominance of the KNDP that has been on the rise since 1957 and

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<sup>803</sup>Khabele Matlosa, Victor Shale. "The impact of Floor Crossing on Party System and Representative Democracy: A Regional Perspective, the Case of Lesotho". In, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Seminar Report No. 19, *Impact Of Floor Crossing On Party System And Representative Democracy*, Johannesburg, March 2007.

<sup>804</sup> Interview with Ano Ebie Civil Society actor, 47yrs Yaounde 27/09/2020 ;

<sup>805</sup> See,. Awah, "Party-Politics. Pp.44-50.

permanently consolidated with the 1961 Plebiscite results. At the same time the dynamics of militancy resulting from disagreements, dissensions, resignations and defections consolidated pluralism in the proliferation of political parties, it greatly divided the opposition along ethno-regional and individualist tendencies which rather fortified and established the dominance of the KNDP across the territory.

**TABLE IX: LIST OF EXISTING POLITICAL PARTIES IN WEST CAMEROON FROM 1961 TO 1966**

N°	Political party	Creation	leader
1	Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP)	1955	J: N: Foncha
2	One Kamerun (OK)	1957	Nde Ntumazah
3	Kamerun United Party	1959	P.M. Kale
4	Cameroon Commoners Congress (CCC)	1959	Nyenti Stephen
5	Cameroon Indigenes Party (CIP)	1960	J.M. Williams
6	Cameroon People National Congress (CPNC)	1961	E.M.L Endeley
7	Cameroon United Congress (CUC)	1965	S.T.Muna
8	Cameroon National Union (CNU)	1966	A.Ahidjo

**Source:** Conceived by author during field work.

Though the dynamics of militancy at some points took the form of alliances as was the case with the KNC/KPP alliance<sup>806</sup> that brought about the CPNC in 1961, opposition to the KNDP largely remained fragmented throughout 1961 -1965. The acquired supremacy of the KNDP which brought to it power dividends, significantly gave the party enough leverage to influence not just national policy, but the democratic process as well. For instance following the December 1961 parliamentary elections in West Cameroon, just 2 political parties and 1 independent candidate effectively engaged in political competition<sup>807</sup>. The question one is prompted to ask is; what then is the role of all the remaining existing political parties in the territory? The answer is obvious, their limitation in space, number of militants and territorial

<sup>806</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroons Revisited*, Vol. II, p.38.

<sup>807</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*. p.182.

coverage puts them in a better and comfortable position to support the dominant majority ruling party from which they can obtain direct fringe benefits of power than coalescing with a weak opposition which offers no guarantee of ever attaining power. The outcome of this was a sweeping victory recorded by the KNDP which grasped 27 of the 37 seats in parliament, and of the remaining 10 obtained by the opposition, 4 defected the opposition to cross over into the ruling KNDP majority so as to also tap some dividends of Power associated with militancy in the ruling KNDP.<sup>808</sup> With this it's very evident that the dynamics of militancy, though consolidated pluralism with the proliferation of political parties and ideologies, it in turn rendered opposition ineffective and weak while consolidating the supremacy and dominance of the ruling majority party.

With the gradual and invading predominance of Ahidjo in West Cameroon politics between 1963 and 1966, which provoked great shifts in the centre of power from the KNDP to the Personality of Ahidjo/UC, militancy in West Cameroon ceased to be at the service of political parties to now serve the person of Ahidjo and his autocratic UC policies. In this new dispensation, political competition in West Cameroon continuously gave expression to dissensions, resignations and defections which rather consolidated pluralism with the birth of new alliances (CPNC/KNDP) and another political party the CUC. This new political party that emerged as a result of a political miscalculation of the KNDP leadership, who in their cravings for stronger Power-backings from the predominant UC party of Ahidjo rather antagonised a cross section of its influential militants who upon dismissal and resignation from the KNDP, hastily founded the CUC thus causing the KNDP to lose its absolute majority in parliament. With the reconfiguration of power parity in West Cameroon politics by 1965, it was very evident that the UC Party of Ahidjo was now the predominant ruling majority party influencing and shaping Power and Power-relations in West Cameroon. Thus the dynamics of militancy that provoked the birth of another party, though enhanced pluralism for effective democracy, greatly weakened the West Cameroon opposition (CPNC, KNDP and CUC) which had now become the Anglophone opposition against an invading Ahidjo and CNU majority. In other words, faced with the challenge to uphold and defend Southern Cameroons autonomy which was gradually invaded and annexed by Ahidjo and his autocratic UC/CNU policies, disagreements and defections which enhanced the migration of militancy in West Cameroon did not in any way build a strong opposition against Ahidjo's annexationist policy. Rather the

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<sup>808</sup> *Ibid.*

divisions and dynamics of militancy which enhanced pluralism for an effective democracy in the territory instead rendered the existing West Cameroon opposition parties weak as they remained divided in their quest to gain Power dividends from the ruling majority. In effect the dynamics of militancy which often cause the proliferation of political parties in our political system as a means to enhance pluralist democracy, rather consolidated a permanent dominant ruling majority as the many political parties often remained focus on the quest to tap dividends from ruling party instead of strategizing and coalescing to fully attain Power.

Going by NN Mbile's affirmations on the one-party system in which he said was more productive for our democracy than the multi-party era<sup>809</sup>, one is tempted to join him in giving legitimacy to the One-party system. But examining this assertion in the light of the elitist battles that continuously gave expression to divisions, disagreements and dissensions among the Anglophone elites, it is very evident and clear that unity could not be attained even in the single CNU party to which they all belonged. Thus within the one party CNU, militancy remained dynamic as *Elitics*<sup>810</sup> divided the Anglophone minority along personal egoistic and communitarian factions which further heightened discord as was deplored by Hon. Njumbe CNU president for Meme Section who said;

CNU would not hesitate to strike its sword of equality against persons who are out to sow seeds of discord, bitterness and disaffection in order to disunite CNU members... It is easy to loss freedom but difficult to regain it ... independence which is not backed with unity easily collapses<sup>811</sup>

With such discord there was bound to be laxity, resentment and even abandonment of post as was decried by Hon. Njumbe. Thus, though pluralism was clearly exhibited in the CNU one-party, it was not effective enough to influence policy and enhance effective democracy as all along, elites kept **“fighting for post with the hope that payment was coming.”**<sup>812</sup> With their eyes, hopes and aspirations fixed on material wealth rather than true democracy that could guarantee them Full Power, the elites of West Cameroon remained distracted in an apparent one- party democracy which instead kept them divided in provincial, section and sub section

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<sup>809</sup> *Ibid*, Pp, 198-201.

<sup>810</sup> *Elitics* here referes to the political battles among elites to have access to power, command authority and influence policy as well as decision making in their communities so as to serve as a strategic focal point and a liason between government and their communities. These battles are usually fierce and aggressive provoking great fractures and divisions within the communities and among its elites rendering unity of purpose and development futile.

<sup>811</sup> NAY, “Njumbe Deplores Laxity among some CNU officials”. In, *La Presse du Cameroun*, May 1972

<sup>812</sup> *Ibid*. Emphasis mine

politics that greatly consolidated the influence and dominance of Ahidjo and the CNU party in the territory. With the rise to power of Paul Biya and the growing desire for liberal democracy manifested as from 1985, these elites who were unable to make gains in the CNU-styled Democracy were the first to start castigating the system<sup>813</sup>. Though they brandish Anglophone Nationalism as a unifying factor to bring together all the factions that had been created by the one-party democracy, this strategy did not still hold as the factions in embracing Anglophone nationalism that gained momentum in the late 1980' early 1990 still did not give room for a common front in pushing through their common ideology. The result was the emergence of several elite associations like the Anglophone Patriotic Alliance (APA) the Free West Cameroon Movement (FWCM), the South West Elite Association (SWELA), the Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM) etc<sup>814</sup>. This pluralism in Anglophone organisations and associations stemming from the political migration of CNU militants/supporters of Anglophone extractions further consolidated the dominance of the ruling CNU now CPDM. For in their different factions they only remained a weak civil society opposition<sup>815</sup>.

Though strength was to be finally achieved in 1993 with the common front established by the convening of the All Anglophone Conference 1(AAC)<sup>816</sup>, the impact of the reintroduction of multi-party politics which gained steam in 1992 with first pluralist election further divide the Anglophone minority along regionalist tendencies which projected the SDF as a “Northwest party” and so could not articulate the aspirations of the Southwest thus the emergence of a “South West party” was imminent and Mola Njoh Litumbe did not hesitate to back out of the alliance with the SDF to create the LDP<sup>817</sup> that was given a “SouthWest Party” connotation. This dynamics in militancy that favoured pluralism by proliferating parties, factions and ideologies, did not only erased the possibility of attaining power but also maintained the Anglophone minority in perpetual weakness while consolidating the influence and supremacy of the ruling CPDM majority of Paul Biya.<sup>818</sup>

Like in the West/Anglophone Cameroon, the East/Francophone Cameroon political landscape from 1961 experience great political effervescence generated by political parties and

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<sup>813</sup> See, Foncha's Resignation Letter.

<sup>814</sup> Dze-ngwa, “National Unity.. p.

<sup>815</sup> Interview with Anonymous Traditional Ruler, 57, Yaounde, 26/09/2020

<sup>816</sup> See, Ndi, *SouthernWest Cameroon Revisited*, Vol. II, p.53.

<sup>817</sup> C. A Taku, “Mola Njoh Litumbe: in him Southern Cameroons rose to fall no more”, in Cameroon Concord news, <http://cameroonconcordnews.com>. 28/05/2020

<sup>818</sup> Interview with G. Tanda, actor Civil Society, 55yrs Yaounde 28/09/2020

their activities which continuously provoked militancy dynamics that led to the proliferation of more political parties and ideas. Between 1960 and 1966 could be identified in East Cameroon over 10 political Parties that is; *UC, DC, PNTC, PSC, UPC, DI FNU* etc: this number that was reduced to 1 CNU party in 1966 later increased again at an exponential rate as from 1990 with the return to multi-party politics. (See, Table IX) All this was simply the results of the dynamics of militancy which dealt a serious blow to competitive politics and democracy by weakening the opposition and consolidating the supremacy and dominance of the ruling majority party on the entire political scene.

**TABLE X: List of Authorised Political Parties in East Cameroon between 1960 -1966**

No	POLITICAL PARTY	CREATION	Founder(S)
1	<i>Union Camerounaise (UC)</i>	1956	A Ahidjo
2	<i>Democrate Camerounaise (DC)</i>	1956	A M Mbida
3	<i>Paysantindependant</i>	1956	M Djoumesi
4	<i>Parti Nationale Travailleiste Camerounais (PNTC)</i>	1962	MbandjaMalangue
5	<i>Parti Socialiste Camerounais (USC)</i>	1954	Charles Okala
6	<i>Rassemblement du peuple camerounais (RPC)</i>	1959	M MarigoMboua
7	<i>Movement Action Nationale Cameroun</i>	1956	Paul SoppoPriso
8	<i>(UPC) legal</i>	1960	Mayi Matip
9	<i>Indepandent Democrate (ID)</i>	1962	H. Effa, & G. Atangana,
10	<i>Front National Unifie (FNU)</i>	1962	Mdida, Matip, & B. Eyidi
11	<i>Union Nationale Du Cameroun(UNC)</i>	1966	Ahidjo

**SOURCE:** conceived by Author from field data

From 1960 with the proclamation of independence by Ahidjo, competitive politics in the East of the Mungo was already largely dominated by the ruling *UC* party.<sup>819</sup> This political party which had the blessings and backings of the French authorities to lead the territory to independence effectively consolidated its supremacy over the territory thanks to a French strategy which consisted of raising and sponsoring the creation of many political parties to fragelise any form of opposition and strengthen their grips on the territory through a dominant

<sup>819</sup> See, P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p, 111.



ruling majority. Thus with this, political competition in French Cameroon before independence had produced a wide range of political parties amongst which was the *RACAM*, , *ESOCAM*., *BDC*, *USC*, *MANC* and *UPC* among others<sup>820</sup>. This wide range of parties that saw light in the territory were simply the product of dissensions, disagreements and defections provoked within the territory to weaken any form of opposition to French imperialism as was propagated by the *UPC*.<sup>821</sup> Since the goal was to oppose the *UPC* opposition, with the banning of the *UPC* in 1955 these parties systematically died<sup>822</sup> and it was only until the setting up of the *ALCAM* assembly where debates were opened to discuss independence that new parties like the *DC*, *UC*, and *Paysan Independent PI*, emerged<sup>823</sup>. Though upholding different ideas on independence these parties were able to mutualise their efforts in a coalition that led to the putting in place of a strong government in 1957 under A. M. Mbida<sup>824</sup>.

The moment A.M. Mbida became a threat to French Imperialism, the strong coalition was systematically broken by the French who immediately backed Ahidjo and the *UC* party against Mbida by appointing him PM to replace Mbida in 1958. All these dynamics, or changes instigated by France that kept proliferating Parties to fragelise any strong opposition to French imperialism, did not end with independence in 1960. As from 1961 after independence had been consolidated with *UC* of Ahidjo as the instrument of French neo-colonialism, this party continuously received the backings of France to impose its supremacy and dominance over the territory and this could only be achieved by encouraging dissensions in competitive politics so as to provoke dynamics that will favour the proliferation of parties thus weakening any strong and common initiative that could overturn the power of the ruling majority. For instance after achieving independence, knowing that *UPC* was still very strong in a rebellion that threatened *UC* power Ahidjo decided to grant amnesty to the party so that they could engage in competitive politics for the built up of a new parliament<sup>825</sup>. Though this was a great move toward pluralist democracy, the target was to fragelised *UPC* rebellion and divide the opposition that was now championed by the *DC* of Mbida. Since the coming into the scene of the Legal *UPC* was not enough to weaken the *DC* that was well implanted in the South-Centre of the territory, the *UC* of Ahidjo resorted to Clientelist politics that consisted of rewarding all those who adhered to

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<sup>820</sup> See, D. Abwa, *Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p. ?

<sup>821</sup> Eyinga, *UPC : Une Révolution*. Pp. ,33-75.

<sup>822</sup> Abwa, *Cameroon : Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p ?

<sup>823</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>824</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>825</sup>. Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.110.

its policies with prominent posts in government<sup>826</sup>. This systematically provoked dissensions within the *DC* and Legal *UPC* by those militants who wanted to tap some dividends of power, thus causing defections and dynamics which brought forth new parties like *Parti Nationale Travailiste Camerounais (PNTC)*,<sup>827</sup> *Indépendant Démocrate (ID)*,<sup>828</sup> *Parti Socialiste Camerounais (PSC)*, *Rassemblement du Peuple Camerounais (RPC)*,<sup>829</sup>. Those who did not create new parties simply joined the *UC* party as was the case with Soppo Priso, Hans Dissake,<sup>830</sup> With the multiplicity of parties pluralist democracy in East Cameroon gain steam but competitive politics received a serious blow as all the parties created were simply “administrative parties”<sup>831</sup> who simply legitimised the supremacy of the ruling Majority by dividing and weakening the opposition. Thus the dynamics of militancy had the effect of proliferating political parties to the advantage of the ruling majority and at the detriment of the opposition in Cameroon.

With the acquisition of supremacy and power through the dominant *UC* party, Ahidjo in his quest to consolidate this power called for the formation of a grand unified party which he successfully enforced through authoritarianism that caused the remnants of the East Cameroon opposition that had taken refuge in the *Front Nationale Unifié*<sup>832</sup> to defect the opposition and migrate into the *UC* majority that simply transformed itself in 1966 to the CNU the one and unique party in the territory.

In this new dispensation of Mono-party democracy as was established throughout the territory, Clientelist and egoistic ambition of militants (Elitics) continuously fuelled dissensions and disagreements within the party’s organs. Such dissensions usually emanated from political competition among the militants (Elits) to occupy strategic positions within the ranks of the party which usually determined their chances and hopes of high political appointments in the government by the national president of the party who doubled as the president of the republic<sup>833</sup>. In such competitions, political losers usually back out of the party and those who

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<sup>826</sup> *Ibid*, p.111.

<sup>827</sup> NAY, *Le Parti National Travailleiste Camerounais in La Presse du Cameroun* 20/05/1962 No. 3573.

<sup>828</sup> NAY, *les indépendant démocrates* » in *La Presse du Cameroun* 05/02/1962 No. 3537.

<sup>829</sup> P. Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p.110.

<sup>830</sup> NAY, « *L’un des anciens responsables de l’UPC de France Démissionne pour adhérer à l’UC* » in *La Presse du Cameroun* 7/06/1962 No.3636.

<sup>831</sup> Abwa, *Histoire d’un Nationalisme*. p.217, See also, B. Y. Bagnakoue, « les parties administratifs camerounais : le cas de l’Evolutions Sociale Camerounais ESO CAM et de la Renaissance Camerounais RENAICAM 1954-1955 », Mémoire Maitrise Université de Yaoundé 1993.

<sup>832</sup> P. Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p. 130.

<sup>833</sup> Interview with, Edward Tafah , Administrator, 65yr, Yaounde 29/09/2020

emerged victorious with prospects of tapping dividends, also back out when such dividends of power didn't come forth. Some simply defected the party and abandoned their post as was the case in Wouri section in 1976 where El-Hadj Tanko Hassan CNU divisional president for Wouri (Douala) had to reorganise elections in 4 of the sub-sections of the party in Wouri so as to replace elected militants and officials of the party who had simply abandoned their functions and were no longer engaged in propagation of the party's ideals.<sup>834</sup> This display of dynamics in militancy was to later gain momentum in the mid 1980's with the coming to power of Paul Biya. His policy of liberal democracy raised new hopes among CNU/CPDM militants who had long abandoned and disengaged themselves in CNU militancy. Many of such militants came back to effectively reintegrate the party and champion liberal democracy by creating a faction of progressist within the party.<sup>835</sup> This faction that press for rapid democratisation within the CPDM later received great support from a determined civil society and an enabling international circumstance to courageously launch in 1990 the return to multi-party politics with the birth of the SDF championed by Fru Ndi an erstwhile CPDM progressist of the Mezam section<sup>836</sup>.

As soon as the SDF emerged several other parties propped up like mushroom and by the end of 1992 there was a large number of political parties in Cameroon. This large number of political parties in the territory which to Hervé Emmanuel Nkom represented an effective barometer to attest to the level of freedom and democracy that had taken roots in the country, its rapid proliferation was nothing else than a perfect expression of political immaturity among political actors who like prostitutes had completely loss the notion of decency and thus could easily profane and trade political values for the simple satisfaction of their alimentary canal.<sup>837</sup>

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<sup>834</sup> NAY, « UNC WOURI : Les responsables absents et défailants seront remplacés dans tout la section pilote » Cameroun Tribune May 1976

<sup>835</sup> Boulanga, *Démocratie de transit*. p. 36-61

<sup>836</sup> See, Vakunta, Peter Wuteh, « Lapiro Parle: entretien avec le professeur vakunta » in *the life and times of a Cameroonian icon Lapiro de Mbanga Ngata Man*, African Books collection 2014 p. 12.

<sup>837</sup> Interview with Hervé Emmanuel Nkom, Member of the CPDM Central Committee, Douala, 16/09/2020.

**TABLE XI: LIST OF LEGALISED POLITICAL PARTIES IN CAMEROON BETWEEN 1990 AND 1992**

No	Party	Leader	legalised	Head Quarter
1	RDPC	Paul Biya	1985	Yaoundé
2	SDF	Fru Ndi	1991	Bamenda
3	PSD	Nsame Mbongo	1991	Douala
4	LDP	Obenson Gabriel	1991	Buea
5	RUN	Seunkam Francios	1991	Yaoundé
6	UFDC	Ateba Ngoa	1991	Yaoundé
7	PRPC	Ateba Ngoa	1991	Yaoundé
8	UPC	Nde Ntumazah	1991	Douala
9	DIC	Essaka Annet	1991	Douala
10	USC	Okala Nicole	1991	Yaoundé
11	ANC	Baba Yousoufa	1991	Yaoundé
12	CPP	Tita Samuel Nfon	1991	Bamenda
13	UBC	BoutalBele	1991	Yaoundé
14	UPK	BoanJean Marc	1991	Douala
15	MORPA	TagueJoseph	1991	Douala
16	PSDC	TekamJean	1991	Bafousam
17	DEC	NkehNdi	1991	Yaoundé
18	PSA	Difoum David	1991	Douala
19	POUC	Bizole Dieudonne	1991	Yaoundé
20	RCR	Wambo Samuel	1991	Bafousam
21	MDPC	Matip Libom	1991	Eseka
22	MPR	Possi Njeunkam	1991	Yaoundé
23	FUC	Njeanga Jean	1991	Douala
24	MPC	Alli Adam	1991	Douala
25	MDR	Dakole Daisala	1991	Yaoundé
26	MJC	Tchoungui Francois	1991	Yaoundé
27	CLC	Tafoh Nganjoh	1991	Bamenda
28	RFP	Tchankou Emmanuel	1991	Yaoundé
29	RFN	Polog Richard	1991	Douala

30	UPR	Antar Gasagay	1991	Douala
31	PVDC	Fogum Justin	1991	Douala
32	NPC	Muafo Justin	1991	Bafousam
33	CIP	Oben Enow	1991	Muyuka
34	PDF	Boo Daniel	1991	Yaoundé
35	DAC	Ayissi Ntsama	1991	Yaoundé
36	UIEN	Tchemo Djamen	1991	Douala
37	CL	Ngayap P Flambau	1991	Douala
38	PPC	Pahai Jean	1991	Yaoundé
39	PAL	Bedzigi	1991	Yaoundé
40	ADD	Garga Haman	1991	Garoua
41	UPR	Bohin Augustin	1991	Yaoundé
42	UPS	Mbele Jean	1991	Yaoundé
43	PSP	Woungly Massaga	1991	Yaoundé
44	MSDN	Yondo Black	1991	Douala
45	LDA		1991	Buea
46	CNDP	Sambond Richard	1991	Bamenda
47	PSC	Nseth Nseth Apolinaire	1991	Douala
48	PAP	Mukwele Ngoh	1991	Kumba
49	UDC	Adamou NdamNjoya	1991	Yaoundé
50	ASDC	El-HadjSadjo	1991	Maroua
51	CPC	Noucti	1991	Douala
52	UNDP	Bello Bouba	1991	Yaoundé
53	URC	Koumbin	1991	Douala
54	DRN	Olinga Dominik	1992	Yaoundé
55	EPC	Nkana Baya	1992	Ngaoundere
56	MDI	Djeukam Tchameni	1992	Douala
57	POPC	Abega Adolf	1992	Yaoundé
58	RNDD	Owona Paul	1992	Douala
59	UND	Garga Balla	1992	Yaoundé
60	RAP	Nintcheu Jean Michel	1992	Douala
61	UN	Fotso Ayata	1992	Douala
62	UDPC	Tsobeni Joseph	1992	Yaoundé

63	CRP	Oben Benson	1992	Limbe
64	MDP	Moukuri Maka	1992	Yaoundé
65	CR	Imangue Hemade	1992	Bafousam
66	RCPU	Abba Aboubakar	1992	Ngaoundere
67	FSN	Abba Pohin	1992	Douala
68	PPJ	Jean Biedi Jules	1992	Yaoundé
69	FNSPR	Biboum	1992	Douala
70	FPLP	Mebada	1992	Yaoundé

**SOURCE:** Electronic Archive MINATD: 29/06/2020 12:59:43

This proliferation of political parties witnessed as from 1990, was in effect the product of the dynamics of militancy registered all over the territory. This outcome of the dynamics of militancy which was celebrated as the return to freedom and effective liberal democracy<sup>838</sup> was in effect thwarted by the rapid proliferation of political parties which instead greatly divided the opposition and consolidated the continuous dominance of the ruling CPDM party.

Though initiatives were taken to federate these plethora of parties under an umbrella organisation (*Comité Nationale de Coordination des Parties de l'Opposition*)<sup>839</sup> as a form of coalition against the dominant ruling party, divisive Clientelist tendencies were injected within such coalitions causing disagreements which only favoured a continuous proliferation of political parties to the advantage of the dominant party and to the detriment of the opposition and effective democracy in the country<sup>840</sup>.

### iii. The Enhancement of Individualism and Personality Based Politics

Beyond the regular organisation of elections which gives room for the people to participate in and shape their governance system, a strong democracy according Michael B. Aleyomi does not just require pluralist elections but rather needs strong and sustainable political parties as well as political institutions with the capacity to represent citizens and provide policy choices that demonstrate their ability to govern for the public good.<sup>841</sup> Cameroon in its democratic construction since independence has continuously placed emphasis on pluralist

<sup>838</sup> Interview with Beltus Munjah, 40yrs Political commentator, Yaounde, 26/09/2020

<sup>839</sup> Boulaga, *Democratie de Transit*, p.81.

<sup>840</sup> Interview with Tifu Ephraime, Political analyst; 59yrs, Yaounde, 28/09/2020. See also interview with Cyril Sam Mbaka on *Face a L'Actualité*; Stv, Douala 28/02/2021.

<sup>841</sup> M. B. Aleyomi, "Elections and Politics of Party Defection in Nigeria: A Clue from Kogi State" in *Covenant Journal of Politics and International Affairs* (CUJPIA) Vol.1 No. 1, September 2013.

elections while down playing fundamental democratic values of freedom tolerance and alternation. This perception of Democracy in Cameroon which upholds pluralist elections instead of pluralist ideas has rather exhibited a strong quest for individual recognition and self-preservation than the greater purpose of service to the people and the nation as true democracy will demand. Thus having understood the functioning mechanism of Cameroons democracy which incorporates the people and the nation only during electoral consultations whose rules the same people do not approve, the political class of the territory found it best to align with this Cameroonian-styled democracy which rather consolidated a plural and multiple number of parties in alignment with the system than in alternative discourse for a prosperous nation and people. This in effect was the principal philosophy behind the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon since independence and the outcome has been very devastating on effective pluralism and democracy as it has built overtime a strong spirit of egoism, individualism among Cameroonians which has raised personality based politics as a democratic standard instead of people-based politics.

The attainment of independence for Cameroon erstwhile under French administration in 1960 on the basis of continuity and not alternation was the beginning of a political evolution for the territory shaped in the dimension of continuity and not alternation. Thus to maintain this continuity, opposition was not welcomed and if opposition should become indispensable it must be one well shaped to embrace continuity and survive or simply die and is silenced in its contradiction<sup>842</sup>. It was against this backdrop that all the political parties in East Cameroon as from 1961 emerged. Realising that contradiction was not tolerated, the only way to survive politically was to ‘contradict’ in alignment thereby securing power dividends which only the individual political actor, not even his militants, not to talk of the people or the nation at large could benefit from<sup>843</sup>.

This in effect was the case with the founding member of the Legal *UPC* in 1960 (Mayi Matip, & Emah Otu). Realising that contradiction was inadmissible and even sacrificial for no personal gains of which contradiction in alignment was rewarded and affirmed the personality of the conformist on the political scene, Mayi Matip and his rebel companion didn’t see the need of fighting for a loss battle when capitulation opened doors of opportunities and prosperity for them as political actors. Thus in their egocentric political rationality they immediately

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<sup>842</sup> Eyinga, L’UPC, une Révolution, p.102.

<sup>843</sup> Interview with E. Motale, Civil Society, 44yr, Yaounde, 29/09/2020.

abandoned the national or people's struggle for alternation to endorse continuity and legitimise imperialism through a false democracy that is apparently plural.<sup>844</sup> As a good majority of political actors that endorsed continuity were handsomely rewarded, as was the case of Mayi Matip of the legal *UPC* who became parliamentarian and even president of the house of assembly, Many other actors chose to adopt the political formula that consisted of defecting their original party and creating new ones.

The undisclosed rationale as evident in their conduct and utterances, was to personally endorse continuity in alignment with the system so as to guarantee their own personal political dividend from the system<sup>845</sup>. For instance in 1962 H. Effa and G. Atangana dissatisfied with the growing political prominence of Mbida which did not influence their livelihood and that of their community chose to defect the *DC* of Mbida to Create *Les Independent Démocrate*.<sup>846</sup> This argument which they raised as *raison d'être* for the creation of their new party makes it clear and evident that the creation of the *ID* was not in any way to militate for alternation but rather to endorse continuity and tap the dividend of such political actions which is individual political aggrandisement at the detriment of the nation and the people. In justifying their defection to adhere to the *UC* ideology as not being focus on leadership but rather for the sake of peace and unity, their emphasis on **“the need to create their own ideology within a grand unified party”**<sup>847</sup> contradicts their initial stance on unity and lay bare their selfish and individualist intention which could in no way be in favour of the people. Like them, Bebey Eyidi and Malangue also defected the *UPC* to put up the *PNTC*.<sup>848</sup> Dismissed from the *UPC* for their anti-violence political stance, Malangue didn't want to disappear from the political scene and miss the opportunities available in political ventures thus with Bebey Eyidi they decided to create the *PNTC* which was to guarantee their political survival and prominence. This was practically the trend throughout 1960-1966 East Cameroon.

Thus, the dynamics of militancy in the territory which apparently consolidated plural politics in Multipartism, with the many parties it favourably brought to existence, was in effect legitimising personality based politics to the detriment of people based politics. In effect all

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<sup>844</sup> Eyinga, L'UPC, une Révolution, p.102.

<sup>845</sup> Interview with Jean F. Bikek, UPC Sympathiser, 42yrs, Yaounde ,26/09/2020

<sup>846</sup> NAY, « les indépendant démocrates » La Presse du Cameroun 05/02/1962 No. 3537.

<sup>847</sup> NAY, « pourquoi avons-nous adhéré au parti union camerounaise » la presse du Cameroun 27/03/1962, No. 3579. (Emphases mine)

<sup>848</sup> NAY, « Mbandja Malangue et Dr. Bebey Eyidi Fondent le PNTC » La Presse du Cameroun, Mardi 20 Mai 1962n No. 3573



these parties were created first to serve the interest of their founders and not the people;<sup>849</sup> that is why they could easily adhere to the *UC* doctrine in 1966 to form the CNU without consulting their base, as was the case with Emah Otu of the legal *UPC* who was very quick to castigate *UPC* militants who were still adamant to align and called on them to “*Cesser toute opposition a l’action nationale du Gouvernement*”<sup>850</sup>. To further confirm that the legal *UPC* was simply a platform to advance individualism and personality based politics as other political parties, Emah Otu as one of the leaders of the party (*1er secrétaire de l’UPC chargé de l’orientation politique*), publicly declared without the consensual approval of the militants of the party, the official adherence of the legal *UPC* to the *UC* unity ideology stating clearly that.

*La décision prise, non par opportunisme politique, mais en tout connaissance de cause et en tout liberté et rendue publique le 26 Avril 1962 reste valable aujourd’hui comme hier tant que l’exigera l’intérêt supérieur de la nation*<sup>851</sup>

This declaration that was not approved by the people provoked many to express their disappointment as Otu himself confirmed in his 1962 declaration saying

*Depuis cette prise de position dont la clarté, l’honnêteté, le courage ne sont pas à démonter, depuis cette date historique, cinquante jours se sont écoulés tout au long desquels des basses intrigues se sont nouées, des déclarations ce sont succédés en cascade qui tendent celles-ci comme celle-là à retarder le plus possible la solution réelle du problème camerounais*<sup>852</sup>

Since the goal was to project himself and his personality on the political scene he did not hesitate to fully resign from the *UPC* and integrate the CNU in 1966; stating emphatically that the rest of the militant should be allowed to follow **his decision**;

*Respecter une fois de plus la volonté populaire qui s’est manifesté à moi à travers correspondances et contact individuels, libérer la conscience de mes camarade et enfin pour permettre au pays de parfaire son unité*<sup>853</sup>

All this in effect made it clear and evident that the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon enhanced individualism and personality based politics instead of true pluralist democracy focused on the people and the nation.

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<sup>849</sup> Interview with D. Djekayi, Political Analyst, 43yrs, Yaounde 28/09/2020

<sup>850</sup> Eyinga, *L’UPC, Une Révolution*, p.116

<sup>851</sup> NAY, « *L’UPC accepte la constitution du parti Unifié* » *La Presse du Cameroun* 18/06/1962 No. 3644.

<sup>852</sup> Ibid.

<sup>853</sup> Eyinga, *L’UPC, une Révolution*, p.116

In the former British Cameroons that became West Cameroon until 1972, the dynamics of militancy sustained by a strong democratic firmament was to finally give way to individualism and egoistic politics that greatly justified the several divisions, disagreements and defections which were to amply give expressions to political inconsistency and dynamics in the conduct of militancy. The dynamics of militancy therefore, as orchestrated by selfish political ambitions turned out to have devastating outcomes on the political evolution and democratic construction of the territory. One of such devastating effects was the enhancement and consolidation of individualism and personality-based politics as democratic standards in competitive politics.

In 1961 following the release of the Plebiscite results which gave landslide victory to the KNDP,<sup>854</sup> it became clear that the nationalist aspirations of the people to self-determination and autonomy was to be concretised by the KNDP which had successfully united a bulk of the political diversities of the territory in its nationalist ideology. Thus within the KNDP we had politicians from different ideological/ political background such as the OK, KNC, KPP and CPNC who had defected their previous parties for different reasons which time later revealed to have been primarily egoistic.<sup>855</sup> By 1962 and 1963, the containment of these wide range of personalities within the party became a difficult task<sup>856</sup> as many started side-lining the nationalist ideal that brought them together to start manifesting personal quest for power and influence as individuals and not as a people or territory. The crisis that finally broke out in the KNDP in 1964<sup>857</sup> was simply the exposure of a long internal strife for personal political ambitions which persistently clashed and since the divide and rule syndrome of Ahidjo had already been injected in the territory, militancy completely shifted from the nationalist ideal to embrace interpersonal struggles for political positioning, power dividends and not power itself. A glaring case in point was the defection of Muna from the KNDP alongside his dismissed counterparts; E.T. Egbe, W.N.O. Effiom, J.M. Bokwe, W.N. Ndoke, Sam Mofor, Martin Fusi, J.K.N. Tataw, B.T. Sakah, and L.I. Umejoh, who unable to attain their individualist ambitions within the KNDP had to create the CUC<sup>858</sup> for effective power positioning within the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

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<sup>854</sup>See, 1961 Plebiscite Results in British Southern Cameroons.

<sup>855</sup>See, Awah, "Party-Politics and the Dynamics of Militancy..p,

<sup>856</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, p, 191.

<sup>857</sup>See, S. Ngemasong, "Crisis within the KNDP, 1959-1966: An Historical Analyses", MA Dissertation, University of Buea 2004.

<sup>858</sup>Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, vol. II, p, 149.

This political conduct of militancy in West Cameroon which showcased inconsistency and dynamics in ideological pursuits, completely sacrificed their quest for Autonomy and Power on the altar of individualism where power dividends as brandished by the Ahidjo regime became the focus instead of Power itself. Thus the dynamics of militancy which has the credit for building up political pluralism, in West Cameroon it rather brought about pluralism for egoistic endorsement of continuity and not alternation, hence consolidated individualism and personality-base politics in the territory from 1961-1966.

Besides the glaring case of Muna's defection from the KNDP, there was equally cases of sporadic defections from the CPNC into the KNDP after the December 1961 parliamentary elections.<sup>859</sup> We got the cases of S.E.Ncha of Mamfe North, and J. Nsame of Nkambe South constituencies respectively<sup>860</sup> who in search of greater political visibility decided to quit the CPNC to cross over into the KNDP. Raising the argument of the opposition's incapacity to give them greater visibility and opportunities for making or obtaining the political dividends of power<sup>861</sup>, they all found it more advantageous to defect the CPNC for the KNDP which was the ruling majority in the territory and offered them greater prospects for power dividends, political positioning, and self-aggrandisement. Instead of pressing on in parliament to defend the aspirations of the people who voted them on the CPNC ticket, these ambitious politicians who in their quest for political influence, positioning and effective acquisition of power dividends, decided to sacrifice democracy and the principle of accountability on the altar of Individualism. Thus the dynamics of militancy as exhibited here does not in any way generate political pluralism as the plurality in the politician's conduct of militancy rather safeguards their individual interest and political dividends against the plight of the people and the nation who eagerly desire alternation and Power. In essence here, the dynamics of militancy profits the individual and not the people nor the democratic system, as the people who ought to be the first beneficiaries of the democratic process are instead "left out in the cold"<sup>862</sup>. As such the dynamics of militancy is bound to greatly undermine participatory democracy and the accountability of politicians, hence consolidating individualism and personality based politics in Cameroon.

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<sup>859</sup>Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*. p, 182.

<sup>860</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>861</sup>*Ibid.* p, 184.

<sup>862</sup>Matlosa & Shale. *The impact of Floor Crossing on Party System and Representative Democracy*, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Johannesburg, March 2007. p.2

Individualism which had become a trade mark in Cameroon's political system throughout 1960-1966, was to further intensify in the one party era as political competition this time around totally did not depend on the people. The people who had been taken hostage by an autocratic system which did not welcome contradiction were forced to legitimise the actions of the system through the regular elections that were organised within the various organs of the one-party. Within this institutionalised Monolithism, political competition which was now all about personalities continuously orchestrated dynamics in militancy as the various political personalities who struggled for "Power"<sup>863</sup> often did not win the favour of "Power" and out of disappointment such usually defected the party or abandoned militancy as was the case in the CNU Meme Section<sup>864</sup> and in the Wouri section<sup>865</sup> where laxity among party elites and rampant abandonment of duties within the party were recorded. This craving for political recognition among militants of the party which pushed them to be inconsistent with their militancy and political engagement greatly projected and exhibited individualism and personality based politics in Cameroon. Since that which interested them was power dividends and not power itself, many simply abandoned militancy as it was very clear to them that Power or alternation was an impossible and suicide mission. It was until 1982 with the rise to power of Paul Biya and with the promise of liberalisation that many had to renew their commitments and engagements as militants of the unique party. As if to say they understood so well the call for liberalisation at the time which was nothing else but a kind of call for disentanglement with the old Ahidjo order for effective alignment with the new Biya order, most of them reengaged into competitive politics. This perfectly corroborates with the analyse of F. E. Boulaga who said;

*Autour de la personne d'Ahidjo et sous son égide, une classe dominante promeut et anime un état autoritaire... Lorsque son successeur parle de « Renouveau » de « Moralisation » et de « Démocratisation » c'est à cette couche qu'il s'adresse, pour lui signifier que l'alliance hégémonique se fera autour de lui et que la prépondérance sera donné au membres de son cercle personnel<sup>866</sup>*

With this, remobilisation within the CNU by 1983 just like before, was all about the struggle for personal political recognition and not power itself. Thus the erstwhile incessant

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<sup>863</sup> Power in this context was no other thing other than the person and personality of the President who ruled supreme over the people and institutions of the state and remained accountable no one else. Thus the president of the republic was not just the incarnation of power he was power itself and as such any competition for power at this point was simply to gain "power" approval for political dividends and not Power itself.

<sup>864</sup>NAY, "Njumbe Deplores Laxity among some CNU officials". *La Presse du Cameroun*, May 1972

<sup>865</sup>NAY, « UNC WOURI : « Les responsables absents et défailants seront remplacés dans tout la section pilote » *Cameroun Tribune* May 1976

<sup>866</sup>. Boulaga, *Démocratie de Transit*, p. 28

internal battles and division among elites struggling for recognition persisted. This was the case in the Wouri, Fako and Mfoundi sections of the CNU/CPDM where stern battles for political recognition continuously divide political actors as witnessed in Douala between Dooh Priso and Jean Jacque Ekindi, in Mfoundi between Ndongo Alega and Emah Basile and in Fako between the Litumbe camp and Endeley camp.<sup>867</sup> In these battles for personal political recognition, many were those whose efforts were in vain as their line of action and policy embraced contradiction instead of alignment. For such there was no political future in the CPDM unless they aligned, and with the opportunities given them by the wind of democratisation blowing across Africa at the time many took the risk to intensify contradiction and opposition to the point of creating a rival party as was witnessed in Bamenda with the launching of the SDF in 1990 which became the first opposition party to emerge in the monolithic era thus inaugurating the return to multi-party politics.

Since in the dynamics of militancy as witnessed in 1990, personality and individualism prevailed over the struggle for Power, many of those who didn't receive political recognition within the CPDM instead chose to create their own parties for greater visibility by those in power and not for the conquest of power. This clearly explains why with the launching of the SDF in 1990 there immediately, a strong explosion of parties was witnessed all over the territory clamouring for political space and recognition. Instead of working out contrary ideologies to the dominant ruling party to effectively bring about alternation and win Power, political actors were rather fighting for individual space so as to easily gain recognition by power and partake in the sharing of political dividends.<sup>868</sup> Even when efforts were made to mutualise the forces of contradiction in a *Comité Nationale de Coordination de Parties de l'Opposition*(CNCPO) so as to better reorganise the political game and put the people at the forefront, the cravings for self-preservation and recognition still resurfaced among political actors thus orchestrating dissensions and disagreements which influenced further multiplication of parties.

Remaining in its age long policy of encouraging the birth of satellite parties to dismember the opposition, the governing party through its president in 1992 put at the disposal of parties that will not respect the order given by the people oriented opposition to boycott legislative elections a sum of 500Million.<sup>869</sup> Since obtaining wealth and prominence has always been the primary goal of many political actors in Cameroon, it was impossible for them not to

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<sup>867</sup> *Ibid*, Pp, 42-54

<sup>868</sup> Interview with F. Asongwe, political analyst, 50yrs Yaoude 30/09/2020.

<sup>869</sup> *Ibid*, p.100.

adhere and align their policies with that of the ruling majority so as to continuously make wealth and fame for themselves. This in essence, was the introduction into the Cameroonian political landscape a new era baptised “*L’ère de la dictature des parties*”<sup>870</sup> this government policy that was codified in the law excluding independent candidates from vying elections in effect opened the doors for any individual to form his or her party such that the latter could easily be lured by the regime to align without any consideration of the people. As Boulaga puts it;

*Il suffit que des individus obtiennent administrativement le statut de parti politique pour avoir le pouvoir de mettre hors-jeu le peuple. Ils reçoivent et perdent leur mandat du parti. Et celui si peut entrer dans les combinaisons avec le régime, former des coalitions en fonctions des intérêts de ces dirigeants... Le destin de la nation est livré, par eux à l’exécutif...*<sup>871</sup>

This is further corroborated by Jean de Dieu Momo president of the PADDEC party who openly declared during an interview that;

i will say very frankly and very clearly that my party does not have an alliance with the CPDM. I have an alliance with the president of the republic, Paul Biya that is his name! My party supports President Paul Biya and this support will go all the way... I have never signed anything with the CPDM...<sup>872</sup>

The outcome of this was the total disintegration of the opposition as in the space of just one year (1990-1991) Over 52 Parties were legalised,<sup>873</sup> there by sacrificing the sovereignty of the people for individual aggrandisement as was witnessed in the 1992 legislative elections wherein several parties did not yield to the call for boycott as was championed by SDF, UDC, UFDC, MDP and UPC just because they had chosen to place their individual quest and aspirations above the nation and people<sup>874</sup>. To further expose the level of individualism that accompanied the dynamics of militancy, A. F. Kodock had to champion a separate faction of the UPC and participate in the Legislative elections against the stance already taken by the UPC party led by Ntumazah to boycott, all just to affirm himself and gain political dividends for his personal aggrandisement. With this it became very clear that the dynamics of militancy in

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<sup>870</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>871</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>872</sup> See Interview with J. De Dieu Momo, on *Dimanche avec vous* Equinox TV, Douala, 26/01/2020.

<sup>873</sup> See, List of Legalised Political Parties In Cameroon; Electronic Archive MINATD: 29/06/2020 12:59:43

<sup>874</sup> Interview With C. Ajoanek, Political Analyst 52yrs, Yaounde, 09/09/2020.

Cameroon simply enhanced egoism, individualism and self-preservation as standard in the country's political system<sup>875</sup>.

## II. Implications of The Dynamics of Militancy on Socio-Economic Development in Cameroon

Studies in societal psychology posit that, changes or dynamics that often occur around us or are manifested by individuals are nothing but the result of psychological processes that would hardly be comprehended if not placed in context. The contextual factors of change are predominantly social and political, thus analysing change out of its context will mean eliminating all the underlying politics that sustains change. In other words, “when the context of change is removed so too is its politics.” Knowing well that in any context where change is to take place, there are always competing interests wherein dominant perspectives emerge and others are marginalised or better still we could talk of winners and losers.<sup>876</sup> In the case of Cameroon and the dynamics in militancy that characterised the conduct and practice of politics one is prompted to ask himself the question; in all these change processes who in effect actually emerged winner, the individual politician or the people (nation)? Here therefore is established the problematic of politics and development in post independent Cameroon.

To be more specific what has been the implications and impact of the conduct and practice of politics on the general well-being of the nation? Drawing inspiration from the Modernisation Theory of Development<sup>877</sup> which shaped and structured post independent African economies and kept them in total dependence and alienation, we came to the realisation that, the Aid-based or Top-Bottom Development paradigm and its excruciating failures as witnessed in Africa,<sup>878</sup> was the development standard on which post-independent Cameroons leaders established their political ideologies. These ideologies which projected development not as an end in itself but rather as a means to an end, provoked serious development crisis in the territory as the endless conflict between the manifest and the latent function of development<sup>879</sup> remained unresolved throughout 1961-1992.

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<sup>875</sup> Interview with G. Anjuabom, clergyman, 52yrs, Bamenda, 23/04/2021

<sup>876</sup> C. Howarth et al, “Insights from Societal psychology : The contextual politics of Change” in *Journal of Social and Political Psychology (JSPP)*, 2013, Vol. 1(1), Pp.364–384

<sup>877</sup> C. Ake, *Democracy and Development in Africa*, the Brookings Institute, Washington DC, 1996, Pp.9-14.

<sup>878</sup> Ibid., see also Lorenzo, G. Bellu, *Development and Development Paradigms a (Reasoned )Review of Prevailing Visions*, FAO EASYPol, May 2011, Pp, 2-13

<sup>879</sup> Ake, *Democracy and Development*. p.9.

Unable to reconcile the Manifest and Latent function of development, political actors in Cameroon rather chose to propagate illusionary manifestos which kept the people (militants) wavering from one ideology to the other just to accomplish their quest and thirst for socio-economic improvement and transformation. The end result of such inconsistency of political engagement in search of social transformation and wellbeing, was in itself to become even more devastating to the socio-economic well-being of the people (nation), as such dynamics in political engagement accentuated social conflicts and political divisions which only magnified the triumph of the state over the nation hence jeopardising democracy and its constant indicator Development.

**i. The Permanent Consolidation of Social Conflict and political strife Repugnant to Development**

The dynamics of militancy resulting from competitive politics in Cameroon from 1961-1992 dealt a serious blow not just to political pluralism and democracy, but also to socio-economic development in the territory. The dynamics of militancy exhibited throughout post independent Cameroon was simply the public manifestation of an inherent class struggle within the territory that gained momentum with independence and clearly expressed itself in two principal dimensions which were ethnic and Economic. It should be noted that the nationalist movements in Africa and Cameroon in particular which pressed vigorously for self-determination and independence was championed by an emerging middle class of elites from the major cities who had constituted themselves in a constructive movement for mass criticism and the overturn of colonialism. These emerging middle class who had injected a considerable dosage of democratic values in the territory successfully positioned themselves as not just a source of countervailing power, but equally as a source of new opinions and channel of communication of new ideas to the entire citizenry so as to build in them better skills for effective and increase political participation<sup>880</sup>. Realising the balance of power gradually institutionalised by the emerging middle class, the colonial capitalist immediately provoked dissensions within this middle class by raising amongst them Neo-capitalist in whose hands

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<sup>880</sup> See, Renske Doorenspleet, "Development, Class and Democracy; Is There a Relationship?" In, *Development and Democracy What We have learned and how?* (Eds) Ole Elgström and Goran Hyden, Routledge ECPR, London and New York, 2002, Pp, 60-61.



independence was awarded thus inaugurating in post independent Cameroon a permanent class struggle which was not just economic but equally took an Ethnic and Cultural dimension.<sup>881</sup>

Since the nationalist struggle in Cameroon was coordinated by a coalition of desperate groups of elites united by their common grievances against the colonial oppressor, it did not exclude the fact that within such coalition existed a complex network of nationalities, ethnic, religious and professional identities/ interest, which often provoked amongst them internal tensions and conflicts. With the disappearance of colonialism and the systematic transfer of its legacy to the Neo-capitalist raised from within the complex web of a totally diverse middle class, it became obvious that no longer having a common enemy/oppressor the natural bond that kept them united automatically became weak and as such accentuated divisions and open conflicts on predominantly ethnic and cultural dimensions with focus not on the colonial oppressor but on the control of state power which tore the emerging middle class apart .

With state power now in the hands of the Neo-capitalist Ahidjo, the remaining middle class elite instead of forging a common political ideology against the authoritarian and exploitative neo-capitalist Ahidjo, rather chose to combat Ahidjo in their dispersed ranks and diverse identities which only sustained a fruitless competition for the control of state power. Like the former colonisers Ahidjo saw in the unity and growth of the middle class a potential threat to his absolute control of state power and resources. thus to limit the exponential growth and influence of the middle class as catalyst of development and democracy, Ahidjo resorted not just to intimidation and coercion, he as well raised nationalities and identities against each other by granting some the privilege to own and control resources while maintaining others in perpetual dependence and poverty. All these simply consolidated within the country, permanent conflict and civil strife which magnified and accentuated competitive politics and the struggle for power which besides rendering the post-independent Cameroon environment hostile for development, completely absorbed, marginalised and neglected development as all the proletariats remained divided and absorbed in the struggle for power and survival.<sup>882</sup>

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<sup>881</sup> In theorising class structures Karl Marks made it clear that in the permanent class struggle between the rich and the poor, the middle and the upper class, the workers and the capital owners , the workers or middle class remain predominantly exploited and marginalised and the only solution to their plight is unity against the capitalist. The capitalist therefore aware of the revolutionary power of proletariat unity have resorted to device and orchestrate dissensions within the middle class so as to avert any such revolutions in the capitalist system. This has been the *modus operandi* of the colonial capitalist regimes in Africa, and the legacy lives on even in the post-independent era.

<sup>882</sup>.Ake, Democracy and Development. p.7.

From 1961 the struggle for Power in Cameroon like a consuming fire swept across and penetrated the entire fabric of the society leaving no class structure indifferent. The flag bearers of the struggle being the workers/middle class realising that the long brandish self-government propaganda was now obsolete, had to abandon contestation to brandish the development ideology. This in effect marked a great turning point in the political evolution of the territory as it provoked great dynamics in militancy with many elites and political actors leaving the radical independence contestation movements to present to the masses their different developmental projects and ideologies translated in political manifestos designed to compete with the Neo-capitalist development ideology championed by Ahidjo and the *UC* party. This was the case with legal wing of the *UPC* created in 1960<sup>883</sup> by dissenters of the radical wing who systematically abandoned radical contestation to compete for power with Ahidjo's *UC* by raising a competing development ideology to that brandished by Ahidjo. Besides the Legal *UPC*, emerged the *PNTC* founded also by dissenters of the radical *UPC* faction who had a different perspective of development which they wanted to project through political competition and gain power<sup>884</sup>.

To these *UPC* dissenters, were also militants of the *DC* who abandoned their party and leader to create the *ID* in protest of economic and political marginalisation within the party and opted for a more open and inclusive development ideology translated in the political manifesto of their new party the *ID*<sup>885</sup> with which they also competed for Power against Ahidjo's *UC*. In the West Cameroons former British Cameroons the situation was not different, after contesting the plebiscite results and the independence platform adopted by the *KNDP*, the *CPNC* by December 1961 abandoned contestation to project their own development vision for the new independent Cameroon which they brandished as ideology and manifesto for their party during the December election where they struggled for power with the *KNDP*<sup>886</sup>. By 1965 the entire political class of Cameroon was totally invested in the struggle for power through competing development perspectives translated in political ideologies, thus corroborating Claude Ake's assertion that;

The new leaders of independent Africa knew that to hold on to their power and to divert their people from demands for redistribution and for the structural transformation of the colonial economy, they had to find something to replace

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<sup>883</sup> Eyinga, *L'UPC une Révolution*. p, 111.

<sup>884</sup> *La Presse du Cameroun* 20/05/1962. No. 3573

<sup>885</sup> *La Presse du Cameroun* 05/02/1962 No. 3537.

<sup>886</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*. p.182.

the nationalist ideology of self-government, something that would, they hoped, create a sense of common purpose. In the end, they settled for the ideology of development.<sup>887</sup>

Now that the entire political class (middle class) had settle for the development ideology, there was now a great need for the translation of ideologies into concrete development actions. How then could this be concretised in a context of hostility and instability coupled with incessant political battles and struggle for power which completely absorbed the political class? This therefore confirms our thesis that the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon and its resulting apparent political pluralism work against the socio-economic wellbeing of the territory and its people.

Realising that the aspirations and demand for structural transformation and human development was getting high and no concrete action on ground was replicating such strong demand as all political actors were swallowed up in political warfare and the struggle for power, Ahidjo like most African Leaders of the time made it clear to all contestants that “development needs unity of purpose and the utmost discipline”<sup>888</sup>, in fact to him development which had become a common interest of all Cameroonians could not be attained in dispersed ranks or what C. Ake calls “oppositional attitudes”<sup>889</sup> to him the time had come to put an end to opposition politics and the fruitless struggle for power and this could only be achieved by the criminalization of political opposition and the establishment of single party systems in 1966. With the silencing of the opposition and its multifaceted perspectives of the development ideal, enough space was created for the neo-capitalist development perspective of Ahidjo rooted on the structuralist modernisation theory to take precedence.

Like the great economist Ragnar Nurske<sup>890</sup> Ahidjo saw development and growth as a matter of industrialisation, thus in the implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Five Year development plan great emphasis was placed on infrastructural transformation as means to improve living standards. Putting into practice the neo-capitalist Top-Bottom Development paradigm which conceived development as an “autonomous process, independent of politics, culture, and institutional framework”<sup>891</sup>, Ahidjo as master planner of the economy, institutionalised an exogenous economy which greatly served the interest of his Western

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<sup>887</sup> Ake, *Democracy and Development*. p.8.

<sup>888</sup> *Ibid*, p, 9.

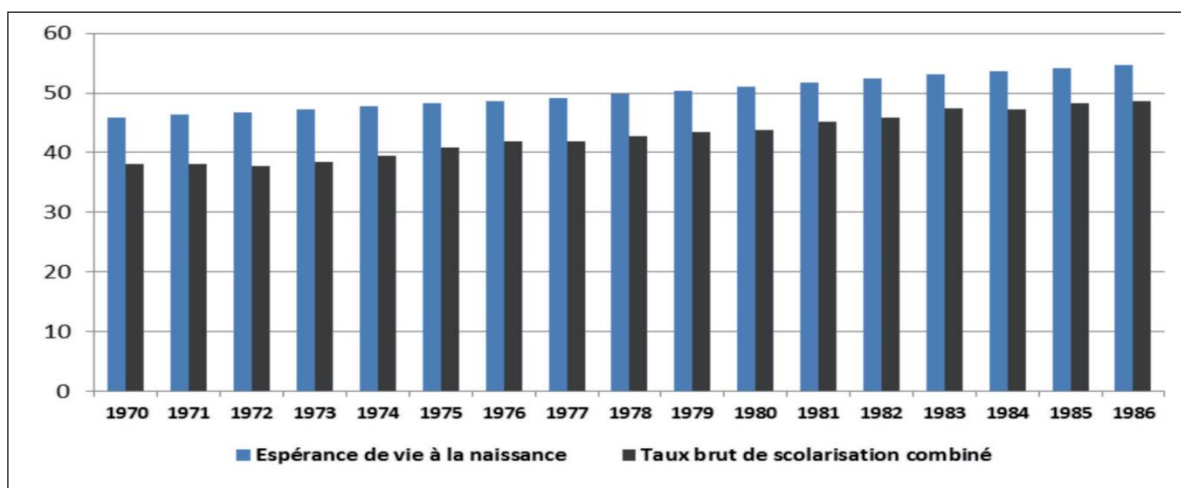
<sup>889</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>890</sup> See, Ragnar nurske cited in Ake, *Democracy and Development*. p.11.

<sup>891</sup>. Ake, *Democracy and Development*. p.12.

partners and their values while consolidating his power at the detriment of the people's welfare and their indigenous values. The result of this was considerable rise in GDP from 1967-1978 with a growth rate rated at 5.7%<sup>892</sup>. This considerable rise according the National Human Development Report was justified by macroeconomic stability, high commodity prices on the international market and government direct intervention in agriculture as was seen in its direct access to and distribution of agricultural inputs, infrastructure, creation of agencies to fund and market agricultural products e.g. the national fund for rural development FONADER, the national produce marketing board NPMB, the Development mission for food products MIDEVIV. All these, couple with the oil boom of 1977, Cameroon experienced relative development and growth as reflected in the steady rise in GDP, human capital and life expectancy<sup>893</sup>.

**FIGURE II: Trends in Life Expectancy at Birth (years) and Average School attendance Rate (ASAR) in % (1970-1986)**



**Source:** National Human Development Report 2013

As development remained for the Neo-capitalist authoritarian regimes a means to an end and not an end in itself, Ahidjo and Biya did not see the necessity to indigenise and render endogenous the Cameroon economy. Since any attempt in that direction would produce real economic development and expand the size of middle/working class which systematically represented a big danger to authoritarian power<sup>894</sup>, they chose to keep and consolidate fragile

<sup>892</sup> See, National Human Development Report 2013, Inclusive Growth and Human Development; the role of human capital, UNDP, MINEPAT, p, 48.

<sup>893</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>894</sup>R. Doorenspleet, "Development, Class and Democracy, p, 48.

exogenous economy which greatly crumbled in the face of the exogenous shocks of the 1980's. Thus with the general fall in the price of Oil and agricultural produces accompanied with the devaluation of the CFA franc, Cameroons GDP drastically decreased by an average of 3.4% from 1986-1989. Investment also dropped from 27% to less than 11% with the coming in of western intervention through SAP human development took a serious blow with poverty increasing from 40% in 1980 to 50.5% in 1990's, scholarship suspended, salaries slashed by 30% hospital beds/1000 dropped from 2.6 in 1988 to 1.3 in 1993 all this put together changed the human development index HDI of Cameroon from 0.490 in 1987 to 0.462 in 1994.<sup>895</sup>

Thus with the dynamics in militancy witnessed in 1966 that ushered in the single party system, the highly propagated prospects of development in a more united Cameroon still remained illusionary. This was so because amidst the structural transformation couple with the oil boom that kept Cameroons GDP on a rise throughout 1967-1979, the latent function of development was still not the priority of the ruling majority. Therefore by remaining focalised on the intended function of development which was to divert the attention of the masses from power and democratic redistribution, they indulged into excessive spending through economic interventionism without taking into consideration the exogenous nature of the economy. The outcome was serious economic crisis following exogenous shocks of the international market which completely crippled the economy and mitigated the erstwhile celebrated high GDP with a drastic and continuous drop in HDI. This in effect still brings us to affirm that the Dynamics in the conduct and practice of politics in Cameroon did not impact the development of the territory and its people.

With the continuous collapse of the Cameroonian economy throughout the 1980's and 1990's many who had been held spellbound by the Neo-capitalists privileges saw all these privileges reduced others simply lost their jobs and many remained unemployed. The outcome was the growth of an informal sector which in the 1990's eventually constituted a new middle class. Deeply exasperated by the corrupt, repressive and authoritarian Neo-capitalist regime the newly reconstituted middle class took back its position as a countervailing power and a channel of communication of new ideas for political and economic liberation. Going by Lipset's argument that the larger the sizes of the middle class the greater the democratic urge<sup>896</sup>, it was

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<sup>895</sup>National Human Development Report 2013, p, 50.

<sup>896</sup>See, Lipset S. M, "Some Social Requisite of Democracy: Economic Development, and Political legitimacy" in *American Political Science Review* cited in R. Doorenspleet, "Development Class and Democracy, p, 59.

but obvious that the long consolidated authoritarianism was to experience collapse to pave the way for freedom and democracy.

This therefore takes us into another phase of the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon marked by the return to multiparty politics. This new era like the previous was still infiltrated and dominated by the neo-capitalist who unable to build and consolidate a sustainable economy for the wellbeing of the nation resorted to corruption which became the anchor on which the regime took refuge to survive in the turbulent era of democratisation. Forced to accept the democratic wave which could not be abated, the Neo-capitalist like before put into use the erstwhile colonial divide and rule *modus operandi* which consisted of ensuring disunity within the middle class thus preventing a middle class coalition which could overturn political tides and bring about alternation in power.<sup>897</sup> The successful application of this *modus operandi* by the ruling CPDM in 1990 produced excellent results as the reconstituted middle class was systematically torn apart through the corrupt practice of raising Neo-capitalist within the middle class to whom power privileges and dividends were attributed. In an era of great economic deprivation, political engagement of the middle class took a paradoxical turn as the erstwhile collectively clamoured change and quest for freedom which united the middle class was simply abandoned for an individual quest for change and freedom which only served the individual interest of the politician or political actors.

Charmed by this new quest for power which had no bearing on general wellbeing but rather on individual political actors, many of them like in the early 1960's abandoned civil society and contestation politics to propose and formalise new development and freedom ideologies translated in political manifestos of parties with which they joined the race for power which remain fruitless in alternation but fruitful in personal development. Thus with return to multiparty politics in the 1990's which saw the rise of new actors and parties in the struggle for power, their total absorption in the corrupt system which kept them divided in separate political parties did not only marginalise the development agenda but equally created an unfavourable environment for development to take place as the consolidated corruption in an exogenous economy could not in any way guarantee greater welfare and freedom for the territory and its people. Hence the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon from 1961-1992 produced negative

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<sup>897</sup> Doorenspleet, "Development class and Democracy, Pp., 48-49.

results on socio-economic development, evidence to this is a falling HDI from 0.490 in 1987 to 0.462 in 1994.<sup>898</sup>

## ii. The Enhancement of Corruption and Authoritarianism in the Guise of Democratic Flexibility

Development (economic development) that consists of positioning an economy on a higher trajectory of growth in terms of material prosperity, higher quality of life and standard of living,<sup>899</sup> it should be noted is a direct function of stable and democratic institutions. Thus the absence of justice, good governance and the rule of law that guarantees political accountability automatically paves the way for corruption and totalitarian authoritarianism which are in essence refractive to socio-economic development. Though may maximise economic growth as experienced in Cameroon throughout 1960-1980, corruption as sustained by the Authoritarian Neo-colonial regimes of Yaoundé, found great firmament in competitive politics which extensively shaped political evolution in the country since independence. Various defined as behaviours that deviate from formal rules of conduct governing public actions of person entrusted with authority due to their strong inclination to private regarding motives such as wealth, power and status<sup>900</sup>, corruption according to the world bank is simply the abuse of public power for private benefits<sup>901</sup>. In essence corruption and state governance are closely related such that their impact on each other is inversely and directly proportional. In other words, an effective state<sup>902</sup> will minimise corruption while a fragile state<sup>903</sup> will rather sustain corruption. Thus as a phenomenal Cancerous pathology that has eaten deep into the cultural, economic and political fabric of the society, corruption had and continue to remain a

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<sup>898</sup> National Human Development Report 2013, p, 52.

<sup>899</sup> Ndah Grimbald, Elphine Nchise and Emmanuel Penn, "A Critical Assessment of the Impact of Corruption on the Economic and Social Development of Cameroon; A Positivism perspective", in *International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies IJIRAS*, Vol. 7; 2, February 2020, p.166.

<sup>900</sup> Mushtaq Khan, "A Typology of Corrupt Transactions in Developing Countries" in *IDS Bulletin*, Vol.27 No. 2 April 1996. See also Colin Leys, "What is the Problem about Corruption?" in *the Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1965, pp, 215-230.

<sup>901</sup> See World Bank, the *Cancer of Corruption*, World Bank Global Issues Seminar Series, 2005

<sup>902</sup> An Effective State, according to the 1997 World Development Report ; is one with the capacity to make provisions for goods and services, establish rules and institutions that allow markets to flourish and people to lead healthier and happier lives.

<sup>903</sup> A Fragile State by the description of international crisis group, is one with weak institutions, a low participation of the population in the political process, a very problematic (questionable) selection of political elites and little functioning over-sight of government. See, International Crisis Group, "Cameroon: Fragile State?" in *Africa Report* No. 160 of 25 May 2010, p, 24.

major challenge to the contemporary world as its impact undermines good governance, distorts public policy, misallocate resources, retards development and particularly hurts the poor.<sup>904</sup> Cameroon in particular has since independence continuously suffered from the excruciating and devastating impact of corruption which has rendered sustainable development practically impossible. Hence in their determination to consolidate power and build a strong state, the various regimes of post independent Cameroon have successively engaged merciless battles against the effects of corruption (underdevelopment) while avoiding the roots of the pathology itself which is in politics and governance.

The conduct and practice of politics in post independent Cameroon with its phenomenal dynamics of militancy, remains one of the fundamental and principal origins of corruption in post independent Cameroon. Competitive politics which became a platform *par excellence* for the struggle for power in post independent Cameroon greatly fragmented the new state into divergently competing cultural, ethno-political and development ideologies which affronted each other in a merciless struggle for power. This highly conflictual perspective of politics, besides undermining nation building, it equally provoked a strong craving for private regarding among a people who all along the pre-independence era upheld great values of integrity and accountability for a common nationalist ideal. The outcome of this; was war, division, dissention and disagreement which greatly impoverished the people and rendered them vulnerable to the cravings of wealth and power not for its own sake but rather for personal survival in an aggressive political environment. Thus from 1961, such cravings for personal regarding in Cameroons politics, completely defeated nationhood while projecting state power which became the determinant of survival. As a result, ethics and morality completely left the political ring causing Cameroonians to persistently waver in their militancy just to take hold of anything if not everything that could guarantee them survival. The outcome of this was the emergence of endemic corruption and authoritarian governance in post-independent Cameroon.<sup>905</sup> This in effect had serious bearing on development as the dynamics of militancy which begets corruption and totalitarianism could not enhance sustainable development.<sup>906</sup>

Between 1961 and 1966 the struggle for power and survival in the guise of democratic flexibility which gave rise to a multiplicity of political parties in Cameroon, though outwardly

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<sup>904</sup> Amundsen Inge, *Political Corruption: An Introduction to the Issues*, Michelsen Institute, 1999, p, 1.

<sup>905</sup> Interview with E. Ngam CRM Sympathiser, 50yrs Yaounde , 30/09/2020.

<sup>906</sup> G. B. Tangwa, "Philosophy, Democracy and Development: History and the case of Cameroon", in *Philosophy and African Development Theory and Practice* p, 193.



demonstrated the institutionalisation of a strong democratic culture, inwardly it was nothing but a democratic farce rooted in personal cravings for power wealth and status which had no regards for the people and nation. Thus political actors who in essence were said to derive their mandate from the people continuously despised the people and unilaterally pursued their own personal cravings for power, wealth and status by criss-crossing ideological lines, contracting alliances/coalition and even abandoning the people to create or join new parties just to secure wealth status and power. This in effect was the conduct of politics which effectively enhanced corruption as was experienced in both East and West Cameroon.

The dynamics of militancy as observed in East Cameroon between 1961 and 1966 effectively provided an avenue for corruption to have its way in Cameroons' political system. After securing independence and finalising negotiations which led to the creation of the two state Federal Republic of Cameroon, Ahidjo as President of the new state had just one major preoccupation and this was to consolidate a strong state firmly established above the nation as was prescribed by his French delegate Pierre Marchand who said "*transformer le Cameroun en un Etat. La Nation suivra...*"<sup>907</sup> This in effect was the consecration of authoritarian powers upon Ahidjo which had little or no regards for the nation. Hence the people in their different ethnic, cultural and political diversity represented nothing and had no strong influence on the political system of the territory thus could be exploited at will to guarantee the supremacy of the state and its incarnate Ahidjo. This was therefore an open cheque signed for corruption and authoritarianism to manifest itself in politics as was seen in 1962 wherein a cross section of *UPC* militants who had abandoned rebellion to constitute the new legal *UPC*, vulnerably gave in to Ahidjo's idea of unity and crossed over to join the *UC*<sup>908</sup>. Having the monopoly of state power and resources in his hands, the *UPC* dissidents realised that Ahidjo was indispensable in the attainment of their own personal cravings for wealth, status and survival. Proof of this was the *Nkolbison* congress experience<sup>909</sup>, where in an attempt to strengthen the base of the legal *UPC* and restructure its organs the delegates of the party witnessed open repression from Ahidjo's forces. Hence by conforming to the status quo, they did not only guarantee their continuous survival on the political landscape, they as well secured opportunities to benefit from the presidential largess of Ahidjo in discretionary appointments which did not respect any criteria of merit. Thus in their dynamism, instead of seeing democratic flexibility to balance

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<sup>907</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.111.

<sup>908</sup> See, *La Presse Du Cameroun*, 16/01/1962.

<sup>909</sup> Eyinga, *L'UPC une Revolution Manquee?* p, 114.

power and ensure political accountability we rather see the endorsement of authoritarianism and corruption.

The same scenario was observed within Andre Marie Mbida's *Democrate Camerounais* where a handful of elites within the party seduced by the opportunity to make wealth and acquire status within the political landscape saw a more promising political career out of Mbida's party whom they accused of monopolising power and wealth<sup>910</sup>. These elites, who in 1962 chose to abandon the *DC* to create their own party the *Indépendant Démocrate (I D)*, justified their action as a means to create their own ideology within the Unified *UC* party<sup>911</sup>. Thus the dynamics of militancy here was not to oppose the decried Mbida's dictatorial principles to vulgarise democracy and accountability as they brandished<sup>912</sup>. It was instead to create for themselves a space in the moon and effectively attract upon them the largess of the president in appointments which were highly discretionary with no regards for merit. Thus in their dynamism they rather consolidated authoritarianism and enhanced corruption in Cameroon.

Like the *I D*, the creation of the *PNTC*<sup>913</sup> by *UPC* dissidents was again another illustration of the anti-democratic and corrupt aspect of the dynamics of militancy. In their quest for greater political visibility and survival in a context of state repression and intense struggle for power, Bebey Eyidi and Malangue<sup>914</sup> who were dismissed from the *UPC*, instead of joining the newly created Legal *UPC*, chose to create their own party the *PNTC*. Their action in effect contradicted their intension which was to pacifically oppose the neo-colonial capitalist system institutionalised by Ahidjo in Cameroon.<sup>915</sup> Avoiding joining the legal *UPC* which they considered being under the influence of Ahidjo, they created the *PNTC* which we would have expected to change the democratic game which until now was falsified. Instead, they remained helpless in the face of state repression and political manipulation orchestrated by Ahidjo using state resources and power without accountability. Like other parties, the *PNTC* conformed to the dictatorial status quo. Though Bebey Eyidi later dissociated from the *PNTC* to join the *FNU* of Mbida, Matip, and Okala to firmly oppose Ahidjo's one party project,<sup>916</sup> their action was still

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<sup>910</sup>See, *La Presse du Cameroun*, 05/02/1962.

<sup>911</sup>See, *La Presse du Cameroun*, 27/03/1962.

<sup>912</sup>See, *La Presse du Cameroun*, 05/02/1962.

<sup>913</sup>See, *La Presse du Cameroun*, 20/05/1962

<sup>914</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>915</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>916</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p, 130.

futile as it never considered the influence and participation of the people. Thus faced with state repression the idea died down as they were all arrested and jail only to end up joining the *UC* upon liberation from prison in 1965<sup>917</sup>. This brings us to the realisation that the dynamics of militancy did not in any way mature our democracy and sense of accountability as political elites remained focused on their individual cravings for wealth and power exploiting and despising the people whose effective participation could produce greater change. Instead the dynamics of militancy in its individualism rather sustained authoritarianism and enhanced corruption in post independent Cameroon.

In the West Cameroon where a strong democratic culture embedded in values of integrity and accountability had been built prior to reunification<sup>918</sup>, the historical reunification of 1961 which integrated the territory within the Federal Republic of Cameroon under Ahidjo as President, subjected the people to the manipulative and corrupt practice of politics institutionalised by Ahidjo in East Cameroon. This new way of practicing politics imposed on West Cameroon through a centralised federation completely diverted the people from their common cause for autonomy which was democratic and people-oriented, to finally embrace individualism which only consolidated Ahidjo's dictatorial rule and enhanced corruption in the territory. The dynamics of militancy in West Cameroon like in East Cameroon besides falsifying the democratic game, sustained authoritarianism and enhanced corruption in the territory.

With reunification now consolidated as the CPNC finally dropped contestation of plebiscite results, an opportunity for a fresh start was offered by the 1961 parliamentary elections into the WCHA<sup>919</sup>. Since these elections were not just to renew the West Cameroon parliament, but also to determine the party and persons that will serve as liaison between the state of West Cameroon and the Federal Government, the stakes became very high. This actually pushed the two prominent parties of the territory (KNDP and CPNC) to manoeuvre strategies at all cost just to secure a majority in these elections. The KNDP which prior to the elections already dominated the political landscape of West Cameroon had as main challenge to consolidate its supremacy and prevent the achievements of reunification from falling in the hands of the CPNC. With this it was evident that the KNDP and its leaders had given in to the manipulative intrigues of Ahidjo which aimed at diverting the people's mind from a common

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<sup>917</sup>*Ibid*, p, 141.

<sup>918</sup>See, Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited*, vol.1. p, 78.

<sup>919</sup> Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, Pp,177-184

cause and disconnecting the elites from their base so as to render them vulnerable to the seduction of power wealth and status. Since wealth, status and power could only be secured through connection with the central state; political actors in West Cameroon devised all strategies just to consolidate their personal cravings for power and wealth which had little or no bearing on the livelihood of the people. In this regards, politicians affronted each other, plotted against each other, caused dissensions in opponents' camp, and even changed political caps just to secure for themselves wealth, power and status<sup>920</sup>.

This scenario which may give the impression of a vibrant democracy was nothing but a farce as it did not obey the democratic principles of Justice and Accountability. Following the declaration of the election results of 30<sup>th</sup> December 1961 which maintained the KNDP in its comfortable majority, a handful of CPNC elected parliamentarians changed their political caps to join the KNDP<sup>921</sup>. With the exception of S.N Ncha who was pressurised by his base to leave the opposition, the others; Ajebe Sone, H.N. Elangwe, and J. Nsame in total disregards for the people who elected them chose to cross the carpet<sup>922</sup> and miss use the peoples votes thus consolidating a KNDP majority which comforted Ahidjo's authoritarian Power. This display of dynamics by the CPNC candidates had just one motif which was to secure opportunities for appointments in government which were generally discretionary and void of merit. Hence instead of the dynamics of militancy to alter the political game and affirm the power of the people for greater accountability, it rather consolidated KNDP majority and Ahidjo's authority while enhancing corruption in the territory.

As from 1962, the same craving for power, wealth and status which had driven militants of different parties into the KNDP was now to manifest itself within the KNDP. This craving for personal regards among the militants of the party was to eventually provoke power crisis within the party in 1964-65 which provoked further dynamics in militancy hence consolidating Ahidjo's authoritarianism and enhancing corruption in the territory. Having accumulated a mosaic of diversities within its ranks, the KNDP which had become an ideal platform for the attraction of political dividends in West Cameroon Politics could not avoid disintegration as all the different factions within the party clamoured for and struggled to control power. This in effect was the origin of the KNDP crisis which greatly comforted Ahidjo as the struggle for power, wealth and status within the party break completely the nationalist bond among the

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<sup>920</sup> Ibid, p, 178 and 179.

<sup>921</sup> Ibid, Pp,182-184

<sup>922</sup> Ibid.

militants of the KNDP making them vulnerable to Ahidjo's corrupt manipulations. Submerged in a merciless struggle for power, the elites of the party who had now lost connection with their base (the people) remained focalised on Yaoundé to attract Ahidjo's largess in designating one of them as PM since Foncha could no longer cumulate functions of PM and Vice President. After engaging constitutional battles and debates between the Jua and Muna camp over who should succeed Foncha as PM, the triumph of Jua which was not accepted by the opposing Muna camp further tore the party apart provoking dissensions and an eventual break up.

This break up masterminded by Foncha's dismissal of Muna's supporters caused Muna to resign from the KNDP creating his own party the CUC which rallied all his dismissed supporters and they independently pursued their goal of power, wealth and status out of the KNDP which had become hostile to their individual quest.<sup>923</sup> Weakened by the break up, the KNDP immediately entered an alliance with its old time rival the CPNC<sup>924</sup> all just to maintain its supremacy and continue benefiting from Ahidjo's largess. Reading within the lines of the political game which had become focused on Yaoundé and not the people anymore, Muna in a counter political offensive adhered with his party the CUC to Ahidjo's call for a *Grand Parti Unifié* in 1966.

This strategic positioning of the CUC effectively caught the attention of Ahidjo, and though the KNDP coalitions helplessly adhere as well, it was too late. For Ahidjo already had a new and promising client in the west Cameroon who was no other person but S.T. Muna<sup>925</sup>. Without delay Ahidjo immediately in 1968 appointed Muna as PM of West Cameroon and later Vice President of the federal republic to replace Jua and Foncha respectively hence establishing his authority over West Cameroon. This therefore reaffirms the fact that the dynamics of militancy witnessed in West Cameroon especially within the KNDP and the CPNC which at the end produced the CUC, was in effect nothing other than a political market for the bargaining of power, wealth and status. Though in its outward trappings is projected a sound democracy, such democracy was nothing but a farce, for justice and accountability was relegated to the backyard and all focus was on Yaoundé (Power, Wealth, Status). The people completely lost relevance and were easily bought over by elites for electoral consecrations which guaranteed them Yaoundé's favours which were generally discretionary and void of merit. Thus the

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<sup>923</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p, 140.

<sup>924</sup>. Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*, Pp., 196-200.

<sup>925</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p, 140.

dynamics of militancy, besides consecrating Ahidjo's authoritarian power in west Cameroon, it as well sowed the seed of division and corruption in the territory.

With authoritarianism established and Jacobinism institutionalised through the CNU One and Unique State-party, competitive politics which was partisan with a deceptive democratic outlook became inter-personal. Thus the struggle for power on a purely partisan platform gave way to a more intense struggle on inter-personal basis. This new dimension of competitive politics which spanned through 1966-1990 greatly consolidated authoritarianism and corruption in Cameroon. Having established presidential power over and above state institutions and the nation, A. Ahidjo became a president larger than life with all state resources and powers of appointment concentrated in his hands<sup>926</sup>. Standing tall as the father of the nation to whom all Cameroonians were to look up to and depend for their livelihood and survival, Ahidjo significantly reduced politics to the display of loyalty to central power which he incarnated<sup>927</sup>. With this new perspective of politics carved out by the state-party incarnated by Ahidjo, two new dimensions of the struggle for power were established in the territory. We had the Vertical dimension which opposed state power to progressive forces of freedom and democracy and the Horizontal dimension which opposed personalities and communities against each other. In these two dimensions of political competition, state authority reign supreme as it possessed all the institutional apparatus and resources to effectively impose itself in the struggle for power.

From the vertical dimension of competitive politics in the one-party era we saw stern confrontations between erstwhile conformists who after accommodating and tolerating authoritarianism decided to confront and opposed it with the ideals of freedom and democracy. This was typically the struggle for power between the totalitarian status quo and the reformed civil society. Here we saw the spontaneous resurgence of dissident voices expected to have been silenced by the one-party status quo set up in 1966. Amongst them was Bishop Albert Ndogmo of the Catholic Church who, scandalised by the inhumane and repressive state machinery put in place to silence voices of freedom decided to join and protect freedom fighters. This action of his which brought him in contact with the dreaded *UPC* rebel Ernest Ouandie, led to his immediate arrest by Ahidjo's forces<sup>928</sup>. Following Ndogmo was the Anglophone

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<sup>926</sup>See, International Crisis Group, "Cameroon: Fragile State?" in *Africa Report* No. 160 of 25 May 2010, p, 9.

<sup>927</sup>Ibid.

<sup>928</sup> P. Konings, *Neo-liberal Bandwagonism: Civil Society and the Politics of Belonging in Anglophone Cameroon*, Langaa and African Studies Centre, Bamenda, 2009, Pp.168-174.

freedom fighter and erstwhile UPC militant Albert Mukong<sup>929</sup> who equally for denouncing autocracy and state corruption suffered arrest and incarceration not just by Ahidjo but equally with successor Paul Biya. In the same series emerged other dissident voices like Pius Njawa<sup>930</sup>, and Lapiro de Mbanga<sup>931</sup> who for openly preaching freedom and democracy had to fall in the nets of the repressive authoritarian regimes of Yaoundé. In essence the stepping out of the dark ( Autocratic conformism) by these dissident and progressive forces of freedom and democracy which was expected to weaken authoritarianism and give way for reforms, rather strengthen and intensified state repression and corruption as most of these dissidents were often proposed deals to abandon dissidence<sup>932</sup>. Thus in the dynamics of militancy as witnessed here authoritarianism was rather consolidated while enhancing Corruption.

On the Horizontal dimension of competitive politics in the one-party era where persons and ethnicities affronted each other within the state-party just to secure personal wealth, power and status, spectacular dynamics were witnessed as militants, unable to win the confidence of the president or make gains from their loyalty simply abandoned their engagement with the one party or joined the progressive forces of change, freedom and democracy. This was actually the case in the CNU Meme and Wouri Sections where party delegates decried the level of laxity and abandonment of post by militants.<sup>933</sup> Exasperated by hyper centralisation of Power which often neglected the base, these militants who could not gain visibility despite their loyalty chose to simply abandon their function in the party<sup>934</sup>. While some abandoned, others like Jean Jacques Ekindi at wake of the new deal regime simply constituted themselves in a progressive faction of the one-party state with the hope of inducing and provoking rapid reforms which will propel them in the limelight of power<sup>935</sup>. Unfortunately all these dynamics only went further to heighten authoritarianism and state corruption as the regime continuously co-opted more loyal individual to replace those who had abandon and completely marginalised the progressive by ensuring they win no elections within the party organs and even when they did win loyal militant where imposed on their position while they remain subalterns<sup>936</sup>. All these

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<sup>929</sup>See, Marie Emmanuel Pommerolle, "Mukong Albert", in *Dictionnaire Biographique Le Maitron Mouvement Ouvrier Mouvement Sociale*, in, <https://maitron.fr> accessed on august 12, 2020.

<sup>930</sup> Boulaga, *Democratie de Transit*, p,68.

<sup>931</sup>See, Vakunta, Wuteh, *The Life and Times of a Cameroonian Icon*, p, 41.

<sup>932</sup>See,. Pommerolle, "Mukong Albert"

<sup>933</sup>See, *La Presse du Cameroun*, May 1972. See also, Cameroon Tribune, May 1976

<sup>934</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>935</sup> Boulaga, *Democratie de Transit*, Pp.33-54.

<sup>936</sup>*Ibid.*

machinations which had no regards for the people, merit, justice and accountability, only affirmed and consolidated authoritarianism which largely enhanced corruption in Cameroon.

Though the international circumstances of 1989 successfully twisted the arm of the regime to embrace democratic reforms for greater freedom and justice, with a return to multi-party politics, state authoritarianism and corruption continuously prevailed as militancy kept on changing political caps. A clear and open evidence of state corruption in Cameroon was witnessed in 1992 when the incarnation of state power president Paul Biya, threatened by increasing number of parties opting for total boycott of legislative elections decided to offer 500 Million francs to all other parties who will shun the boycott propaganda and take part in the elections.<sup>937</sup> This effectively worked as the political landscape being heavily polluted by self-seeking politicians with no regards for the people automatically clamoured for wealth and status proposed to them by President Biya.

This generally brings us to the lamentable fact that; democratisation injected in 1990 with the return to multi-party politics was indeed placed on a wrong pedestal which could only produce a false start<sup>938</sup>. Thus amidst the democratisation wind which provoked great dynamics in militancy orchestrating multi-polarity in politics, the strong and firm hand of state power and authority remained predominant over the nation and institutions. Hence having full control over state power and resources plus the discretionary power to decide who should share in it Paul Biya successfully maintained all the newly formed political parties in dependence and vulnerability<sup>939</sup> since the only way to attain their personal ambition of power, wealth and status was to align with authoritarianism. Therefore the dynamics of militancy witnessed with the return to multi-party politics in 1990, though produced outward trappings of democracy in essence it was farce as this democracy brandished by the regime had no regards for the people neglected in poverty and allow at the mercy of shrewd politicians who systematically transformed them into electoral flock all to satisfy their craving for wealth, power and status. All this comes to reaffirm the fact that the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon from 1961-1992, besides projecting illusionary democracy, consolidated authoritarianism at the helm of the state and institutionalised corruption in the country.

### **iii. The enhancement of Discrimination and inequalities**

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<sup>937</sup>*Ibid*, p, 100.

<sup>938</sup>See, International Crisis Group, "Cameroon: Fragile State, p, 10.

<sup>939</sup> Interview with Thomas Sabum, Political Observer 54yrs, Yaounde, 12/09/2020



One of the biggest challenges of development facing most economies of the world and developing countries in particular is the challenge of overcoming poverty and inequality.<sup>940</sup> Defined as the gap that exist between the rich and the poor people in a region, country, or the world at large<sup>941</sup>, inequality is an age old concept that has always existed be it between or within social classes. Even in the most egalitarian societies it should be noted, age and sex have still probed up to fragment society thus establishing the permanence of inequalities which usually take different forms varying from social, economic, cultural, political, and even ethnic inequalities<sup>942</sup>. Therefore, inequality, whatever the form and where ever identified, has strong bearing on social cohesion and the economic livelihood of the people, hence magnifying the predominant impact of socio-economic inequality on the development discourse.

Socio-economic inequality being the disparity observed in the regulation of access to economic and social assets in the territory<sup>943</sup> may be at the origin of gross income disparities and poverty within a territory which greatly inhibits sustainable human development and in the long run can even challenge political democracy. Confronted with the challenge of inequality in 1961 which greatly broadened the poverty gap and minimised development efforts in Cameroon, Ahidjo in an attempt at reducing existing regional socio-economic disparities in the territory and promoting a harmonious national development, opted for a policy or politics of regional equilibrium also called regional balance<sup>944</sup>. Regional equilibrium/balance as politics which consisted of appointing or facilitating the emergence of Cameroonians from politically disadvantaged and socio-economically disfavoured regions in to the lime light of power, wealth and status, became a veritable instrument and weapon of socio-cultural fragmentation. In trying to reduce regional disparities, Ahidjo instead widened socio-economic disparities within communities and ethnic groups by promoting divisive politics and enhancing the dynamics of militancy which rather widened the gap between the rich and the poor (Elites & the Masses) hence sustaining poverty and inequalities which only consolidated underdevelopment.

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<sup>940</sup>Wokai-azi Ndangle Kumase, *Aspects of Poverty and Inequality in Cameroon*, Guttingen Studies in Development Economics, PeterLang, Frankfurt, 2010, p, 1.

<sup>941</sup> Ibid.

<sup>942</sup> C. Chameni Nembua, & Maimo Wendji, Inequality of Cameroonian Households: An Analyses based on Shapley-Shorock Decomposition, in *International Journal of Economics and Finance*, Vol. 4, No.6, June 2012, p, 149&150, see also Ashraf Gani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding Fractured World*, Oxford University Press, 2008, p, 68.

<sup>943</sup> Ibid, p, 150.

<sup>944</sup> Y. Monga, "Au Village, : Space , Culture and Politics in Cameroon", in Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, 160, XL-4, 2000, pp.723-749. See also, Francis B. Nyamjoh, "Cameroon a Country United by Ethnic Ambition and Difference", in <https://www.Nyamjoh.com>

The conduct and practice of politics in post independent Cameroon which was heavily characterised by the dynamics of militancy provided fertile ground for the sustenance of socio-economic inequalities and poverty which greatly downplayed the countries effort to consolidate sustainable development. For, in their continuous fluctuations and inconsistency in political engagements all in the hope of attaining and securing their personal regarding of power, wealth and status, the political actors of post-independent politics in Cameroon greatly exposed and rendered themselves vulnerable to the centralised and authoritarian regimes of Yaoundé who had absolute power and control over the territory and its economic resources. Conscious of the socio-cultural diversities of the country and their development exigencies which pushed them into the struggle for power, Ahidjo, not ready to share power resorted to regional equilibrium as a means of attaining the development exigencies of the diverse people of the territory.

This policy which enhanced the supremacy of the central state and projected the president as the national God father<sup>945</sup> completely subjected the people and the political class to unconditional loyalty as it co-opted from the various regions of the territory, individuals to sit in government, public service and other state corporations. These individuals who having acquired wealth , power and status thanks to largess of the president, owed him absolute loyalty and any other person or community aiming such wealth and power had to demonstrate greater allegiance and loyalty to the president and his political party<sup>946</sup>. This in essence had serious impact on competitive politics as it influenced the dynamics of militancy (dissentions within other parties, resignations and eventual carpet crossings) which went a long way to institutionalise divide and rule in the guise of balance development, thus maintained inequalities and enhanced poverty which are *par excellence* refractive to sustainable development.

Between 1962 and 1966 the many dissentions and resignations observed within influential political parties of East Cameroon like the *UPC* and the *Democrate Camerounais* demonstrated a strong urge among the political class of the territory to strategically position themselves within the struggle for Power which had completely loss its national essence and reduced to a communitarian struggle for wealth, status and power. Having successfully diverted the struggle for power to a communitarian, ethnic and regional dimension using the politics of regional equilibrium, Ahidjo placed himself at the middle as the referee with all powers to reward loyalty and sanction dissidence<sup>947</sup>. This in turn pushed many politicians in socio-

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<sup>945</sup>Ibid.

<sup>946</sup> Interview with G. Ako, SDF Militant, 60yrs, Yaounde 29/09/2020.

<sup>947</sup>. Nyamjoh, "Cameroon a Country United by Ethnic Ambition..", p, 6.

economically disfavoured communities to abandon opposition so as to join the ruling party or created their own party with which they aligned and paid allegiance to the president and his party.

A good example here was the defection of Henri Effa, Gabriel Atangana and Paul Louis Schunmeler who in 1962 abandoned the *DC* of A. M. Mbida to create the *I.D.* party<sup>948</sup>. This new party which naturally should have increased the number of opposition rather aligned with the ruling *UC* party of Ahidjo upon creation, a clear indication that these representatives of the Nyong and Sanaga communities felt abandoned as militants of the *DC* a Southern majority Party which by virtue of its opposition stance could not ensure easy access to wealth power and status in their communities. Thus by quitting the *DC* and creating the *ID* which adhered to the *UC* ideology of Ahidjo, these elites showed great sign of loyalty which generally paid off as they secured favours for the communities in terms of appointment. These appointments it should be noted could not guaranteed effective redistribution of wealth as such politicians and appointed elites instead enriched themselves in the name of the communities hence creating gross income disparities and inequalities within communities which did not in any way consolidate development. Thus the dynamics of militancy legitimised divide and rule which enhanced inequality and sustained poverty which greatly hindered development.

Acting in the same line of reason like the defected *DC* militants of the the Nyong and Sanaga localities, were key *UPC* Militants and political actors of independence such as Mayi Matip and Emma Otu. These erstwhile combatants and nationalist, who had defected the ranks of radical nationalism to spearhead the putting in place of the Legal *UPC* in 1960, were to later fall prey to Ahidjo's divisive manoeuvres legitimised in regional balance. Charmed by Ahidjo's development propaganda which emphasised on the participation of all Cameroonians (regional equilibrium) to consolidate greater unity, Emma Otu in 1962 immediately declared the adherence of the Legal *UPC* to the *UC* Ideal of unity<sup>949</sup>. Though his declaration was contested and considered to be personally driven by some *UPC* party elites<sup>950</sup>, one thing emerges from this as analyses of facts; the struggle for political positioning among elites so as to benefit co-option by the regime as focal point for regional balance development. Mayi Matip whose intentions were not different from those of Otu, rather went on an offensive in dissidence only to back out in 1965 to equally adhere to the *UC* unity ideal. In their dynamics and public

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<sup>948</sup>See, *La presse du cameroun*, 02/05/1962, No. 3537.

<sup>949</sup> See, *La Presse du Cameroun*, 18/06/1962 No. 3644.

<sup>950</sup> See, Eyinga, *L'UPC Une Révolution Manqué*, p, 116.

manifestation of loyalty these elites benefited from the regimes largess which was to indirectly impact their communities.

For instance, Mayi Matip, for his total submission and pledge of loyalty to the regime, secured his continuous nomination and re-election as parliamentarian and representative of his community at the national assembly. He as well enjoyed the privilege of appointments as he was made vice president of the assembly until 1988 when his exposure to a popular democratic test revealed the bitterness of his community towards him<sup>951</sup>. These communities, who remained in abject poverty and precarity while the elite kept flourishing in affluence and plenty, seized the opportunity given to them by the CPDM in the 1988 legislative elections which had some relative democratic effervescence, to effectively sanction them. This in effect attest to the fact that the dynamics of militancy observed in post-independent Cameroon which to a greater extent sought to consolidate the privileged of regional balance only went further to widen the gap between the elites and the masses, institutionalising gross inequalities and poverty levels in the various communities which down played all necessary development efforts made by the regime.

With the institutionalisation of the one-party system in 1966 and the rise to power of Biya in 1982, regional balance as a Cameroon development policy was perfected especially as Biya, now confronted with the pressure of democratisation, needed more loyal representatives across the different regions and localities of the country to secure and consolidate power as well as his predominance and pre-eminence over the state. In this prevailing circumstance where the number of dissident voices was gradually increasing and expanding across the national territory, regional balance politics provided the appropriate platform for the execution of the manipulative divide and rule policy which greatly fragmented opposition<sup>952</sup> through consistent dynamics in militancy thus revealing the selfish attitude of elites that enhanced inequalities and poverty which are anti-developmental. In the former Southern/West Cameroon where the people's strong resolve for autonomy was completely silenced in a centralised federation and later absorbed in unity, the struggle for autonomy was dissipated and diverted to a struggle for recognition, wealth and status among elites. These elites who had been divided between Northwest and Southwest Provinces completely loss focus of their earlier struggle for autonomy and power to delve into communitarian and regional struggles for recognition , wealth and

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<sup>951</sup> See, Boulaga, *Democratie de Transit*, p, 54.

<sup>952</sup> Interview with, L. Ebanek, Civil Society Actor, 47yrs Yaounde, 30/09/2020.

status which only helped in dividing the territory and its communities.<sup>953</sup> Instead of mutualising their efforts to face the rising totalitarianism in Cameroon they rather fought each other to preserve Clientelist connection with the totalitarian regime as means to secure personal regarding and be in good records of loyalty for imminent and other forms of compensation.

This was the case with S.T Muna who after having been marginalised within the KNDP decided to quit and form the CUC which instantly paid allegiance to Ahidjo and adhered to the unitary ideal in 1966<sup>954</sup>. As the man who provoked dynamics of militancy and compelled the CPNC and KNDP to join the status-quo, Muna was rewarded bountifully with prestigious appointments at the helm of power circles within the ruling party and the state. By the standards set for regional balance in Cameroon, the privilege position held by Muna was to bring dividends that had to be felt by the people of West Cameroon. But now that redistribution was in accordance to loyalty, Muna like Foncha, Ahidjo and later Biya granted opportunities to his loyal friends thereby sanctioning his enemies and dissidents.<sup>955</sup> By so doing communities with dissidents were to suffer while those with loyal stewards were to experience the joy of having elites in power and wealth but without themselves having access to this wealth. This could explain why the grassfield which became North-west province in 1972 continuously remained among the least developed regions of Cameroon<sup>956</sup> in spite of the prestigious appointments its Elites have enjoyed at the helm of the Party and State apparatus. Thus the dynamics of militancy which provided fertile ground for the operationalization of regional balance only further divided the communities and created gross inequality between the people and the elites hence retarding development.

With the advent of democratisation in the late 1980s, followed by the increasing need among Cameroonians to be free, an increasing number of Cameroonians started stepping out of the unique party status-quo to address pluralism, freedom and justice for all Cameroonians. This dynamics in militancy that was observed in the cities of Douala and Yaoundé was mostly championed by Cameroonians with ethnic backgrounds from the west, Littoral North and North West provinces of the country<sup>957</sup>. The rising spirit of protest among these communities is partly

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<sup>953</sup> See, Nyamjoh, "Cameroon, a Country United by Ethnic Ambition...", p, 8.

<sup>954</sup> See, .Ndi, Southern/West Cameroon Revisited.. vol.II, p,

<sup>955</sup> See, S. T. Munas' 1968 Government. In its constitution Muna maintained just two ministers from the previous government of Jua; (NN. Mbile & SN. Tamfu), the rest were his entire close allies majority from the grassfield where the dissidents erstwhile KNDP had substantial support.

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<sup>957</sup> See, Boulaga, *Democratie de Transit...*, p, 85.

explained by the accumulated frustrations and injustice suffered in the hands of dubious elites and politicians<sup>958</sup> who having been favoured by the regime remained silent to the development exigencies of the masses thus provoking massive exodus to the cities of Douala and Yaoundé where the frustrations became even bigger with the prevailing Economic crisis. For instance many Anglophones who left the provinces for the cities of Douala and Yaoundé were greatly astonished not just by the wide socio-economic disparities with their provinces but equally by the increasing stigma of discrimination and marginalisation.

As for the Westerners (*Bamileke*) many who arrived the cities realised the level of abandon by an elite greatly favoured by wealth and economic prestige flourishing in the cities. Caught therefore in the democratisation wind of the 1990s they all stepped out of the status quo to embrace dissidence. While the former clamoured for political justice and equity in pluralism the latter clamoured for change and better redistribution of economic resources. With the spectacular switch over of many into dissidence, the Biya regime did not hesitate to intensify its divide and rule tactics through the politics of regional balance. For instance while Anglophone movements were taking shape to better address their plight, overzealous and self-driven elites who had been co-opted in the regime for their loyalty were exploited to tear apart the Anglophone solidarity. Thus Biya in his usual tactic elevated some in the Southwest and dropped some of the North West making the latter to perceive their downfall as being cause by the promoted Southwest elite<sup>959</sup>.

This in essence fuelled division within the Anglophone movements and maintained the elites in an incessant struggle for wealth and power which did not in any way benefit nor address the plight of a people greatly abandoned, discriminated upon and marginalised. Instead of being the solution to the people's development plight they rather facilitated the exploitation and impoverishment of these people for their political gains in regional balance<sup>960</sup>. Just like the Anglophones were fragmented by regional balance the *Bamileke* on their part, clamouring for change, political transition and justice in politico-economic redistribution were rather set against the indigenes (*autochthones*) of the littoral and centre provinces. Projecting the economic power of *Bamileke* visible in the cities of Douala and Yaoundé, the regime co-opted

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<sup>958</sup> Interview with M. Shu, civil Society actor 40yrs Yaounde , 29/09/2020

<sup>959</sup>See, Nyamjoh, "Cameroon, a country divided by ethnic ambition...",p, 8.

<sup>960</sup>*Ibid.*

more loyal clients from the littoral and Centre making them to perceive their elevations as a means of balancing *Bamileke* power.

Thus with this, it became difficult for an organised protest movement for change and democratic transition to take place as any such attempt was easily tagged as “*le Complot Anglo-Bamileke*”<sup>961</sup> the more reason why even with the declaration of national civil disobedience “*ville morte*” greater adherence was recorded only in areas with heavy Anglophone and especially *Bamileke* presence<sup>962</sup>. Hence, even with the eventual democratisation and return to multi-party politics, the notion of “Electoral Village”<sup>963</sup> was now institutionalised by the regime all just to justify regional balance and maintain perpetual division within the socio-economic and political landscape which greatly secures the authoritarian power of the regime. Therefore, with this it becomes clear and evident that the dynamics of militancy observed at the wake of democratisation in the early 1990s only contributed in perfecting regional balance politics which greatly divided the territory and its people while accentuating socio-economic disparities in the guise of balance development. All this only went a long way to widen the Gap between haves and the have not thereby increasing the poverty and inequality levels within communities which greatly downplayed development in post independent Cameroon.

## CONCLUSION

Putting into perspective the Dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon to assess its implication on democracy and development, two important evident results arrived at strongly attest to the fact that the conduct and practice of politics throughout post-independent Cameroon fragilised democracy and impoverished the masses. In their permanent and consistent inconsistency in the championing of a political cause, political actors in post-independent Cameroon demonstrated through their conduct and actions a high propensity to deviate from or abandon the struggles and challenges to which post-independent politics was confronted. While

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<sup>961</sup>See, Boulaga, *Democratie de Transit*, p, 85.

<sup>962</sup> Ibid, p, 81-85.

<sup>963</sup> “Electoral village” here was a new concept introduced in Cameroon politics as from 1992. It was first articulated by Prof, Roger Gabriel Nlep who argued that Cameroon politics have functioned on the basis of an “equilateral triangle” formed by three geopolitical regions dominated by three main ethnic groups: the North and the Muslim Fulani, the South and the Beti, and the West and the Bamileke. According to Nlep, these three ethnic groups had dominated the political and socio-economic life of Cameroon since independence to the exclusion of all others. Therefore, for the others ever to have a chance to play a part in the political game, candidates for office should henceforth campaign and run for elections in their own “electoral village.” see, Yvette Monga, “*Au Village*,: Space , Culture and Politics in Cameroon”, in *Cahiers d’Etudes Africaines*, 160, XL-4, 2000, pp.723-749.

their flexibility and dynamism exhibited a strong urge and desire to move away from existential political constraints to embrace freedom and liberalism, such movements were personally motivated and heavily rooted on ethno-Clientelist and opportunistic drives which produce counter-productive results on the country's democratic construction and Socio-economic wellbeing of its people. By constantly defecting and embracing new platforms for militancy the political landscape was heavily polarised and exposed to division, social tension and conflicts which all together was well manipulated by the ruling majority through corrupt practices which only widened the gap between the rich and the poor in the society hence defeating one of the fundamental pillars of politics which is to impact positively the social and economic wellbeing of the masses.



## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Journeying through the political History of Post-independent Cameroon from the period 1961-1992, an interrogation and assessment of the practice and conduct of politics in Cameroon, lays bare a factual reality about Cameroonian politics and post-independent studies as a whole which is nothing else but the infernal struggle to reconcile politics and development. The problematic of politics and development which appears to have surfaced at independence and shaped the post-independent era, did not in effect begin with independence. The struggle for power and the utilisation of this power to create dominion, prosperity and general welfare predates independence and colonisation. Before becoming a constituted territory with colonial boundaries as was mapped out by the German invaders in 1884<sup>964</sup>, Cameroon as it was later identified harboured a mosaic of Ethnic groups and cultures which had always been independent of each other and had continuously struggled to survive and consolidate their prosperity and welfare through power and dominion. From their various migratory patterns and settlement, the different polities that make up the present Cameroon state, were confronted with two major challenges which were; the challenge of attaining and consolidating power as well as the challenge of igniting and sustaining the general prosperity of their land and its people.

Meeting up with these challenges was not an easy task as it required continuous mobilisation on a daily basis for the conquest of power and expansion which were essential guarantees for growth and prosperity. Since power and prosperity were a common ideal for which every polity, state or kingdom aspired for, there was bound therefore to be an intense struggle for power among the different ethnic nations that inhabited Cameroon before colonisation and as such in this struggle dominant forces emerged while subdued forces either conformed or moved away in dissidence with prospects of creating their own sphere of power, dominion and prosperity elsewhere.

This in effect was the case with Modibo-He and Hamman Sambo founders of Tibati<sup>965</sup>; who unwilling to succumb to the Fulani hegemony established in Yola and lorded upon them in North Cameroon through Modibo Adama decided in dissidence and Warfare to dissociate

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<sup>964</sup>Awah, "the Dynamics of Political Engagement, p, 182

<sup>965</sup> Eldridge Mohamadou, *Histoire De Tibati ; Les Chefferie Fulbé Du Cameroun*, Editions Abbia et Cle, 1965.

themselves from the Emir of Yola<sup>966</sup> and his power by carving out their own sphere of power influence and prosperity in Tibati which remained unsubdued till the advent of German Colonial incursion in North Cameroon. A common scenario was witnessed also among the many polities who moved southward into the Grassfield for fear of Fulani domination and power. A good case in point was the Bali Chamba who after the death of their father Gawolbe, the seven children of the leader, aspiring for power and prosperity for their individual families chose to separate from each other with prospects of carving out their sphere of power and prosperity through dissidence and warfare.<sup>967</sup> Further South into the forest region of the present Cameroon state a similar scene of power struggle manifested itself as the Pahouins<sup>968</sup> just like the Ejaghams<sup>969</sup> very sensitive to freedom power and prosperity continuously experienced dissidence and splits within their settlements causing the rise of new polities and spheres of power throughout the forest zone of the territory. In this persistent quest for Power to consolidate general welfare and prosperity was exhibited a very strong sense of political awareness amongst the people of Cameroon which had remained very strong.

Even with the eventual 19<sup>th</sup> century colonial incursion which totally challenged, subdued and suppressed the peoples power which had been consolidated over the years and replaced it with Colonial Power which became the only guarantor of welfare and prosperity, the Cameroonian peoples engagement, zeal and passion to be free and build their own prosperity remained very much alive. In effect, though subdued, the people did not totally succumb to the colonial power as they persistently manifested native power with the prospects of building a counter national power thus producing what Temgoua called the confrontation of two dominations<sup>970</sup>. Pioneering the national Kamerunian struggle and power against colonial power, Martin Paul Samba and Duala Manga Bell laid a very strong foundation which even their public assassination by the colonialist did not in any way deter the resolve of the people to freely exercise their power and work together as a people for the common good of their territory and the welfare of the nation. It was therefore in this context that national political consciousness emerged in Cameroon and gained full impetus during the interwar years to

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<sup>966</sup> Ibid.

<sup>967</sup> Ndifontah B. Nyamndi, *The Bali Chamba of Cameroon: A Political History*, Paris, ND.

<sup>968</sup> See, R. K. Kpwang and Walters T. Samah "Invention of Tradition.: Chieftaincy, Adaptation and Change in the Forest Region of Cameroon" *see also*, Thadée Claude Bene Bene, « Les Relations Entre Les Ewondo Et Les Béné Aux Xix Et Xx Siecles . p.,8.

<sup>969</sup> S. Tarkang Bessong , "EJAGHAM Migration, Settlement, And Resettlement : A Cultural History", MA, Dissertation, University of Yaoundé I, 1986

<sup>970</sup> Temgoua, *Cameroun à l'époque des Allemands*. p. 55.

become the bed rock of nationalism and the struggle for autonomy and power which spread across the Cameroons which had by the time been transferred to the British and French colonialist. Taking advantage of the various institutional frameworks put in place following the implementation of colonial policies in the territory, the people successfully organised themselves by the 1940's into interest groups, trade unions, pressure groups and later political parties within which they articulated their non-conformity with the colonial status-quo and demonstrated their zeal to independently exercise their power and take responsibility for their collective welfare and development as a people<sup>971</sup>. While in the British Cameroons the manifestation of this zeal and determination to be free followed a calm and well organised constitutional process which had as finality the end of British domination in the territory, the case of French Cameroon was different characterised by repression and the outbreak of violence.<sup>972</sup>

But in all this the people's power remained alive, active and determined to conquer despite all impediments and colonial manoeuvres mounted to frustrate and nullify the peoples power and resolve for freedom and prosperity. While in French Cameroon political contradiction was stirred up from within the people's power to divide, weaken and frustrate the people's movement for power<sup>973</sup>, in the British Cameroons the quest for materialism and self-projection greatly divided the peoples movement and as a result the erstwhile strong nationalist movement suddenly experienced the rise within its ranks a strong wave of discordant and dissident voices whose dissidence was not against the invaders but rather against the peoples power. The targeted aim of such dissidence was no longer for people's power but rather for personal power and personal welfare or development.

This phenomenon which led to a wide proliferation of political parties in pre-independence Cameroon worked greatly in favour of colonial forces as they could easily manipulate difference to create several poles of power hence deviating the people's attention away from foreign domination. It was therefore under these circumstances that independence was acquired in Cameroon, an independence which excluded the interest of the people and rather provoked infighting amongst the people on ideological lines which upheld every other thing except power. For realising that power had now left the people completely and was now in the hands of Neo-colonialist, two distinct path of political choice were set before the people

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<sup>971</sup> See, Ebune, *Growth of Political Parties*.

<sup>972</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun Histoire d'un Nationalisme* p.227.

<sup>973</sup> Eyinga, *l'UPC une Revolution manquee*, p.56

for which each and every one of them concerned about their development and welfare had to make a choice of either conformism or dissidence.

These two paths of political choice and engagement set before the people of Cameroon at independence were in essence going to constitute the nucleus of militancy in post-independent Cameroon. Thus the people were compelled to either conform to the neo-colonial status quo and accept its development paradigm or reject the neo-colonial status quo and build a completely new and unique pattern for their development and welfare.

Unfortunately, throughout post-independent Cameroon, the people chose to be indeterminate and inconsistent wavering between conformism and dissidence depending on the political stakes and considerations which in all were dictated by personal values, ethical principles, ethnicity and global politics. On several occasions depending on the political stake we saw many Cameroonians and political actors engaging in conformism to later defect conformism for dissidence while there were others who engaged in dissidence to later defect dissidence for conformism. For instance as was seen in West Cameroon in 1961 the CPNC which after the plebiscite results officially chose dissidence than to conform to the KNDP status quo, was to later come back to its choice to accept the status quo it contested<sup>974</sup>. Same for some CPNC politicians and parliamentarians like Ajebe Sone, E.E. Ngone, and S.E. Ncha who having evolved within the rangs of the CPNC and benefited the people's suffrage on the CPNC ticket during the 1961 Parliamentary elections into the West cameroon House of Assembly decided to defect the CPNC to engage in the KNDP and conform to its status quo.<sup>975</sup>

This not being enough, the KNDP which was said to have swallowed much and accumulated diversity within its rangs was to also manifest division and defection within its rangs as some of its militants not satisfied with the parties policy and development agenda which was not inclusive and general decided on the basis of egoism and Clientelism to adopt dissidence against the KNDP status-quo and engage in the Clientelist and neo-colonial conformism which guaranteed personal development and political aggrandisement. This in effect was the case with ST.Muna, E.T. Egbe, W.N.O. Effiom, J.M. Bokwe, W.N. Ndoke, Sam Mofor, Martin Fusi, J.K.N. Tataw, B.T. Sakah, and L.I. Umejoh who in dissidence abandoned the KNDP to create the CUC<sup>976</sup> with which they voluntarily conform to the neo-colonial status

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<sup>974</sup> See .Mbile, *Cameroon Political Story*.pp.160-162

<sup>975</sup> Ibid, Pp.182-184

<sup>976</sup> Ibid, pp. 194-196

quo of Ahidjo at the detriment of the people but in the interest of their personal ambition and political career. Realising by 1965 that the struggle for people's power was completely lost and that the loss of people's power opened doors for personal power and influence in the Neo-colonial status quo under Ahidjo, the different political actors of West Cameroon in their totality conform to the CNU one-party system thus completely abandoning dissidence against what they had termed Annexationism by conforming to it and making personal gains from it which generally sacrificed the wellbeing of the people and the development of the territory as a whole.

The same scenario of inconsistency was equally reproduced in the East Cameroon where political actors and militants, unable to build an indigenous power were compelled to either conform to Neo-colonial power or challenge it in dissidence. With these two political options in front of the political actors, there was hardly a time when they fervently made a choice to pursue one of these options rather they chose to be swinging from conformism to dissidence and dissidence to conformism. This was the case with erstwhile UPC Militants in the likes of Theodore Mayi Matip, Emma Ottu, Bebey Eyidi, and Malangue who having chosen dissidence following the compromise of people's power by Ahidjo in 1960, could barely maintain their position in dissidence for long as the attractions of personal gains which accompanied conformism could not leave them indifferent.

Not holding faithfully to their initial political option of dissidence these actors continuously wavered between dissidence and conformism depending on the stakes, interest and circumstances. Mayi Matip for instance seeing the benefits of personal power in conforming to the neo-colonial status quo decided to abandon dissidence and contestation in the bushes to create the Legal UPC and endorsed neo-colonialism. Realising later that the neo-colonial status quo was cruel as the colonial status quo in 1962 he decided to join Mbida in the FNU to challenge the status quo<sup>977</sup>, but after tasting the cruelty of the system which had incarcerated them for close to 3 years Mayi Matip upon leaving prison in 1965 abandoned dissidence again to conform for a second time to the Neo-colonial status quo.<sup>978</sup> Besides Matip of the UPC there was also people like Henri Effa and Gilbert Atangana of the DC party who not satisfied with the position of dissidence adopted by the leader of their party whom they accused of depriving them from tapping benefits in conformism decided to quit the party in

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<sup>977</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, P.130,

<sup>978</sup> *Ibid.* 129.

1962 and created the ID party<sup>979</sup> with which they immediately gave in to the neo-colonial status quo of Ahidjo so as to benefit returns which were believed would maintain their personal status and project their identity within the neo-colonial system and their community. Like them Bebey Eyidi an erstwhile UPCist also abandoned dissidence to conform to the neo-colonial status quo in 1926 by creating the PNTC<sup>980</sup> with which he endorsed neo-colonialism only to later reject some of its principles by opposing Ahidjo's Grand National party. Tasting repression like Matip he later came back to conformism by 1966. Thus after continuously wavering from Conformism to dissidence and back, it was believed that with the institutionalisation of state repression and autocracy in the one-party system Conformism would have been totally consolidated and people's power and prosperity completely lost to individual power and prosperity. Unfortunately the inequalities and the poverty gap that kept increasing as from 1980 stir up frustrations in several communities and among certain elites who after long years of loyalty to the system had nothing to show of it neither did their community received any benefits for their militancy and support.

These frustrations coupled with the developments in global politics which increasingly laid emphasis on liberalisation and liberty across the world provoked a strong wave of dissensions within the CNU status quo and enabled the rise of contestant movements and ideologies. with the recurrence of continuous defections and abandonment of post by CNU party officials as was recorded in in Meme and Wouri sections<sup>981</sup> of the party, it was very evident that some cracks were already revealing themselves on the one-party system. Unable to withstand the pressures of liberalisation in the late 1980's, these cracks completely opened with several militants and political observers and actor who had long been silenced in conformism, taking a bold step by coming-out of the conformism to engage in dissidence. This was the case with West Cameroon political actors in the likes of Foncha, Muna, fon Dinka, A.Mukong Litumbe, and Fru Ndi. Challenged by an enabling international circumstance and the rise of a vibrant civil society that had started instigating dissidence in music, religion and literature, the political actors had to automatically join the banwagon of dissidence that was taking shape in the country. In their various courageous initiatives these actors stood up tall in defiance of the system they had earlier conformed to. For instance while Dinka challenged the West

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<sup>979</sup> See, *La Presse Du Cameroun*, No. 3.597, *Mardi 27/03/1962*.

<sup>980</sup> See, *La presse du Cameroun* No. 3573, 20/05/1962

<sup>981</sup> See, *La Presse du Cameroun*, May 1972. See also, *Cameroon Tribune*, May 1976

Cameroonians to abandon docility and rise up against Annexationism<sup>982</sup>, Albert Mukong engaged the regime in strong criticism and opposition, causing erstwhile conformist like Foncha and Muna to resign from the neo-colonial status-quo to embrace dissidence just like litumbe and Fru Ndi who had also left the CNU/CPDM to openly launch the SDF party. These various action undertaken to deviate from conformism effectively propagated dissidence and completely shattered the strong holds of the one-party status quo paving the way for a return to multiparty politics which unfortunately did not still succeed to restore power and welfare to the people. This was evidently to happen as such since the pre independence cravings for individualism still surfaced among political actors exposing them to manipulations and further divisions which in all worked against the welfare of the people and the country at large.

Just as the enabling circumstances of the time caused erstwhile conformist of West Cameroon to jump into dissidence, so also were the political actors of the Former East Cameroon encouraged to also defect the status-quo to embrace dissidence. This was the case with CNU/CPDM official in the likes of J.J Ekindi, and Ndongo Alega<sup>983</sup> who openly challenged the status-quo and with the rising force of the media, the church and the bar association it had become clear to all that dissidence was imminent. Thus deviating from party lines, ekindi and alega started dissention within the one-party which was accentuated by the call of the civil society for a more democratic and developed territory. Hence by endorsing dissidence which they could not even sustain for a while, it never the less produced fruits as the Launching of the SDF in 1990 opened doors for mulitipartism which in effect did not demonstrate pluralism. The consequences were further suffered by the masses who expecting to tap benefits in pluralism were rather served individualism which only kept worsening their already bad situation.

From a general observation the dynamics of militancy was indeed a reality in post-independent Cameroon, for hardly could any political actor or militant hold tied to a policy or ideology faithfully without compromising it. This phenomenon which gained steam within the political evolution of Cameroon in post-independence was the product of several considerations but which in all was given exposure and expression by human action or better still political actors. The dynamics of militancy found expression within post-independent Cameroon due to the collective effort and contribution of all politicians and other actors of the political scene. In

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<sup>982</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon History*, p.320.

<sup>983</sup> <sup>983</sup>. Boulaga, *Démocratie de transit*, p, 46.

their different categories, that is party leaders, or followers, politicians greatly contributed in giving expression to the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon. Taking the case of frontline leaders like Ahidjo, Foncha, Muna, Paul Biya, Fru Ndi, and J.J. Ekindi, they have all participated directly and indirectly in enhancing the Dynamics of militancy, for their inconsistency in politics automatically engendered or pulled along with a large pool of followers and militants who compelled to do so or constrained by Clientelist links had no option but to follow the direction of the wind to whatever direction it was blowing. For instance when Ahidjo adopted anti-imperialism as his political policy in the guise of national unity, he pulled along a vast section of UPC militants in the bushes to abandon dissent only for them to later embrace Neo-colonialism they were contesting<sup>984</sup>. Later again when the same Ahidjo abandoned anti- imperialism to impose neo-colonial conformism on all<sup>985</sup>, everyone had no other choice than to follow his direction of policy as any form of opposition to him was tantamount to subversion and punishable by the state which had become the person of Ahidjo<sup>986</sup>. The ripple effects of the dynamics of militancy as engendered by Ahidjo's conduct was equally witnessed with the other leaders but for the fact they did not compel or imposed adherence, their versatile attitude and conduct of militancy influenced their followers who; concerned about the consolidation and preservation of the benefits attached to their militancy and support to these leaders had to do everything to follow them in whatever direction they took. Hence enhancing and giving expression to the dynamics of militancy across the whole territory.

Besides the front-liners or leaders mentioned above there were also local political actors and individuals who commanded strong influence on public opinion and by so doing had to equally enhance the dynamics of militancy in post independent Cameroon as they persistently changed camp and political positions as well as opinion on burning issues of general concern. This was particularly the case with Mayi Matip, Henri Effa, Gabriel Atangana, Mola Litumbe, Lapiro de Mbanga, Bate Besong, Pius Njawe and Cardinal Tumi. Though not directly involved in the government machinery, their positions as local representatives of the people, press men, musical icons, intellectuals and religious leaders greatly gave them strong influence on public opinion and each time they adopted a given policy framework of action be it in dissidence or in

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<sup>984</sup> NAY, *La presse du Cameroun*, No 3520 / 01/1962

<sup>985</sup> Gaillard, *Ahmadou Ahidjo*, p.141, See, Eyinga, A. *l'UPC : Une Révolution*, p. 116

<sup>986</sup> Gaillard, *Ahidjo*, p. 129.



conformism, there was a ripple effect across the country which enhanced and gave expression to the dynamics of militancy. Taking for instance Ndigaman (Lapiro de Mbanga) the musical icon of the late 1980's who, through his unique style of music in the Mboko language<sup>987</sup> reached out to many Cameroonians in the nooks and crannies of the territory was to become a key actor on the political scene of the country though not a politician. Having pulled a good number of fans in the early 1980's who enjoyed his entertainment music, Lapiro by the end of the 1980's completely switched to contestant and anti-conformist music challenging neo-colonialism and the injustices it had produced in the society<sup>988</sup>. In his versatility and dynamism he pulled along his large pool of fans and many new ones who admired his music and the messages he vehiculated. This music which had great influence on the masses had the effect of liberation on them and galvanised them for dissidence and anti-conformism. Influenced by his cry for justice and the dismantling of the neo-colonial order many Cameroonians in early 1990's massively abandoned docility and conformism which had been imposed on them by the regime. Overcoming their fears through dissidence music many took to the streets, engaged in social and political activism for change which attained its paroxysm on May 1990 with launching of the SDF party by Fru Ndi in Bamenda<sup>989</sup>. Thus from a conformist Lapiro's change of political mind-set and opinion about music equally changed many Cameroonians mind-set about governance<sup>990</sup> and as such enhanced and gave expression to the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon. Like Lapiro other local actors like the cardinal Tumi, Pius Njawe, Bate Besong, Mola litumbe, Heri Effa in their socio-political activism greatly influenced the masses and produced social transformations in mind sets which generally enhanced and gave expression to the dynamics of militancy in Cameroon.

In all these dynamics and changes in militancy we have observed, examined and ascertained in the post-independent Cameroonian landscape, the challenging question we have been confronted with and begging for an answer has been; to know to what extent these inconsistency or dynamics in militancy throughout post-independence impacted democracy in Cameroon as well as the peoples wellbeing and development. After extensive investigation and research we have arrived at the conclusion that political consciousness in Cameroon which is as old as the people and their territory has sustained an age old struggle for power whose

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<sup>987</sup> See Exclusive Interview on Protest Politics and the Art of Satire, p.127.

<sup>988</sup> See Nyamnjoh and Fokwang, "Entertaining Repression: Music and Politics, pp, 251-274

<sup>989</sup> Vankuntah, *The Life and Times of a Cameroonian Icon* p.46

<sup>990</sup> Ibid.

dimension in post-independence engendered stiff competition not for power but rather for political survival as power itself had been sacrificed on the altar of independence in neo-colonialism. Thus in competing for survival, everything and anything could become an ideal in so far as it guaranteed the ultimate end which is survival. This dimension of politics in effect produced and sustained dynamics in militancy whose impact was very visible First in the country's democratic construction.

As the urge and propensity to hang on to any ideal for power and survival became strong in post-independent Cameroon, so also was the propensity to exhibit political freedom and democracy. In effect the continuous manifestation of dissensions, and change of political ideal by militants in post-independent Cameroon, only went a long way to consolidate within the territory very strong democratic values of freedom which gave Cameroonians the latitude to think freely and act freely in their own personal interest.

It as well engendered political diversity and pluralism as the high propensity to move away or hold on to a new ideal facilitated the multiplication of political ideals which in democracy represents strength that could be harnessed for effective economic and human development. But this unfortunately was not the case for Cameroon as the diversity and pluralism produced through the proliferation of political parties and ideals were not designed for the attainment of power. Rather they were all at the pursue of political subsistence and survival which limited their audacity and kept them perpetually weak<sup>991</sup> in the face of a domineering and prevailing neo-colonial ideal.

The dynamics of militancy's visible impact on Cameroonian democracy since independence has also been its high capacity to weaken collective action. The high propensity to defect, move away and hold on to a new ideal just to express personal freedom and zeal to attain personal goal of subsistence as was the case in post-independent Cameroon, defeated the primary purpose of democracy which is serving the people. The moment power is sought not for the sake of the group but rather for its own sake, such power becomes individualistic and destructive to democracy and collective action<sup>992</sup> as was seen throughout post-independent cameroon wherein all collective actions taken in favour of alternation and power persistently

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<sup>991</sup> Abwa, *Histoire d'un Nationalisme*. p.217,

<sup>992</sup> M. B. Aleyomi, "Elections and Politics of Party Defection.

failed thus maintaining the neo-colonial ideal of politics which has remained the struggle for personal power against peoples power.

Besides its impact and their implications on the democratic construction in post independent Cameroon, the second impact of the dynamics of militancy in post-independent Cameroon has been very visible in the livelihood and economic wellbeing of the people. Trapped in the neo-colonial ideal of politics which puts the individual against the people and by implication sacrificed the needs of the people to uphold personal gains, there was bound to be a permanent clash of interest between the political class and the masses. The capitalist political class in their determination to uphold and consolidate personal power, always ensured any rise in rival force from the masses which could balance up power for effective democracy and development was neutralised and weakened through divisive manipulations which only institutionalised political strife and conflict thereby diverting the attention of governance away from development to concentrate on political manoeuvres to consolidate power.<sup>993</sup>

Equally in their high propensity to move away or hold onto a new ideal for self-interest and gratification, it was evident that anything of personal benefit could influence a person to move. This in effect was to open doors to political corruption which only maintained a few in power who sustained this power with corruption hence sacrificing the people's welfare and development.<sup>994</sup>

Furthermore the dynamics of militancy in post independent cameroon which institutionalised conflict within the political class by alienating elite from the masses, created great disparities and inequalities with adverse effects on the welfare of the people and the territories development. In their zeal and determination to consolidate personal gains and power, political actors and elite not compelled by any social contract with the masses left the latter in total abandon since they counted in little or no way to their political achievements<sup>995</sup>. Thus by so doing, they kept serving neo-colonialism while enriching themselves and impoverishing their people as well as their territory.

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<sup>993</sup> See, Renske Doorenspleet, "Development, Class and Democracy; Is There a Relationship?" In, *Development and Democracy What We have learned and how?* (Eds) Ole Elgström and Goran Hyden, Routledge ECPR, London and New York, 2002, Pp, 60-61.

<sup>994</sup> See, N. Grimbald, Nchise E. and Penn Emmanuel, "A Critical Assessment of the Impact of Corruption on the Economic and Social Development of Cameroon, p.166.

<sup>995</sup> See, Nyamjoh, "Cameroon a Country United by Ethnic Ambition..", p, 6

With all the above mentioned repercussions of the dynamics of militancy on democracy and development in Cameroon, it is very evident that conduct and practice of politics in post-independent Cameroon and its dynamic character has greatly limited Cameroon and retarded not just its democratic construction but as well its smooth ride to socio-economic welfare and development. With this very gloomy picture of democracy and development painted by the conduct and practice of politics in Cameroon from 1961 -1992 and which even till present has not known any significant progress, there is great need today for attention and special emphasis to be given the conduct and practice of politics as a tool of development. This can be possible if the History of the practice and conduct of politics in Cameroon is revisited and the lessons of this History well assimilated and materialised in concrete political and institutional reforms amongst which we suggest the following as recommendations.

A reform on the country's constitution to address the form of the state is an imperative and a necessity required to effectively re-align and reconcile politics to its fundamental end of development and social transformation in Cameroon.

The dissolution of all existing political parties without an effective national coverage across the territory is of utmost necessity, this will help flush out satellite parties with no clear objective of power or national development program.

The law No.90/056 of 19 December 1990 on creation and establishment of political parties in Cameroon should be amended to limit the creation of political parties to just 1per region so that on every electoral consultation a total of 10 political parties at most will have to compete. This in effect will destroy the notion of politics around personal initiatives and create a stronger political effervescence at regional and at national levels with greater impact on development and social transformation.

A total reformation of the electoral code shaped around very strong, objective and impartial institutions built on a general consensus so as to level the electoral floor and render political competition very equitable and just.

The introduction of politics and political education in the curricula for primary and secondary schools in Cameroon. This in effect will initiate young Cameroonians to the conduct and practice of politics thereby equipping them with the knowledge, understanding and values of political competition and democracy in the society.

## SOURCES CONSULTED

### A. Oral Sources

#### List Of Informants

NAME	PROFESSION/STATUS	AGE	PLACE OF INTERVIEW	DATE OF INTERVIEW
Abwa Daniel	Professor of History at the University of Yaoundé I and author of several books and articles on the history of Cameroon	61	Yaoundé	09 <sup>th</sup> /07/2014
Ajoanek C.	Insurer and political analyst	52	Yaounde	09/09/2020
Ajuabom G.	Clergyman	52	Bamenda	23/04/2021
Ako Gregoire	SDF Militant	60	Yaounde	29/09/2020
Ambo J.	Civil Society	45	Douala	16/09/2020
Angwafor S.A III	<i>Fon</i> of Mankon & former member of the Southern Cameroons House of Chiefs, and House of Assembly (Politician)	89	Mankon Palace (Bamenda)	08 <sup>th</sup> /01/2014
Ano Epie	Civil Society	47	Yaounde	27/09/2020
Anonymous	Traditional ruler	57	Yaounde	26/09/2020
Anonymous	Traditiobnal ruler	52	Douala	15/09/2020
Anonymous	Senior Civil Administrator	53	Bamenda	05/09/2020
Asana Festus A.	Moderator Emeritus of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon	66	Bamenda	2 <sup>nd</sup> /03/2015
Asombang J.	Teacher	42	Yaoundé	18 <sup>th</sup> /07/2014
Asongwe F.	Frontline agent and Militant for Change	50	Yaounde	30/09/2020
Atanga Celestine	First National Assistant Secretary for political education and training of the Social Democratic Front (Politician)	47	Yaoundé	10 <sup>th</sup> /07/2014
Ateh Grace	UPC Militant	65	Bamenda	01/10/2021
Bikek Jean F.	UPC Supporter	42	Yaounde	26/09/2020

Biyong Joseph E.	Mayor Douala V Council and militant of the PCRN	33	Douala	15 <sup>th</sup> /09/2020
Chi Nyamngoh L.	3 <sup>RD</sup> Vice President of the UPC Party Directorate	62	Yaoundé	07 <sup>th</sup> /05/2014
Djekayi Daniel	Political analyst	43	Yaounde	28/09/2020
Ebai Emmanuel	Librarian	52	Yaoundé	18 <sup>th</sup> /07/2014
Ebaneck L.	Civil Society	47	Yaounde	30/09/2020
Effungani Charles Endeley	Retired staff of the CDC Communication Department, and nephew to Dr.EML. Endeley, PM of the Southern Cameroons (1957-1959)	60	Buea	17 <sup>th</sup> /01/2014
Ekane F.	Civil society actor	51	Douala	15/09/2020
Esimo Motale	Civil Society	44	Yaounde	29/09/2020
Feh Reuben	Political commentator	50	Yaounde	20/09/2020
Fomin E.S.D.	Associate professor of History at the University of Yaoundé I	60	Yaoundé	06 <sup>th</sup> /05/2014
Foncha Anna	Widow of the late J. N. FONCHA former PM of Southern Cameroons & Vice president of the federal republic of Cameroon	90	Nkwen (Bamenda)	06 <sup>th</sup> /01/2014
Forgwe Primus	Archivist	60	Buea	16 <sup>th</sup> /01/2014
Fru Martin	Former SDF Militant	63	Yaoundé	26/09/2020
Fru Ndi J.	National Chairman of the Social Democratic Front Party	74	Yaoundé	17 <sup>th</sup> /03/2015
ITAMBI .Z.A	Teacher	61	Yaoundé	18 <sup>th</sup> /07/2014
Kah walla E.	President CPP and leader of Stand up for Cameroon Movement.	55	Doaula	15/09/2020
Kom Herve E.	CPDM Militant and Member of the Central Committee	67	Douala	16 <sup>th</sup> /09/2020
Labah P.	Civil Society	57	Yaounde	30/09/2020

Mackay Andreas	Civil society actor	49	Yaounde	30/09/2020
Manu Joe	Manager security company and political commentator	52	Yaounde	29/09/2020
Mbombog Yebga	UPC-MANIDEM Militant and Contested President of MANIDEM party	62	Douala	15/09/2020
Munjah Beltus	Teacher and Political commentator	40	Yaounde	27/09/2020
Nfor John	Retired vcivil servant	68	Yaounde	30/09/2020
Ngam Elvis	CRM Militan	50	Yaounde	30/09/2020
Ngwayi John	Eyewitness of the May 26 1990 SDF Launch in Ntarikon Park motor Bamenda	62	Yaounde	28/09/2020
Numfor Crispus	Retired Journalist of the Presidential Press core	68	Yaoundé	18 <sup>th</sup> /07/2014
Sabum T.	Political observer	54	Yaounde	12/09/2020
Sanjou-Tadzong Abel,Ndeh	Former Municipal Administrator for Bamenda city council	70	Ngomgham (Bamenda)	2 <sup>nd</sup> /03/2015
Shu Martin	Civil society	40	Yaounde	29/09/2020
Tafah Edward	Senior administrator	65	Yaounde	29/09/2020
Tagne N.W.	Former PCRN Militant	35	Douala	15/09/2020
Tanda George N.	Civil Society	55	Yaounde	28/09/2020
Tanga Franklin	Civil society actor and militant for change	48	Yaounde	27/09/2020
Tifuh Ephraime	Teacher and political analyst	59	Yaounde	28/09/2020

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix I. 1990 law on the Establishment of Political parties in Cameroon

## Loi n° 90/056 du 19 décembre 1990 portant sur la création des partis politiques

1

Chapitre I: Des dispositions générales

**Article premier:** Les partis politiques sont des associations qui concourent à l'expression du suffrage.

**Article 2.-** Les partis politiques se créent et exercent librement leurs activités dans le cadre de la constitution et de la présente loi.

**Article 3.-** (1) Nul ne peut être contraint d'adhérer à un parti politique.

(2) Nul ne peut être inquiété en raison de son appartenance ou de sa non-appartenance à un parti politique.

(3) Nonobstant toutes dispositions des alinéas précédents du présent article, il est interdit aux personnels des forces armées et de la police en activité de service d'adhérer à tout parti politique.

(4) Nul ne peut appartenir à plus d'un parti politique.

Chapitre II : De la création

**Article 4 :** (1) La demande de création d'un parti politique se fait par le dépôt d'un dossier complet auprès des services du gouverneur territorialement compétent

(2) Une décharge mentionnant le numéro et la date d'enregistrement du dossier est délivrée au déposant.

**Article 5.-** (1) Le dossier à déposer comprend :

- la demande timbrée indiquant les noms, adresse ainsi que l'identité complète, la profession et le domicile de ceux qui sont chargés de la direction et/ou de l'administration du parti ;

- le bulletin N° 3 du .casser judiciaire des dirigeants ;

- le procès-verbal de l'assemblée constitutive en triple exemplaire ;

- les statuts en triple exemplaire ;

- l'engagement écrit .avec signature légalisée de respecter les principes énumérés à l'article 9 ci-dessous ;

- un mémorandum sur le projet de société ou le programme politique du parti ;

- l'indication du siège.

(2) Tout changement ou toute modification dans ces éléments ainsi que les pièces le constatant, doit être communiqué au gouverneur territorialement compétent.

**Article 6.-** Le gouverneur dispose d'un délai franc de quinze (15) jours francs pour transmettre au Ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale tout dossier comportant l'ensemble des pièces énumérées à l'article 5 ci-dessus.

**Article 7.-** (1) La décision autorisant l'existence légale d'un parti politique est prise par le ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale.

(2) En cas de silence gardé pendant trois (3) mois à compter de la date de dépôt du dossier auprès des services du gouverneur territorialement compétent, le parti est réputé exister légalement.

**Article 8.-** (1) L'autorisation visée à l'article 7 ci-dessus ne peut être refusée que si le dossier ne remplit pas les conditions énumérées aux articles 5, 9, 10 et 11 de la présente loi.

(2) Tout refus d'autorisation doit être motivé et notifié au déposant par tout moyen laissant trace.

Le déposant peut, le cas échéant, saisir le juge administratif dans les conditions prévues par la loi.

(3) Par dérogation aux dispositions de l'article 12 de l'ordonnance N° 72/6 du 26 août 1972 fixant l'organisation de la Cour suprême, le refus de l'autorisation prévue à l'alinéa 2 ci-dessus est susceptible de recours, sur simple requête devant le président de la juridiction administrative.

Ce recours doit intervenir dans un délai de 30 jours à compter de la date de notification à personne ou à domicile.

Le président statue par ordonnance dans un délai de 30 jours.

L'exercice des voies de recours n'a pas d'effet suspensif.

**Article 9--** Ne peut être autorisé, tout parti politique qui:

- porte atteinte à l'intégrité territoriale, à l'unité nationale, à la forme républicaine de l'Etat, à la souveraineté nationale et à l'intégration nationale, notamment par toutes sortes de discriminations basées sur les tribus, les provinces, les groupes linguistiques ou les confessions religieuses ;
- prône le recours à la violence ou envisage la mise sur pied d'une organisation militaire ou paramilitaire ;
- reçoit les subsides de l'étranger ou dont l'un des dirigeants statutaires réside à l'étranger ;
- favorise la belligérance entre les composantes de la Nation ou entre des pays.

**Article 10.-** Il est formellement interdit à un parti politique de recevoir des financements de l'extérieur.

**Article 11.-** Nul ne peut être dirigeant d'un parti politique s'il ne remplit les conditions suivantes :

- être de nationalité camerounaise d'origine ou d'acquisition depuis au moins dix (10) ans ;
- être âgé de 21 ans au moins;
- jouir de ses droits civiques ;
- ne pas appartenir à un autre parti politique;
- résider sur le territoire national.

### **Chapitre III : Des droits**

**Article 12.-** Tout parti politique autorisé peut:

- acquérir à titre gratuit ou onéreux et disposer des biens meubles et immeubles nécessaires à ses activités ;
- fixer librement le taux des cotisations et les percevoir ;
- ouvrir des comptes bancaires exclusivement au Cameroun ;
- créer et administrer des journaux et des instituts de formation conformément aux lois en vigueur ;
- ester en justice ;
- tenir des réunions et organiser des manifestations dans les conditions prévues par la loi ;
- percevoir le produit de ses activités culturelles ou économiques.

**Article 13.-** (1) Tout parti politique peut recevoir les dons et legs mobiliers provenant exclusivement de ses membres ou des personnes installées au Cameroun.

(2) Les quantums annuels maximum de ces dons et legs et les modalités pratiques de leur perception sont fixés par voie réglementaire.

**Article 14.-** L'Etat participe, en tant que de besoin, dans les conditions fixées par la loi, à certaines dépenses des partis à l'occasion des consultations électorales locales ou nationales.

**Article 15.-** Les partis politiques ont accès aux médias audio-visuels de service public dans les conditions fixées par voie réglementaire.

**Article 16.-** Toute perquisition au siège d'un parti politique est interdite, sauf en cas de procédure judiciaire, sur réquisition du juge ou pour des motifs d'ordre Public.

### **Chapitre IV: Des sanctions**

**Article 17.-** (1) Le ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale peut d'office suspendre par décision motivée pour une durée de trois (3) l'activité de tout parti politique responsable de troubles graves à l'ordre public ou qui ne satisfait pas aux dispositions des articles 5, 6, 9, 10 et 11 ci-dessus.

(2) Cette décision peut faire l'objet d'un recours devant le juge administratif dans les conditions prévues à l'article 8 alinéa 3.

**Article 18.-** (1) Tout parti politique peut être dissous :

- par la volonté de ses membres conformément à ses statuts ;
- par décision du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale agissant en vertu de l'article 17 ci-dessus.

(2) La décision de dissolution du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale est susceptible de recours devant la Cour suprême dans les conditions prévues à l'article 8 alinéa 3.



**Article 19.-** En cas de dissolution d'un parti politique par le ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale, celui-ci saisit le tribunal de première instance pour sa liquidation.

**Article 20.-** La dissolution d'un parti politique ne fait pas obstacle aux poursuites judiciaires qui peuvent être engagées contre ses dirigeants.

#### **Chapitre V: Des dispositions diverses et finales**

**Article 21.-** Les partis politiques qui existent légalement à la date de promulgation de la présente loi n'ont pas à demander une nouvelle autorisation.

**Article 22.-** Sont abrogées toutes dispositions antérieures concernant les partis politiques.

**Article 23.-** La présente loi sera enregistrée, publiée selon la procédure d'urgence, puis insérée au Journal Officiel en français et en anglais.

**Le Président de la République**

**(é) Paul Biya**



## APPENDIX II: Law N° 90-47 of December 1990 to repeal ordinance N°62-OF.18/12/03/62

Année — N° 1 (Supplémentaire)  
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# EL OFFICIAL GAZETTE

OF THE

## REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN

## REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

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## Loi n° 90-46 du 19 décembre 1990

abrogeant l'ordonnance n° 62-OF-18 du 12 mars 1962 portant répression de la subversion.

L'Assemblée nationale a délibéré et adopté,

le Président de la République promulgue la loi dont la teneur suit :

Article premier. — Est abrogée l'ordonnance n° 62-OF-18 du 12 mars 1962 portant répression de la subversion ainsi que ses textes modificatifs subséquents.

2. — La présente loi sera enregistrée, publiée selon la procédure d'urgence, puis insérée au *Journal officiel* en français et en anglais.

Yaoundé, le 19 décembre 1990.

Le Président de la République  
Paul Biya

## Loi n° 90-47 du 19 décembre 1990

relative à l'état d'urgence.

L'Assemblée nationale a délibéré et adopté,

le Président de la République promulgue la loi dont la teneur suit :

Article premier. — L'état d'urgence peut être déclaré sur toute ou partie du territoire national :

1) soit en cas d'événements présentant par la nature et la gravité le caractère de calamité publique ;  
2) soit en cas de troubles portant gravement atteinte à la sécurité intérieure ou à l'intégrité de l'Etat ;  
3) soit en cas de troubles venant de l'extérieur.

2. — L'état d'urgence est déclaré par décret.

3. — Le décret instituant l'état d'urgence précise :

a) la ou les partie (s) du territoire soumise (s) à l'état d'urgence ;  
b) la durée de celui-ci qui ne peut excéder trois mois ;  
c) les autorités administratives habilitées à prendre les mesures consécutives à la proclamation de l'état d'urgence.

4. — a) Nonobstant les dispositions de l'article 2, ci-dessus, l'état d'urgence pourra être prorogé par décret pour une seule période de trois mois.

b) La situation qui a motivé l'état d'urgence persiste, l'Assemblée nationale doit être consultée.

5. — L'état d'urgence prend fin :

1) soit automatiquement à l'expiration du délai fixé par le décret l'ayant institué ou prorogé ;  
2) soit par décret, aussi bien au cours de la première période qu'au cours d'une période de prorogation, lorsque les circonstances ayant entraîné sa proclamation ont cessé.

6. — Lorsque l'état d'urgence est déclaré sur une partie du territoire, les autorités administratives de ladite partie du territoire habilitées par le décret de proclamation, selon le cas et de plein droit, par arrêtés administratifs exécutoires :

a) restreindre la circulation des personnes et des biens à des zones restrictives et éventuellement à une autorisation

## Law No. 90-46 of 19 December 1990

to repeal Ordinance No. 62-OF-18 of 12 March 1962 to repress subversive activities.

The National Assembly has deliberated and adopted,

The President of the Republic hereby enacts the law set out below :

Section 1. — Ordinance No. 62-OF-18 of 12 March 1962 to repress subversive activities and all the subsequent amendments thereto are hereby repealed.

Section 2. — This law shall be registered, published according to the procedure of urgency and inserted in the *Official Gazette* in English and French.

Yaounde, 19 December 1990.

Paul Biya  
President of the Republic

## Law No. 90-47 of 19 December 1990

relating to the state emergency.

The National Assembly has deliberated and adopted,

The President of the Republic hereby enacts the law set out below :

Section 1. — A state of emergency may be proclaimed throughout the national territory or in any part thereof in the event of :

— an occurrence which, by its nature and gravity, is considered a national disaster, or  
— a series of disturbances undermining public order or the security of the State, or  
— a foreign invasion.

Section 2 (1) : The state of emergency shall be proclaimed by decree.

(2) The decree instituting a state of emergency shall specify :

— the part (s) of the territory placed under the state of emergency ;  
— its duration, which may not exceed three months ;  
— the administrative authorities empowered to take measures resulting from the proclamation of the state of emergency.

Section 3. — (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 2 (2) above, a state of emergency may, by decree, be extended for only one period of three months.

(b) If the situation which gave rise to the state of emergency persists, the National Assembly shall be consulted.

Section 4. — The state of emergency shall cease :

— automatically, on expiry of the period specified by the decree which proclaimed or extended it ;  
— by decree, during the initial period or during an extension thereof when the situation that led to its proclamation has ceased.

Section 5. — When a state of emergency is proclaimed over a part of the territory, the administrative authorities of the said part of the territory empowered by the decree proclaiming the state of emergency may, as the case may be and as of right, issue immediately enforceable orders to :

(1) subject the movement of persons and property to restriction and if necessary, to administrative authorization ;



2) ordonner la remise des armes, munitions, effets militaires d'habillement ou de campement et postes de radio émetteurs-récepteurs, ainsi que faire procéder à leur recherche et à leur enlèvement ;

3) interdire toutes réunions et publications de nature à entretenir le désordre ;

4) instituer des zones de protection ou de sécurité où le séjour des personnes est réglementé ;

5) requérir les autorités militaires pour participer en permanence au maintien de l'ordre public dans les formes légales ;

6) autoriser, par tout officier de police judiciaire, civile ou militaire, des perquisitions à domicile de jour ou de nuit dans les formes légales ;

7) ordonner la garde à vues des individus jugés dangereux pour la sécurité publique dans les locaux, y compris dans un quartier spécial des établissements pénitentiaires, pendant une durée de 7 jours pour les préfets et 15 jours pour les gouverneurs.

A l'expiration de ces délais, l'élargissement sera de droit si la mesure n'a pas été confirmée dans les conditions prévues à l'article 6, alinéa 6 ci-dessous.

Art. 6. — Dès la proclamation de l'état d'urgence et pendant la durée de celui-ci, le ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale peut, par arrêtés immédiatement exécutoires :

1) ordonner la fermeture, en tant que de besoin, des salles de spectacles, débits de boisson et lieux de réunion de toute nature ;

2) organiser le contrôle de la presse et des publications de toute nature, ainsi que celui des émissions audio-visuelles et des représentations théâtrales ou artistiques ;

3) ordonner la dispersion de tous groupements ou suspendre les associations qui provoquent des manifestations armées ou présentant par leur forme et leur organisation militaire ou para-militaire le caractère de groupe de combat ou de milices privées, ou qui ont pour but de porter atteinte à l'intégrité du territoire national, à l'unité, à la sécurité ou à la forme républicaine de l'Etat ;

4) autoriser la réquisition des personnes et des biens dans les formes légales ;

5) prononcer l'assignation à résidence, dans une circonscription territoriale ou localité déterminée, de tous individus résidant dans la zone soumise à l'état d'urgence qui s'avèreraient dangereux pour la sécurité publique.

L'autorité administrative devra, en cas de nécessité, prendre toutes dispositions utiles pour assurer la subsistance des personnes astreintes à résidence ;

6) ordonner, soit de sa propre initiative, soit à la demande des autorités chargées de l'administration des circonscriptions soumises à l'état d'urgence, la garde à vue pour une durée de deux mois renouvelable une seule fois des individus jugés dangereux pour la sécurité publique.

Art. 7. — Cessent d'avoir effet, en même temps que prend fin l'état d'urgence, les mesures administratives prises pour son application.

Les armes et les effets visés à l'article 5, alinéa 2 sont restitués à leurs propriétaires.

Art. 8. — Les mesures prises en application des dispositions prévues aux articles 5 et 6 de la présente loi doivent être communiquées au Comité national des droits de l'homme et des libertés.

Art. 9. — Les modalités d'application de la présente loi seront, en tant que de besoin, fixées par voie réglementaire.

(2) require the surrender of arms, ammunition, military clothing and equipment, and transceivers, and also authorize the search and seizure thereof ;

(3) prohibit all meetings and publications that foster disorder ;

(4) prescribe areas of protection or of security within which the presence of human beings shall be subject to regulation ;

(5) call, in prescribed form, upon the military authorities for standing assistance in the maintenance of law and order ;

(6) authorize the search by day or night of dwelling houses by any civilian, military or judicial police officer in accordance with the law ;

(7) order the detention of persons deemed dangerous to public security in any premises, including special prison cells, for duration of 7 days by Senior Divisional Officers and 15 days by Governors.

Upon expiry of such periods, their release shall be as of right if the measure is not in accordance with the conditions laid down in Section 6 (6) below.

Section 6. — On proclamation of a state of emergency, and throughout the duration thereof, the Minister in charge of Territorial Administration may, by orders that shall be immediately enforceable :

(1) order the closure, as and when necessary, of entertainment halls, drinking and meeting places of any kind ;

(2) organize the control of the press and of all kinds of publications, audio-visual broadcasting and theatrical or artistic productions ;

(3) disperse any assembly or suspend any association which may provoke armed demonstrations or, by reason of its constitution or its military or paramilitary organization, may be equivalent to a combat unit or a private militia or may have the object of undermining the integrity of the national territory or the unity, the security or the republican character of the State ;

(4) authorize the requisition of persons and property in accordance with the law ;

(5) order, in a given jurisdiction or area, the house arrest of any person residing in the area under a state of emergency who may prove dangerous to public security.

The administrative authority shall, if need be, take all the necessary measures to ensure the sustenance of persons under house arrest.

(6) Order, either on his own initiative or at the request of authorities responsible for the administration of the areas under a state of emergency, the detention of persons deemed dangerous to public security for a two-month period renewable once.

Section 7. — Administrative measures taken in pursuance of this law shall lapse with the expiry of the state of emergency.

The arms and other articles referred to in Section 5 (2) above shall be returned to their owners.

Section 8. — The measures taken in pursuance of this law shall be communicated to the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms

Section 9. — The conditions of implementation of this law shall, as and when necessary, be fixed by regulations.

Art. 10. — La présente loi abroge toutes dispositions antérieures, notamment l'ordonnance n° 72-13 du 26 août 1972 relative à l'état d'urgence.

Art. 11. — La présente loi sera enregistrée, publiée selon la procédure d'urgence, puis insérée au *Journal officiel* en français et en anglais.

Yaoundé, le 19 décembre 1990.

Le Président de la République  
Paul Biya

Loi n° 90-48 du 19 décembre 1990

modifiant l'ordonnance n° 72/5 du 26 août 1972 portant organisation judiciaire militaire.

L'Assemblée nationale a délibéré et adopté,

Le Président de la République promulgue la loi dont la teneur suit :

Article premier. — Les dispositions des articles 5, 10, 29, 31 et 33 de l'ordonnance n° 72/5 du 26 août 1972 relative à la compétence de la juridiction militaire sont modifiées et complétées ainsi qu'il suit :

Art. 5 (nouveau). — Le tribunal militaire est seul compétent pour connaître à l'encontre de toute personne majeure de 18 ans :

- des infractions purement militaires prévues au Code de justice militaire ;
- des infractions de toute nature commises par les militaires avec ou sans co-auteurs ou complices civils, soit à l'intérieur d'un établissement militaire, soit dans le service ;
- de toutes les infractions de toute nature où se trouve impliqué un militaire ou assimilé, perpétrées dans une région soumise à l'état d'urgence ou d'exception ;
- de toutes les infractions connexes à celles prévues ci-dessus.

Art. 10 (nouveau). — Dans le cadre des infractions visées à l'article 5 ci-dessus :

- les officiers de police judiciaire ne peuvent procéder de nuit à des visites domiciliaires, perquisitions et saisies que sur ordre écrit du ministre chargé de la défense ;
- ils peuvent garder à vue les suspects pendant 48 heures à partir de leur arrestation. Ce délai peut être prorogé trois (3) fois sur autorisation écrite du commissaire du gouvernement ;
- les officiers de police judiciaire sont tenus d'adresser quotidiennement un état des gardés à vue au ministre chargé de la défense avec copie au ministre de la justice, garde des sceaux ;
- tout acte accompli en dehors des prescriptions ci-dessus peut entraîner à l'encontre des officiers de police judiciaire l'application de sanctions pénales ou disciplinaires et donner lieu à réparation.

Art. 29 (nouveau). — Les jugements du Tribunal militaire sont susceptibles d'appel devant la Cour d'appel de Yaoundé ou, lorsqu'il existe plusieurs tribunaux militaires, devant toute autre cour d'appel compétente.

Art. 31 (nouveau). — Les crimes et délits contre la sûreté de l'Etat relèvent de la compétence de la Cour de Sûreté de l'Etat dont l'organisation fera l'objet d'un texte particulier.

Art. 33 (nouveau). — (1) Les affaires pendantes devant les tribunaux militaires à la date de promulgation de la présente loi qui portent atteinte à la Sûreté de l'Etat seront transmises à la Cour de Sûreté de l'Etat prévue à l'article 31 (nouveau) ci-dessus.

Section 10. — This law repeals all previous provisions, in particular Ordinance No. 72-13 of 26 August 1972 relating to the state of emergency.

Section 11. — This law shall be registered, published according to the procedure of urgency and inserted in the *Official Gazette* in English and French.

Yaounde, 19 December 1990.

Paul Biya  
President of the Republic

Law No. 90-48 of 19 December 1990

to amend Ordinance No. 72/5 of 26 August 1972 relating to the jurisdiction of the military tribunal.

The National Assembly has deliberated and adopted,

The President of the Republic hereby enacts the law set out below :

Section 1. — The provisions of Articles 5, 10, 29, 31, and 33 of Ordinance No. 72/5 of 26 August 1972 relating to the jurisdiction of the military tribunal are hereby amended and supplemented as follows :

Article 5 (new) : The military tribunal shall have exclusive jurisdiction to try the following types of cases involving persons of at least 18 years of age :

- purely military offences provided for in the Code of Military Justice ;
- offences of all kinds committed by servicemen with or without civilian co-offenders or accomplices, whether within a military establishment or while on duty ;
- offences of all kinds involving a serviceman or a person ranking as such, committed in a region under a state of emergency or siege ;
- any offences related to the above.

Article 10 (new) : With regard to the offences referred to under Article 5 above :

- Judicial Police Officers may not carry out domiciliary visits, searches and distrains by night without a written order from the Minister of Defence ;
- they may detain suspects up to 48 hours after their arrest. This period may be extended three times upon the written authorization of the Government Commissioner ;
- Judicial Police Officers shall be bound to send a list of detainees every day to the Minister of Defence and a copy thereof to the Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals ;
- any breach of the foregoing may entail penal or disciplinary sanctions against the Judicial Police Officers concerned and to the payment of damages.

Article 29 (new) : The judgments of the military tribunal shall be subject to appeal before the Yaounde Court of Appeal or, where there are several military tribunals, before any other Court of Appeal with jurisdiction.

Article 31 (new) : Felonies and misdemeanours against State security shall fall under the jurisdiction of the State Security Court the organization of which shall be laid down in a separate instrument.

Article 33 (new) (1) : Cases of offences against State security pending before military tribunals on the date of enactment of this law shall be transferred to the State Security Court provided for in Article 31 (new) above.



## APPENDIX III: Law N°90-053 OF 19 December 1990 On Freedom of Association

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**LIBERTE D'ASSOCIATION**  
**LOI N° 90/053 DU 19 DECEMBRE 1990**

**TITRE I**  
**DISPOSITIONS GENERALES**

**Article 1<sup>er</sup>** La liberté d'association proclamée par le préambule de la Constitution est régie par les dispositions de la présente loi.

(2) Elle est la faculté de créer une association, d'y adhérer ou de ne pas y adhérer.

(3) Elle est reconnue à toute personne physique ou morale sur l'ensemble du territoire national.

**Art.2.-** L'association est la convention par laquelle des personnes mettent en commun leurs connaissances ou leurs activités dans un but autre que de partager des bénéfices.

**Art..3-** Tout membre d'une association peut s'en retirer à tout moment après paiement des cotisations échues de l'année en cours.

**Art.4-** Les associations fondées sur une cause ou en vue d'un objet contraires à la Constitution, aux lois et aux bonnes mœurs, ainsi que celles qui auraient pour but de porter atteinte notamment à la sécurité, à l'intégrité territoriale, à l'unité nationale, à l'intégration nationale et à la forme républicaine de l'Etat sont nulles et de nul effet.

**Art..5-** (1) Les associations obéissent à deux régimes :

- .- le régime de la déclaration ;
- 0.- le régime de l'autorisation.

(2) Relèvent du régime de l'autorisation, les associations étrangères et les associations religieuses.

(3) toutes les autres formes d'associations sont soumises au régime de la déclaration. Toutefois, les régimes prévus à l'alinéa premier ci-dessus ne s'applique pas aux associations de fait d'intérêt économique ou socio culturel.

(4) les parties politiques et les syndicats sont régis par des textes particuliers.

**TITRE II**  
**DU REGIME DES ASSOCIATIONS DECLAREES**

**CHAPITRE I**  
**DE LA CREATION**

**Art. 6 :** sous réserve des cas de nullité prévus à l'article 4 ci-dessus, les

associations se créent librement. Toutefois, elles n'acquièrent de personnalités juridiques que si elles ont fait l'objet d'une déclaration accompagnée de deux exemplaires de leur statut.

**Art. 7 :** (1)- La déclaration prévue à l'article précédent est faite par les fondateurs de l'association à la préfecture du département où celle-ci a son siège. Un récépissé leur est délivré dès que le dossier est complet si l'association n'est pas frappée de nullité.

(2)- La déclaration indique le titre, l'objet, le siège de l'association ainsi que les noms, professions et domiciles de ceux qui, à un titre quelconque, sont chargés de son administration ou de sa direction.

Toute modification ou changement dans ces éléments doit être porté dans les deux mois à la connaissance du préfet.

(3)- Le silence du préfet gardé pendant deux mois après le dépôt du dossier de déclaration vaut acceptation et emporte acquisition de la personnalité juridique.

**Art. 8.-** Toute personne a le droit de prendre connaissance sur place à la préfecture, des déclarations et statuts ainsi que des changements intervenus dans l'administration d'une association. Elle peut s'en faire délivrer, à ses frais, copies et extraits.

## CHAPITRE II DU FONCTIONNEMENT

**Art. 9-** Les associations s'administrent librement dans le respect de leurs statuts et de la législation en vigueur.

**Art. 10-** (1) Toute association déclarée dans les conditions prévues par la présente loi peut librement :

- ester en justice ;
- gérer et disposer des sommes provenant des cotisations ;
- acquérir à titre onéreux et posséder :

- a) le local destiné à son administration et aux réunions de ses membres ;
- b) les immeubles nécessaires à l'accomplissement du but qu'elle poursuit.

2) Les valeurs mobilières de toute association doivent être placées en titres nominatifs.

**Art. 11.-** Hormis les associations reconnues d'utilité publique, aucune association déclarée ne peut recevoir ni subventions des personnes publiques, ni dons et legs des personnes privées.

## CHAPITRE III DE LA DISSOLUTION

**Art. 12.-** Les associations peuvent être dissoutes :

- par la volonté de leurs membres conformément aux statuts,
- par décision judiciaire à la diligence du ministère Public ou à la requête de tout intéressé en cas de nullité prévue à l'article 4 ci-dessus. Le jugement ordonnant la fermeture des locaux et/ou l'interdiction de toute réunion des membres de

l'association est exécutoire nonobstant toute voie de recours.

**Art.13.**-(1)- Le ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale peut, sur proposition motivée du préfet, suspendre par arrêté, pour un délai maximum de trois (3) mois, l'activité de toute association pour troubles à l'ordre public.

(2)- Le ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale peut également, par arrêté, dissoudre toute association qui s'écarte de son objet et dont les activités porte gravement atteinte à l'ordre public et à la sécurité de l'Etat.

(3)-Par dérogation à l'article 12 de l'ordonnance n°72/6 du 26 août 1972 fixant l'organisation de la Cour suprême, les actes prévus aux alinéas 1 et 2 ci-dessus sont susceptible de recours, sur simple requête, devant le président de la juridiction administrative.

Ce recours doit intervenir dans un délai de (10) jours à compter de la date notification à personne ou à domicile.

Le présent statue par ordonnance dans un délai de dix (10) jours.

(4)-L'exercice des voies de recours n'a pas d'effet suspensif.

**Art. 14** -La dissolution d'une association ne fait pas obstacle aux poursuites judiciaires qui peuvent éventuellement être engagées contre les responsables de cette association.

### TITRE III DU REGIME DES ASSOCIATIONS AUTORISEES

#### CHAPITRE IV DES ASSIATIONS ETRANGERES

**Art. 15.**-Sont réputés associations étrangères, quelle que soit la forme sous laquelle ils peuvent se présenter, les groupements possédant les caractéristiques d'une association, qui ont leur siège à l'étranger ou qui, ayant leur siège au Cameroun, sont dirigés en fait par des étrangers ou dont plus de la moitié des membres sont des étrangers.

(2) Les valeurs mobilières de toute association doivent être placées en titres nominatifs.

**Art.16-** (1) Les associations étrangères ne peuvent exercer aucune activité sur le territoire sans autorisation préalable du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale après avis conforme du ministre chargé des Relations extérieures.

(2) La demande d'autorisation d'exercer qui est introduite au ministère chargé des Relations extérieures par les fondateurs ou les mandataires d'une association étrangère doit spécifier les activités à mener, les lieux d'implication au Cameroun, les noms, profession et domicile de ceux qui, à un titre quelconque, sont chargés de la direction de ces activités.

(3) Les associations étrangères ne peuvent avoir des établissements au



Cameroun qu'en vertu d'une autorisation distincte pour chacun de ces établissements.

La demande d'autorisation pour tout nouvel établissement est adressée au ministre chargé des Relations extérieures qui, après avis, la transmet au ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale.

**Art. 17-** (1) L'autorisation peut être accordée à titre temporaire ou soumise à un renouvellement périodique.

(2) Elle peut être subordonnée à certaines conditions

(3) Elle peut être retirée à tout moment.

(4) Les associations étrangères auxquelles l'autorisation est refusée ou retirée doivent cesser immédiatement leurs activités et procéder à la liquidation de leurs biens dans le délai de trois (3) mois à compter de la date de notification de décision.

(5) En aucun cas, le retrait d'une autorisation ne peut donner lieu à dommages intérêts.

**Art.18-** Les préfets peuvent, à tout moment, inviter les dirigeants de tout groupement ou de tout établissement fonctionnant dans leur département à fournir par écrit, dans le délai de quinze jours, tous renseignements de nature à déterminer le siège auquel ils se rattachent, leur objet, la nationalité de leurs membres, de leurs administrateurs ou de leurs dirigeants effectifs.

**Art. 19-** Les associations étrangères, quelle que soit la forme sous laquelle elles se présentent, qui ne demandent pas l'autorisation dans les conditions fixées ci-dessus, sont nulles de plein droit.

**Art. 20.-**(1) sont punis d'un emprisonnement de quinze jours à six mois et d'une amende de 100.000 à 1.000.000 de F ou de l'une de ces deux peines seulement ceux qui, à un titre quelconque, assument ou continuent d'assumer l'administration d'associations étrangères ou d'établissements fonctionnant sans autorisation.

(2) Sont punis d'un emprisonnement de dix jours à trois mois et d'une amende de 50.000 à 500.000 F ou de l'une de ces deux peines seulement les autres personnes qui participent au fonctionnement de ces associations ou de leurs établissements.

(3) Les peines de l'alinéa 2 ci-dessus sont applicables aux dirigeants, administrateurs et participants à l'activité d'associations ou d'établissements qui fonctionnent sans observer les conditions imposées par l'arrêté d'autorisation au-delà de la durée fixée par ce dernier.

**Art. 21-** Les associations étrangères peuvent être reconnues d'utilité publique.

## CHAPITRE V



### DES ASSOCIATIONS RELIGIEUSES

**Art. 22** :-Est considérée comme association religieuse :

- tout groupement de personnes physique ou morales ayant pour vocation de rendre hommage à une divinité :
- tout groupement de personnes vivant en communauté conformément à une doctrine religieuse.

**Art. 23** :- Toute association religieuse doit être autorisée. Il en est de même de tout établissement congréganiste.

**Art. 24** :- L'autorisation d'une association religieuse ou d'un établissement congréganiste est prononcée par décret du président de la République, après avis motivé du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale.

**Art. 25** :-(1) Les associations religieuses ne peuvent recevoir de subventions publiques ou de dons et legs immobiliers.  
(2) Toutefois, elles peuvent recevoir les dons et legs immobiliers nécessaires à l'exercice de leurs activités.

**Art. 26** :- Les associations religieuses tiennent un état de leurs recettes et dépenses et dressent chaque année, le compte financier de l'année écoulée et l'état d'inventaire de leurs biens meubles et immeubles.

**Art. 27** :-Les responsables des associations religieuses sont tenus de présenter sur réquisition du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale ou de son délégué, les comptes et états visés à l'article précédent ainsi que les listes complètes de leurs membres dirigeants.

**Art. 28** :- (1) Sont nuls tous actes de donations entre vifs ou testamentaires, à titre onéreux ou gratuit, accomplis soit directement, soit par personne interposée ou par toute voie indirecte ayant pour objet de permettre aux associations religieuses légalement ou illégalement fondées de se soustraire aux obligations de l'article 27 ci-dessus.

(2) Cette nullité sera constatée soit à la diligence du ministère public sur dénonciation du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale ou de son délégué, soit à la requête de tout intéressé.

**Art. 29** :-Sont punis des peines prévues aux articles 314 et 129 du Code pénal les représentants ou directeurs d'une association religieuse qui ont fait des fausses communications ou refusé d'obtempérer aux réquisitions du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale ou de son délégué dans le cadre des dispositions de l'article 27 ci-dessus.

**Art. 30** :-Toute association religieuse peut être suspendue par arrêté du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale pour troubles à l'ordre public. Code suspension obéit aux dispositions de l'article 13 ci-dessus.

**Art. 31** :-Toute association religieuse dûment autorisée dont l'objet initial est par la suite dévié peut être dissoute après préavis de deux mois resté sans effet par décret du président de la République.

**TITRE IV**  
**DISPOSITIONS DIVERSES TRANSITOIRES ET FINALES**

**Art. 32** :- (1) Toute association dont la contribution effective est déterminante dans la réalisation des objectifs prioritaires du gouvernement peut, sur demande, être reconnue d'utilité publique par décret du Président de la République, après avis motivé du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale.

(2) Elle peut dans ces conditions :

-accomplir tous les actes de la vie civile non interdits par ses statuts, sans pouvoir posséder ou acquérir d'autres immeubles que ceux nécessaires au but qu'elle poursuit ;

-recevoir des dons et legs de toute nature sous réserve de l'autorisation du ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale pour les dons et les legs immobiliers ;

-recevoir des subventions de l'Etat et des collectivités décentralisées ; dans ce cas, l'Etat doit s'assurer de la bonne utilisation de ces subventions.

**Art. 33** :-(1) Sont punis d'une amende de 100.000 à 1000.000 de F, d'un emprisonnement de trois mois à un an, ou de l'une de ces deux peines seulement, les fondateurs ou administrateurs de l'association qui serait maintenue ou reconstituée illégalement après jugement ou décision de dissolution.

(2) Lorsque la décision de dissolution a été motivée par des manifestations armées, une atteinte à la sûreté intérieure ou extérieure de l'Etat, le maximum des peines prévues à l'alinéa précédent est doublé.

(3) Sont punies des mêmes peines, les personnes qui ont favorisé la réunion des membres de l'association dissoute en leur conservant l'usage d'un local dont elles disposent.

**Art. 34** :-Les associations qui justifient de la possession d'actes de déclaration, de reconnaissance ou d'autorisation délivrés conformément à la législation en vigueur lors de la présente loi sont tenues d'en faire la preuve dans le délai de douze mois par la production d'une copie au ministre chargé de l'Administration territoriale.

**Art. 35** :-La loi n°67/LF/19 du 12 juin 1967 sur la liberté d'association est abrogée et remplacée par les dispositions de la présente loi.

**Art. 36** :-La présente loi sera enregistrée, publiée selon la procédure d'urgence, puis insérée au Journal officiel en français et en anglais.

Yaoundé, le 19 décembre 1990

Le Président de la République  
(é) Paul BIYA

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## APPENDIX IV: The resignation of Hans Guet from the UPC to join the UC Party

# L'UN DES ANCIENS RESPONSABLES DE L'U.P.C. EN FRANCE DEMISSIONNE POUR ADHERER A L'U.C.

Vous trouverez  
en page 2 :

- LE CARNET DE  
« LA PRESSE »
- LES NOUVELLES  
ADMINISTRATI-  
VES.
- LA VIE SYNDI-  
CALE.

L'un des anciens responsables de l'U.P.C. en France, puisqu'il en fut vice-président de 1956 à 1961, M. Guet Hans vient de démissionner de ce parti pour adhérer à l'U.C. Vous l'avez vu après la déclaration qu'il a faite à cette occasion.

« Fidèle à la ligne de conduite que je me suis tracée depuis que nous ne sommes libérés de nos administrateurs français j'ai tenu à informer le bureau directeur l'U.P.C. et le public qu'après l'accession de notre pays à l'indépendance et à la réunification, j'ai l'intention d'adhérer au grand parti unifié, rénovation nationale et dont le programme est l'œuvre de tous, pas de toutes les parties, mais du grand parti possible de tous les citoyens.

« Nous sommes petit pays. Aujourd'hui, les objectifs nationaux sont atteints grâce à la lutte menée par différents partis. L'indépendance est ac-

quis. La réunification que les uns désiraient voir s'accomplir par étapes et d'autres dans les meilleurs délais est partiellement réalisée. Il ne sert donc plus rien d'éparpiller les efforts par des actions disséminées mais de nous atteler, tous unis à l'édification réelle de la nation, tant dans les domaines économiques et sociaux qu'administratifs, œuvre qui exige de la patience, en raison de la complexité et qui constitue sans doute l'étape la plus difficile à accomplir.

« En conséquence, je démissionne de l'U.P.C. et sollicite mon adhésion dans l'Union Camerounaise ; ceci dit je lance un vibrant appel à ceux, au Cameroun et à l'extérieur, qui jusqu'à ce jour, n'ont fait confiance et désirent apporter leur contribution à la construction de notre commune patrie, en leur demandant de me suivre dans l'Union et la Fraternité autour de son Excellence Ahmadou Ahidjo, président de la République fédérale et président du parti d'Union Camerounaise ».

GOUET Hans  
étudiant à la Faculté de  
Droit et Sciences Economiques  
de Paris à Douala

**ORAL "RECAGÉ" ?**

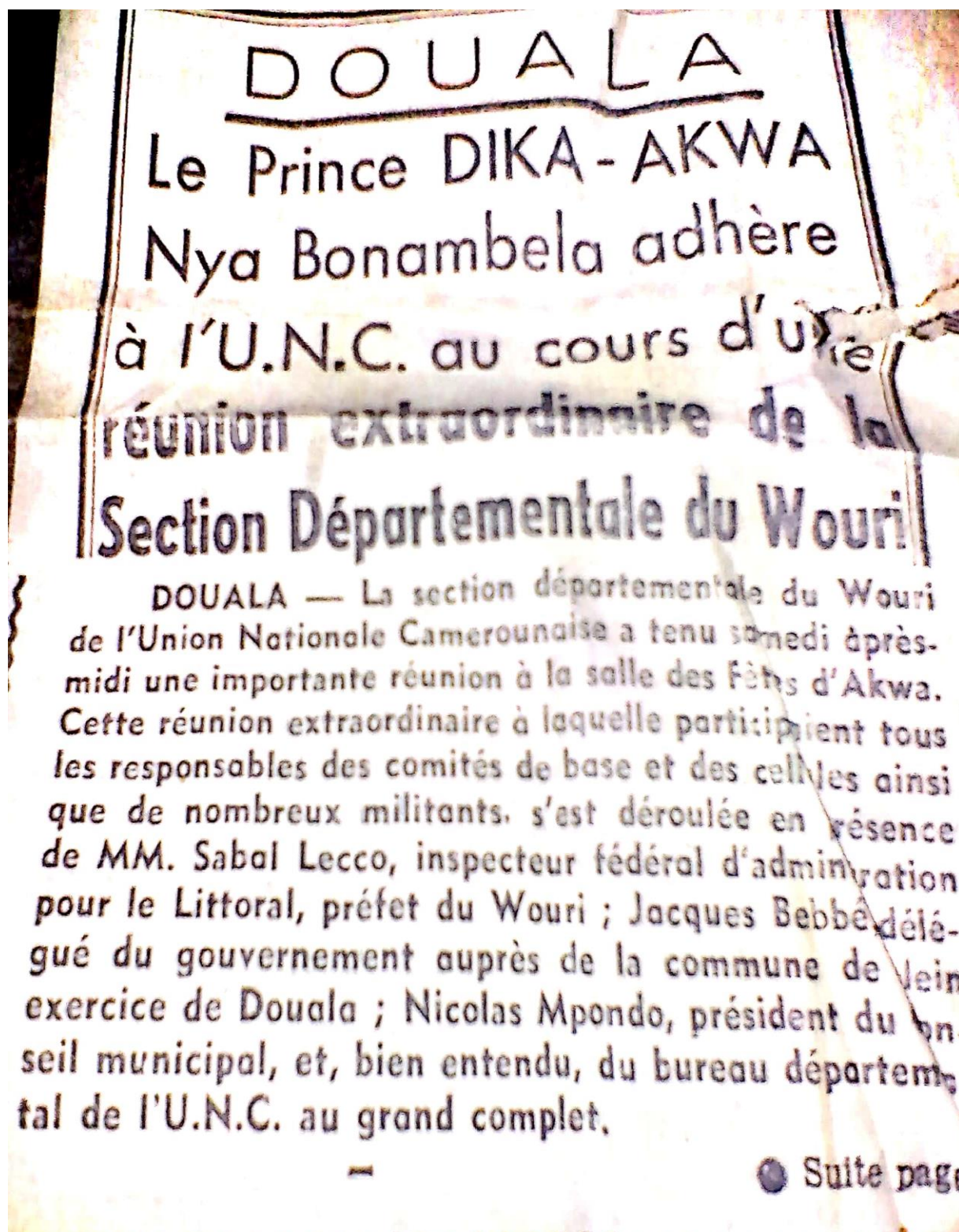
**2 BIÈRES**



Source: NAY. La Presse du Cameroun, N°3636, jeudi 7 juin, 1962.



## APPENDIX V : Dika Akwa abandons dissidence to adhere to the one part CNU



Source: NAY, La Presse du Cameroon 10/11/1968.







## APPENDIX VII: RASPAC abandons its ideology to Adheres to the UC Party

# LE RASSEMBLEMENT DES PAYSANS CAMEROUNAIS (RASPAC) ADHERE AUSSI A L'U. C.

Hier, dans notre édition, nous avons diffusé l'adhésion de l'Association « Comité » de Douhaing au sein de nos diffusions de l'Assemblée des Paysans Camerounais (RASPAC) qui nous est parvenue dans une motion.

Le Rassemblement des Paysans Camerounais (RASPAC) nous a écrit, en congrès extraordinaire, le 24 avril 1962, au village de Mémomé, district de Ngomendzap.

Considérant que ses statuts lui donnent le droit de s'affilier à un parti politique de son choix, en ce qui concerne le droit de justice, dont le legs de conduite inspire à la confiance.

Considérant que les objectifs majeurs de tous les partis politiques du Cameroun ont déjà été atteints et moins de deux ans, grâce au dynamisme, à la persévérance, à la sagesse et au désintéressement de notre chef d'Etat.

Considérant que la diversité des partis politiques dans un Etat aussi jeune que le nôtre freine l'évolution rapide des masses et ne peut que nuire à la construction nationale.

Considérant que la démagogie de certains leaders politiques du département du Nvong-et-Sanaga a taillé l'emporter sur la vérité, cette dernière étant souvent difficile à croire et à être admise de bonne heure.

Considérant qu'après et malgré tout, le Nvong-et-Sanaga a

été par décision le faux du vrai, étant donné que la vérité triomphera toujours du mensonge.

Considérant que dans son message à la nation camerounaise du 27 décembre 1961, S.E. Ahmadou Ahidjo, président de la République Fédérale du Cameroun, déclaré que « Si 1960 a été l'année de l'indépendance, 1961, celle de l'unification, 1962 devra être l'année de l'unité nationale ».

Considérant la haute portée de ces paroles, le RASPAC ne peut demeurer sourd à cet appel.

Considérant enfin que l'union fait la force.

Après avoir examiné et étudié les statuts et le règlement intérieur de l'Union Camerounaise et acquis le vote unanime des congressistes en approuvant l'adhésion du RASPAC à l'U.C. ;

Declare le RASPAC dissous et affilié à l'U.C., les sections du RASPAC devenant ipso facto les comités de base de l'U.C. ;

Prononce la démission collective des dirigeants des sections du RASPAC qui restent cependant en place jusqu'au vote des nouveaux membres des comités de base de l'Union Camerounaise.

Charge l'ancien comité directeur du RASPAC de l'implantation des comités de base de l'U.C. dans le rayon de notre district de la propagande de la doctrine de l'U.C. et enfin de la liaison de ces comités avec ceux déjà installés, d'une part, et la sec-

tion départementale, d'autre part. L'ancien comité directeur du RASPAC dont le nom devient « Comité de liaison », reste en place jusqu'au renouvellement de la sous-section de Ngomendzap.

Enregistre avec satisfaction les efforts déployés par le gouvernement en vue de forger l'union sincère et véritable de tous Camerounais.

Remercie les autorités locales, en particulier MM. le sous-préfet de Mhalmala et le chef de district de Ngomendzap, du concours apporté par celles-ci à la réussite de notre congrès.

Motion votée à l'unanimité moins une voix.

Le Président :

**Gaston Ahanda Ndong**

Le secrétaire :

**Etienne-Roger Ahanda Ayissi**

## CONTACTS PRIVES DE LA MISSION AMERICAINE

La mission économique américaine qui séjourne à Douala indépendamment du programme que nous avons publié, recevra les hommes d'affaires désireux de prendre contact avec elle en l'hôtel de la Chambre de Commerce de Douala, le vendredi 25 mai de 9 h. à 12 h. et de 18 h. à 19 h. ainsi que le samedi 26 de 9 h. à 11 h.



# APPENDIX VIII: H. Effa & G. Atangana explain their reasons for defecting the DC Party of Andre Marie Mbida

## LA POPULATION DU MUNGU ET LES GROUPES D'AUTO-DÉFENSE ABATTENT QUINZE HORS-LA-LOI

### et s'emparent de 17 armes à feu

Il y a quelques jours, une bande armée a fait irruption dans le village de Nkong, dans le département de Nkam, au Cameroun. Les habitants ont été obligés de fuir. Les auteurs de ces faits sont des membres de groupes d'auto-défense qui ont abattu quinze hors-la-loi et s'emparés de dix-sept armes à feu.

Les auteurs de ces faits sont des membres de groupes d'auto-défense qui ont abattu quinze hors-la-loi et s'emparés de dix-sept armes à feu.

## LE GÉNÉRAL DE GAULLE SERA PEUT-ÊTRE INVITÉ À UNE CONFÉRENCE AVEC LES CHEFS D'ÉTAT DE L'U.A.M. M. Senghor en a fait la suggestion

### L'EX-GENERAL JOUHAUD ARRÊTÉ

#### ALGER: 35 MORTS 125 BLESSÉS

Après le rappel de l'ambassadeur de France, en U.R.S.S.

Le général de Gaulle sera peut-être invité à une conférence avec les chefs d'état de l'U.A.M. M. Senghor en a fait la suggestion.

### LE FINANCEMENT DU TRANSCAMÉROUNAIS

FRANCE	200
ÉTATS-UNIS	100
ITALIE	100
ALLEMAGNE	100
RUSSIE	100
CHINA	100
INDONÉSIE	100
VIÊT-NAM	100
THAÏLANDE	100
PHILIPPINES	100
BRÉSIL	100
ARGENTINE	100
ESPAGNE	100
PORTUGAL	100
GRÈCE	100
ROYAUME-UNI	100
IRLANDE	100
ROYAUME-BELGE	100
PAÏS-BAS	100
LUXEMBOURG	100
ALLEMAGNE DE L'EST	100
CHINA PEUPLE	100
VIÊT-NAM DU NORD	100
THAÏLANDE	100
PHILIPPINES	100
BRÉSIL	100
ARGENTINE	100
ESPAGNE	100
PORTUGAL	100
GRÈCE	100
ROYAUME-UNI	100
IRLANDE	100
ROYAUME-BELGE	100
PAÏS-BAS	100
LUXEMBOURG	100
ALLEMAGNE DE L'EST	100
CHINA PEUPLE	100
VIÊT-NAM DU NORD	100

# LA PRESSE DU CAMEROUN

QUOTIDIEN D'INFORMATION ILLUSTRÉ  
 BP. 584 - PLACE DU GOUVERNEMENT DOUALA TELEPHONE : 42-84  
 79 35 année MARDI 27 MARS 1962 PRIX DU NUMERO 15 FRANCS

## POURQUOI AVONS-NOUS ADHÉRÉ AU PARTI D'UNION CAMÉROUNAISE ?

par H. EFFA et G. ATANGANA Représentants du Nyong et Sanaga à l'Alcamor



Le 17 mars 1962, nous avons adhéré au Parti d'Union Camérounaise (P.U.C.) à l'Alcamor. Cette décision a été prise à l'unanimité par les membres du Nyong et Sanaga.

Notre adhésion est le résultat d'une réflexion approfondie sur la situation politique du Cameroun. Nous sommes convaincus que le P.U.C. est le seul parti capable de mener à bien la lutte pour l'indépendance et la réunification du pays.

## LE TIERS MONDE FACE AUX NECESSITES DE SON DEVELOPPEMENT

par Georges LARCHÉ

I. — LA RECHERCHE DE SOLUTIONS

Dans le tiers monde, les besoins sont énormes. Il faut trouver des solutions pour répondre à ces besoins.

## LE PRÉSIDENT DU TOGO M. SYLVANUS OLYMPIO AUX U.S.A.



Le Président du Togo M. Sylvanus Olympio est en visite officielle aux États-Unis. Il a rencontré le Président Kennedy.

## Les ministres de l'Education des pays africains s'élèveront à l'UNESCO jusqu'au 30 Mars

Des ministres de l'Éducation des pays africains participent à l'Assemblée de l'UNESCO à Paris jusqu'au 30 mars.



Appendix IX: Diedo Traditional Council calls on all its Subjects to join the UC Party

# Le Grand Conseil coutumier de Deido invite tous ses ressortissants à adhérer à l'U. C.

Réunis en Grand Conseil Coutumier ce samedi 5 mai 1962, à partir de 15 heures, sur convocation et sous la présidence de leur chef supérieur M. Ekwalla Essaka Deido, tous les chefs de quartiers, tous les notables coutumiers, tous les chefs de famille, et une forte délégation de la jeunesse de Deido ont eu :

1) à examiner la situation inhérente au climat d'insécurité créé, ces temps derniers par la naissance, dans notre pays, de plusieurs partis politiques ;

2) à décider de la ligne de conduite à adopter à l'égard de tous ces mouvements politiques.

Après avoir fait le tour d'horizon et analysé objectivement la crise que traverse actuellement notre jeune Etat ;

ATTENDU que les principaux objectifs des revendica-

tions politiques du Cameroun, à savoir l'indépendance et la réunification sont déjà atteints ;

CONSIDERANT que cette situation appelle l'union des cœurs de tous les Camerounais pour combattre le tribalisme qui nous divise encore si profondément ;

CONSIDERANT que cette union des cœurs ne peut se réaliser qu'au sein d'un grand parti national unifié ;

CONSIDERANT qu'il ne sert plus à rien d'éparpiller les efforts par des actions dissimulées, mais qu'il convient que tous les Camerounais s'attachent, tous unis, autour de leur chef d'Etat et de son équipe gouvernementale, à l'édification réelle de la nation camerounaise, tant dans le domaine économique, social que culturel ;

## LE GRAND CONSEIL COUTUMIER DU CANTON DE DEIDO

a) réitére son attachement indéfectible aux institutions démocratiques de la République fédérale du Cameroun ;

b) réaffirme sa confiance totale au jeune et dynamique chef d'Etat, Son Excellence M. le Président Ahmadou Ahidjo et à son gouvernement ;

c) décide, à l'unanimité que ce sont les ressortissants des deux sexes du canton de Deido dignes de ce nom, et d'une manière générale tous les compatriotes qui habitent le territoire, qui doivent adhérer en bloc au seul parti politique d'Union Camerounaise ;

d) invite tous les Deido se trouvant provisoirement, pour quelque raison que ce soit, hors de Douala de s'inscrire, là où ils résident actuellement au même parti qui est, jusqu'ici, le seul mouvement politique national camerounais, au vrai sens du terme ;

e) invite tous les autres cantons et chefferies du département du Wouri en particulier, et de la région administrative du littoral en général à imiter cette prise de position qui est, ou ne peut plus, indispensable pour la prospérité de notre cher pays.

Fait à Deido - Douala ce samedi 5 mai 1962

Tout le Grand Conseil Coutumier :

Signé : Ekwalla Essaka Deido, chef supérieur ; Dihn Dicka David, chef de quartier ; Makoubé Epée Albert, chef de quartier ; Etia Nkongo André, chef de quartier ; Toubé Ngongu Abel, chef de quartier ; Ebbé Nkoungourou Annet, chef de quartier.

## A Nkongsamba 6 FONCTIONNAIRES DU TRÉSOR ET 3 DE LA MAIRIE ONT ÉTÉ ÉCROUÉS

Au cours de ces trois derniers jours, la fréquence de malversation de la trésorerie publique a augmenté de manière alarmante dans le secteur public et privé, a pris beaucoup d'ampleur dans le Mungo, malgré les menaces de sanction, malgré des instructions renouvelées.

C'est ainsi qu'au Trésor de Nkongsamba, six fonctionnaires ont été écroués ; il s'agit de MM. Ndjem Daniel, Olinga Faustin, Hankoué Joseph, Tsamenbenda Justin, Bollé Koum Cyria-

ont été également appréhendés et écroués.

Aux districts de Manjo et Moundou, les nommés Mbanga Edmond, Ekwelle Louis et autres ont été inculpés pour le même motif. Quant au district de Mélongue, il s'y est eu des arrestations de même nature, mais l'enquête est en cours.

Les inculpés ont été déferés au parquet pour faux en écriture publique, usage de faux, détournement de deniers publics et complicités. M. Njambou Raphael, mécanicien à Nkongsamba est poursuivi ainsi que des commer-



## APPENDI X: UPC abandons Anti-imperialism to Endorse and Adhere to the UC Party

**RAPPELANT, DANS UNE SOLENNELLE DÉCLARATION, LES  
POINTS ESSENTIELS DE SA DÉCISION DU 26 AVRIL  
L'U.P.C. ACCEPTE LA CONSTITUTION  
DU PARTI NATIONAL UNIFIÉ**

**LE GÉNÉRAL MAU-MAU  
GÉNÉRAL CHINA »  
EN LIBERTÉ**

Le « général Mau-Mau », chef de l'armée de libération au Kenya, a été relâché par les forces britanniques le 26 avril 1954, et est actuellement en liberté.

Publié par le gouvernement britannique à l'occasion de la démission de l'ancien ministre de la Défense.

Après avoir examiné objectivement et de façon approfondie l'évolution de la situation politique camerounaise ces dernières années, tirant des faits, des informations, des documents particulièrement éloquentes, la conclusion que son opposition, parce que habilement et malhonnêtement exploitée par l'étranger pour la réalisation de ses visées impérialistes, était devenue, bien malgré elle, nuisible à l'intérêt supérieur de la nation, l'U.P.C. prendait publique le 26 avril dernier, la très importante décision :

- de cesser toute opposition à l'action nationale du gouvernement,
- de redoubler de vigilance pour déjouer les plans de ceux qui complotent contre notre souveraineté nationale,
- d'étudier avec le maximum de sérieux, que ce problème re-

vient et quel qu'il en puisse coûter à l'amour-propre de quelques uns, le projet de parti national unifié préconisé par le chef de l'Etat...

Depuis cette prise de position dont la clarté, l'honnêteté, le courage ne sont pas à démontrer, cinquante jours se sont écoulés, tout au long desquels de basses intrigues se sont nouées, des déclarations se sont succédées en cascades, qui tendent, comme celles-là à retarder le plus possible la solution réelle du problème camerounais.

Parmi ces déclarations, les unes empreintes d'opportunisme politique, trahissent des esprits à tel point aveuglés par un égoïsme éhonté, qu'il leur est désormais impossible de se hisser à la hauteur du vrai problème politique camerounais de l'heure et d'envisager la solution qui s'impose.

Certaines autres des déclarations enregistrées durant ces cin-

quante jours, marquent un raidissement qui tend désespérément à ramener la situation évolutive du Cameroun à son point de départ par crainte d'aborder le problème de face et d'être obligé de le résoudre.

Par ailleurs, il s'est tissé un vaste réseau d'intrigues agissant en synergie : elles visent les unes à créer et à envenimer un climat de méfiance morbide entre les Camerounais ; les autres visent soit à provoquer du côté du gouvernement un raidissement qui, espère-t-on, doit fatalement rejeter l'U.P.C. dans l'opposition ; soit à créer de nouveau un climat de confusion particulièrement dans l'U.P.C. où l'on tente de ressusciter une certaine opposition en s'adressant à des personnalités dont la félonie n'est que trop connue, et qui courant éternellement après leur gloire personnelle, leur profit individuel, sont prêts à tout sacrifier pour atteindre ces bas objectifs.

(Suite page 4)

**DE L'INFORMATION  
CONTRE SALAN**

**LE WEEK-END  
SPORTIF**

**DERNIÈRE**



## APPENDIX XI: Ateba Otoa Resigns from the DC to later cross to the UC of Ahidjo

# Démission au sein du parti des démocrates camerounais

Ancien secrétaire administratif du parti des Démocrates camerounais, M. Etaba Otoa Didier fait connaître à toute la population et à tous ses anciens camarades du parti que, pour compter de ce jour, il se désolidarise de la politique des Démocrates camerounais et se retire du parti.

Il reproche à ce parti son esprit de tribalisme et de démagogie, esprit qui favorise la haine, la division, l'incompréhension et un fanatisme aveugle et stérile, esprit qu'entretiennent soigneusement les dirigeants dudit parti, afin de satisfaire leur ambition personnelle, égoïste et grossière.

Animé de l'esprit de vérité et soucieux du sens de la justice, de l'intérêt et du bien-être des populations, ne pouvant longtemps cautionner la politique d'un parti dont les seuls buts sont de fausser la mentalité des milliers de paisibles citoyens et de cultiver un culte personnel par la démagogie et le mensonge, il met en garde les mal avertis contre ce parti qui ne sert qu'à retarder et à détruire l'évolution du Cameroun.

Il lance un appel fraternel à tous les jeunes Camerounais et principalement à ceux qui font partie de l'Association dite Anagsama de faire preuve de vigilance, de civisme et de savoir dire non à la démagogie, à la doctrine vide de réalisme du parti des Démocrates camerou-





APPENDIX XIV: The One-Party Finaly takes Form as Mainline Political Parties Dissolve themselves in the new CNU Party in 1966



Scanned with CamScanner

Source: NAY, La Presse Du Cameroon, N°4524, of 14/06/1966



APPENDIX, XV: President Ahidjo Announces a Referandum to Terminate the Federation

N° 6378  
LUNDI  
à  
MAY  
1972  
PRIX :  
10 FRANCS

La Presse  
DU CAMEROUN  
CAMEROON PRESS

du Cameroun  
Tél. 42-55-36  
B.P. 99 - DOUALA

FOOTBALL Deux victoires camerounaises  
Notre onze gagne à Lomé contre le Togo (2-1) tandis que le Léopard écrase l'équipe de Guinée Equatoriale à Douala (5-1)  
VOIR DÉTAILS EN PAGE 5

Dans sa communication samedi à l'Assemblée nationale  
**Le Président Ahidjo a annoncé une décision historique: SUPPRESSION DU SYSTÈME FÉDÉRAL LE CAMEROUN DEVIENT UNE REPUBLIQUE UNIE**

**Le peuple est appelé à se prononcer par référendum le 20 mai prochain**

Le Président Ahidjo a fait samedi dernier à l'Assemblée nationale fédérale réunie en session ordinaire à Yaoundé depuis vendredi. Ce fut l'occasion pour le chef de l'Etat d'annoncer à tout le pays à travers les représentants du peuple, une décision historique: la suppression du système fédéral et l'instauration immédiate d'un Etat unique. Avec le Cameroun qui était jusqu'ici une République fédérale avec deux Etats fédérés, devient la République Unie du Cameroun. Le fédéralisme et le pluralisme à propos le Président Ahidjo seront maintenus et développés au sein de l'Etat unique. Il a ensuite qualifié de « grand jour » la manifestation qui sera tenue le 20 mai prochain à Yaoundé pour célébrer l'anniversaire de la proclamation de l'Etat unique.

Ancien Président du Congo-Brazzaville l'abbé Fulbert YOULOU est mort à Madrid

BRUXELLES (AFP) - L'abbé Fulbert Youlou, ancien président du Congo-Brazzaville, est mort à Madrid.

Dans sa communication à l'Assemblée nationale fédérale, le Président Ahidjo a déclaré que le Cameroun sera un Etat unique à partir du 20 mai 1972. Cette décision historique marque le début de la République Unie du Cameroun. Le Président Ahidjo a souligné que cette décision est le fruit de la volonté du peuple camerounais et qu'elle marque le début d'une nouvelle ère de développement et de progrès pour le pays.

Le Président Ahidjo a également souligné que cette décision est le fruit de la volonté du peuple camerounais et qu'elle marque le début d'une nouvelle ère de développement et de progrès pour le pays. Il a promis de maintenir et de développer le fédéralisme au sein de l'Etat unique.

**LA FUSION DU SYSTÈME FÉDÉRAL**  
Ahidjo annonce le 10 mai, le début de l'Etat à deux visages qui concerne la plupart des services publics, tous services passés à des structures qui restent valables pour les deux régions.

**MONOPRIX**

LES TRAVAUX SONT ... ENFIN FINIS !  
A COMPTER DU 27 AVRIL

Pendant 15 jours, 15 tonnes d'articles à des prix incroyables !!  
ET... N'OUBLIEZ PAS : DES CADEAUX POUR TOUS,

SUITE PAGE 4



APPENDIX XV: Campaign for the 1972 Referendum Takes Steam in Bamenda

N° 6374  
BAMENDE  
LE MARDI  
15 MAI  
1972  
PRIX :  
50 FRANCS

**GRATUIT**

# La Presse DU CAMEROUN

CAMEROON PRESS

Imprimerie Commerciale  
du Cameroun  
B.P. 55-36  
Yaoundé

## LA CAMPAGNE POUR LE REFERENDUM DU 20 MAI SE DERoule DANS L'ENTHOUSIASME POPULAIRE

### 10.000 PERSONNES HIER AU MEETING DE BAMENDA

Plus de dix mille personnes ont répondu à l'appel lancé le 14 mai 1972 par le Comité de l'Union des Démocrates du Cameroun (UDC) pour participer au référendum du 20 mai prochain sur l'avenir de la République Unie du Cameroun. Hier, à Bamenda, une manifestation de grande ampleur a été organisée par le Comité local de l'UDC. Plus de dix mille personnes ont répondu à l'appel lancé par le Comité local de l'UDC. Les participants ont écouté un discours de l'ancien ministre de l'Intérieur, M. Georges Etienne, qui a souligné l'importance de ce référendum pour l'avenir de la République Unie du Cameroun. Le meeting a été présidé par le chef de file de l'UDC, M. Georges Etienne. Les participants ont exprimé leur soutien à la République Unie du Cameroun et leur confiance en l'avenir de ce pays. Le meeting a été très animé et a duré jusqu'à tard dans la nuit. Les participants ont chanté des chansons patriotiques et ont fait des discours. Le meeting a été une grande réussite et a montré l'enthousiasme populaire pour le référendum du 20 mai prochain.



**ATTENTION !**  
Dans « La Presse » de mardi 16 mai  
**Le texte intégral**  
de la constitution de  
la République Unie du Cameroun

**Football** Le tournoi préolympique continue  
**Le Cameroun et le Sénégal**  
se retrouvent demain à Douala  
pour un match décisif  
Voir nos articles en page 5

**Indochine**

PERKIN REA ELEPHANT  
LE SOUTIEN DES  
100 MILLIONS  
DE CHINOIS  
A HANOI  
VOIR EN PAGE 5

**LE MINISTRE DES POSTES ET  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
COMMUNIQUE :**

A compter du SAMEDI 12 MAI 1972

Un nouveau central TELEX INTERNATIONAL sera mis en service à DOUALA.

Le service automatique intégral déjà établi en  
LE GABON  
LE TCHAD  
LA REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE  
REPUBLIQUE POPULAIRE DU CONGO  
sera sans changement de mode opératoire.

Le service automatique sera étendu aux pays dont  
numéro caractéristique figure dans le tableau de  
cette notice relevant le mode opératoire adressée individu-  
ment à tous les abonnés concernés (DOUALA - BI  
- VICTORIA - NKONGSAMBA - BAFOUSSA  
EDEA).

Pour les abonnés TELEX de YAOUNDE - GARO  
ESEKA, le service demeure sans changement. Un  
nouvel avis.

Source : NAY, La Presse Du Cameroon, N°\_6374, of 8/05/1972.







# APPENDIX XVII: Ahidjo defending One-Party Democracy and rejecting Multipartyism infront of the International Press in Paris

## LE CAMEROUN TRIBUNE

GRAND QUOTIDIEN NATIONAL D'INFORMATION  
7<sup>e</sup> ANNÉE N° 626 VENDREDI 23 JUILLET 1976 40 F

**Réunion des économistes le 10 août**  
Complément de 20 F sur les 40 F du journal en session ordinaire le 10 août

# Le Président Ahidjo à la presse internationale

## «NON AU MULTIPARTISME»

### Le chef de l'État est satisfait de sa visite qui a pris fin hier



**Communiqué final**  
**UNE AMITIÉ RENFORCÉE**

« À l'invitation du Président de la République française et de Madame Valéry Giscard d'Estaing le Président de la République du Cameroun S. E. El Hadj Ahmadou Ahidjo se rendait en France avec sa femme et sa fille du 18 au 22 juillet. Ce voyage a permis l'établissement de contacts directs et personnels au plus haut niveau des deux Chefs d'État amical et fructueux pendant lesquels les deux Chefs d'État ont échangé leurs vues sur les relations bilatérales et internationales, la coopération économique et culturelle, le développement économique et social, le rôle de la femme dans le développement économique et social, les problèmes régionaux et internationaux. Le Président Ahidjo a été particulièrement satisfait de sa visite et a exprimé son intérêt et son engagement pour l'amélioration et le développement de la coopération franco-camériounaise. »

**EDITORIAL**  
**D'égal à égal**

C'est un Chef d'État d'un pays libre que le Président de la République uni du Cameroun, S. E. El Hadj Ahmadou Ahidjo, a entré en France le 18 juillet. Ce jour-là, le Président Ahidjo est venu en France avec sa femme et sa fille du 18 au 22 juillet. Ce voyage a permis l'établissement de contacts directs et personnels au plus haut niveau des deux Chefs d'État amical et fructueux pendant lesquels les deux Chefs d'État ont échangé leurs vues sur les relations bilatérales et internationales, la coopération économique et culturelle, le développement économique et social, le rôle de la femme dans le développement économique et social, les problèmes régionaux et internationaux.

Au sein de la conférence de presse de la capitale française de Paris, le Président Ahidjo a été reçu par le Président de la République française, M. Jacques Chirac, et par le Premier ministre, M. Jacques Chirac, et par le Président de la République française, M. Jacques Chirac, et par le Premier ministre, M. Jacques Chirac.

Source: NAY, Cameroon Tribune, N°626 of July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1976



# APPENDIX XVIII: After Ahidjo's Declarations in France the Campaign against Multiparty Politics Intensified within the Territory and was even considered Suicide

**A L'ECOUTE DE LA NATION**

**Grand meeting hier à la permanence nationale**

### Non au suicide, non au multipartisme

Par ROBERT ESSIME

Une telle thèse sera refusée à caractère hautement pédagogique et sera destinée à servir de point de repère à l'ensemble du peuple. Elle sera destinée à servir de point de repère à l'ensemble du peuple. Elle sera destinée à servir de point de repère à l'ensemble du peuple.

Il est évident que le multipartisme est une thèse qui ne peut être acceptée par le peuple. Elle est une thèse qui ne peut être acceptée par le peuple. Elle est une thèse qui ne peut être acceptée par le peuple.

Non au suicide, non au multipartisme. C'est la seule ligne que nous devons suivre. C'est la seule ligne que nous devons suivre. C'est la seule ligne que nous devons suivre.

### N'imitons pas Hannibal

Par F. N. S. S. S.

Le général Hannibal est un héros. Mais il ne faut pas l'imiter. Il ne faut pas l'imiter. Il ne faut pas l'imiter. Il ne faut pas l'imiter.

N'imitons pas Hannibal. N'imitons pas Hannibal. N'imitons pas Hannibal. N'imitons pas Hannibal.

N'imitons pas Hannibal. N'imitons pas Hannibal. N'imitons pas Hannibal. N'imitons pas Hannibal.

## UN COMBAT VICTORIEUX

Par M. S. S. S.

Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux.

Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux.

Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux. Le combat a été victorieux.



L'hymne national, un symbole de la foi patriotique

APPENDIX, IX: Cracks within the CNU Wouri Section as Top Militants Desert and  
Abandon Post of Responsibility

**DOUALA**

**U.N.C. WOURI :**

**Les responsables absents et défaillants  
seront remplacés dans toute la section pilote**

A la demande de la section départementale du Wouri de l'Union nationale camerounaise, notre grand parti national et sur l'autorisation du secrétaire à l'organisation du comité central et cela après consultation du président national, la section du Wouri procède depuis samedi dernier à une tournée à travers quatre des onze sous-sections de la ville de Douala, en vue d'organiser des élections partielles pour le remplacement des responsables absents ou défaillants de ces instances du parti.

En effet, El Hadj Tanko Hassan, le président départemental de l'UNC ici à Douala a présidé le samedi 28 mai à la place de l'école principale de Bali pour le compte de la sous-section canton Bell, aux élections qui

ont permis à M. Njomo Toto Heriman de briguer le secrétariat de ladite sous-section. Du côté des femmes ça été rude. La démocratie et la vigilance de la commission aidant Mme Biyaga gagna, battant ainsi de loin ses deux concurrentes. Chez les jeunes de la JUNC, M. Ongolo a été élu par acclamation après le desistement dans la fierté et l'élégance de ses deux camarades en lice. Cette haute tenue politique des jeunes a fait tirer la foule de joie.

Ces nouveaux élus du parti ont été chaleureusement félicités par les membres de la commission dont MM. Djumo Daniel-Claude du comité central, Ndoumbe Pokossi, secrétaire départemental, Joseph Nguépi, président départemental de la

JUNC ainsi que par le député Isabelle Ebanda, présidente départementale de l'OEI NC.

S'adressant à ces nouveaux responsables du parti, M. Hassan leur a demandé d'être des militants zéles et disciplinés, car a-t-il dit, « sans la discipline, rien de constructif ne peut se faire. Le président départemental n'a pas manqué de leur souligner aussi que s'ils s'avéraient incompetents ou défaillants, il reviendrait « D'ici le début de l'année prochaine » pour procéder à nouveau à des élections car leur a-t-il encore précisé : « Dans notre grand parti de construction nationale il n'y a pas de place pour les dilettantes ».

Emmanuel TCHAWA.



APPENDIX, XX: Cracks within CNU Meme Section as top Militants abandon post



# WEST CAMEROON

## Njumbe deplores laxity among some CNU officials

**TOMBEL.** — The Meme Section President of the CNU, Hon. N.C. Njumbe has vehemently deplored the behaviours of some Party officials who were not performing their Party duties with determination and sacrifice.

Addressing militants at the Tombel Sub-section Seminar here late last April, Hon. Njumbe said — « I know that ability and capability and fitness for function were not taken into account when Party officers were being elected. I was very shocked to find that they were not suited and the implications of which they did not understand. Some people even fought for posts with the hope that movement was coming and as it did not come, they started dragging back their legs. Such militants he added should be replaced constitutionally.

### FINANCE

Speaking about CNU finance in the sub-section, he said, he regarded the membership card of the Party as a document one should be proud to possess and thus provides funds for the CNU besides, to paying contributions, subscriptions and donations when need arises in accordance with Article 50 of the CNU Constitution was very essential, Hon. Njumbe declared. Noting that no organization can function without money, he urged militants to buy membership cards and pay subsequent party dues. « But when the mo-

ney does come, it should not be embroiled », he warned.

### WCNU, YCNU

« The women of Cameroon are given equal opportunity to participate in the social, economic and cultural welfare of the country, through WCNU or YCNU because the Party believes that to train a woman is to train a family.

The youths are given facilities to develop their talents through organized activities because CNU holds its youths in high esteem. That is why it organizes youth education and leadership courses because the youths of today are leaders of tomorrow.

### DISCORD

Emphasising on the goals of unity towards a strong and virile nation, the Meme Divisional CNU Boss warned that CNU would not hesitate to strike its sword of equality against persons who are out to sow seeds of discord, bitterness and disaffection in order to disunite CNU members, no matter their status.

« It is only through unity that we would be able to guide our Independence, sovereignty, freedom and liberty. It is very easy to lose freedom but difficult to regain. It adding that independence which is not backed or re-enforced with unity easily collapses », Hon. Njumbe concluded.

A.N.

## Entrance exam into institute of sports begins July 10

**BUEA.** — The entrance examination into the National Institute of Youth, Sports and Mass Education, Yaounde, shall be held from July 10 to 15, 1972 in the Regional Inspection of Youth, Sports and Mass Education, Buea.

The closing date for receiving application forms is June 14, this year.

According to a recent notice the acting regional inspector of Sports, and Mass Education, Mr. C.R. Njoutcha, the following conditions are set below for prospective candidates wishing to enter the institute:

Candidates must possess one of the following qualifications:

- a) Teachers' Grade 11 certificate;
- b) GCE Ordinary Level with five papers including English Language;
- c) R.S.A. Stage 11 with five papers including English language;
- d) Candidates writing the G.C.E. ordinary level in June, 1972, must show proof of their candidature for this examination. In this case the candidate's success in the examination will depend upon his/her success in the June examination;

Candidates must be Cameroonian;

Candidates must not be less than 16 or more than 24 years of age by the 31st December of the year of entrance examination. Passed an examination of physical and morphological aptitude test;

Candidates must submit to this office a month before the date of examination the following dossier:

An application form with 50 francs Federal fiscal stamp affixed along with precisely the section the applicant has chosen (appendix);

A certified true copy of birth certificate or age declaration of not less than 3 months to the date of examination;

A copy of certificate of non-conviction of less than 3 months;

A certified true copy of national identity card (certificate of nationality);

Medical certificate (appendix 11 and 11 bis) to be filled by a Government medical officer;

A curriculum vitae;

Two passport size photographs bearing the names of the candidate;

Three forty francs self stamped addressed envelope (10" x 6 1/2");

Service Bond (appendix 11) stating that the candidate in case of success will serve for ten years in the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

All the appendix referred to here, are available in all youth sports offices in the etc.

Candidates will be examined in two parts written and practical tests.

(ACAP - B)

## East Cameroon officials praise West Prison system

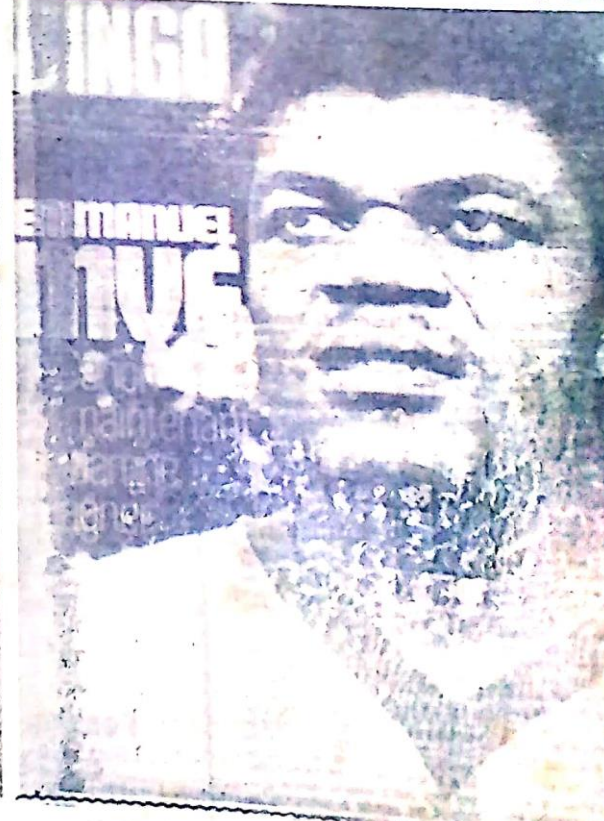
**BUEA.** — Two East Cameroon officials of Judicial Affairs, Mr. Mballa and Madam Jeanette Esombra who visited the West Cameroon Prisons' institutions in the Federated State Capital here recently, expressed their deep appreciation for the running of prison's services in this Federated State and hoped that in due course, the system would be a model for all prisons services in the Federation.

On their arrival in Buea, they were received by the West Cameroon Procureur General, Nyo Wackai. The officials later called on Mr. Ngwa, the Regional Director of Prisons Department who took them to all the Prisons establishment in Buea.

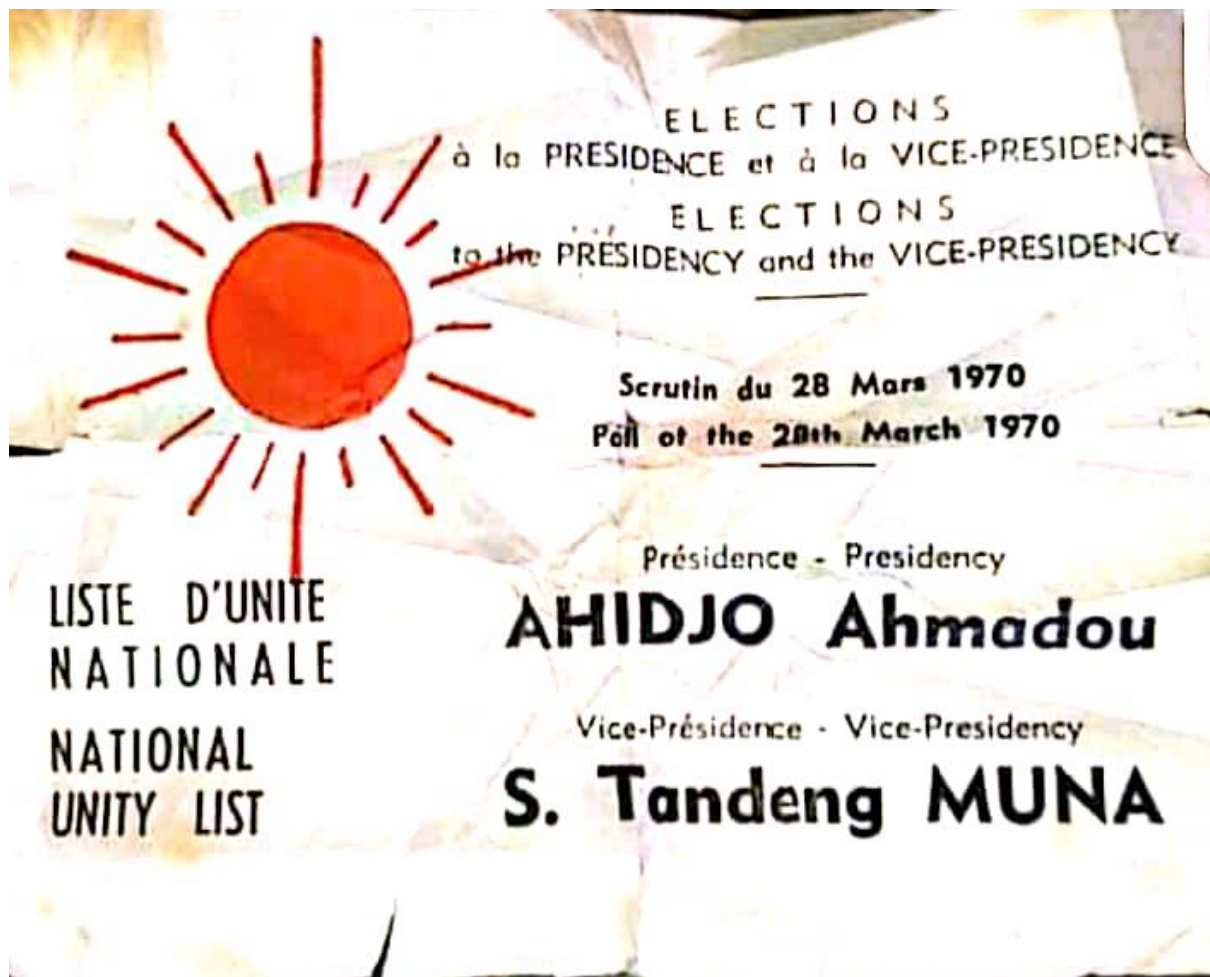
It should be noted that early April a United Nations expert, Mr. Erickson who visited the Prisons Establishments in Buea, with Mr. Fred Eko also expressed satisfaction on the system of Prisons services in the State.

A.N.

## April Bingo is now on sale



**APPENDIX XXI: S.T.Muna as Ahidjo's newfound ally for the concretisation of Unity  
and the Termination of Federalism.**



**Source:** National Archives Yaounde



APPENDIX, XXII: 1961 Plebiscit Electioneering and Outcome

# Cameroons Champion

Motto: (ETERNAL VIGILANCE)

VOL. 2, NO. 7

VICTORIA

WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 15TH, 1961

2d.

## Cameroons Plebiscites-Results so far, North for Nigeria South for Unification

VOTING ended in one day in the South, and in the North voting took two days in the Plebiscites conducted in the Trust Territory of the Cameroons. Cameroonsians Under United Kingdom Trusteeship were voting to ascertain freely the wishes of the people on attaining independence. The two alternatives before the people have been:

1. Do you wish to attain independence by joining the Independent Federation of Nigeria?
2. Do you wish to attain independence by joining the Republic of Cameroon?

In the Northern Cameroons the colour for Nigeria was Black and that for unification Pink, while in the South Green stood for Nigeria and White for the Republic. In the North, there are six Plebiscite Districts and in the South twenty six.

Results received so far show that in the North, more people opt for Nigeria than Unification with the Cameroon Republic while in the South the vote leans heavily for Unification with the Cameroon Republic as against Federation with Nigeria.

As we go into print, the following are the details of results received so far.

PLEBISCITE DISTRICT	NOTES CASE FOR FIRST ALTERNATIVE	NOTE CASE FOR SECOND ALTERNATIVE
1. VICTORIA: S/West	2,452	3,746
2. S/East	1,329	4,370
3. S/West	1,711	4,205
4. S/East	3,291	9,231
5. KUMBA: N/West	6,105	10,827
6. S/West	2,030	8,505
7. MAMFE: North	685	8,275
8. South		
9. East		
10. BAMENDA: North	8,073	18,839
11. East	1,822	17,858
12. Central West	1,230	18,027
13. Central East	136	18,193
14. West	467	16,142
15. South	226	19,426
16. WUM: North	3,644	3,211
17. Central	1,518	13,133
18. East		
19. West		
20. NIKAMBE: North	3,845	5,096
21. East	3,039	4,268
22. Central		
23. TOTAL:	40,151	186,266

Figures so far from the Northern Cameroons are:-	Nigeria	Cameroon Republic
Mubi	23,798	11,132
Gwasa	19,185	2,564
Ghamba	9,304	22,117
Dikwa	24,687	24,203
	81,314	61,066

### "MOUMIE WAS A REBEL" Premier Foncha.

THE Premier of the Southern Cameroons and leader of the K. N. D. P. Mr E. N. Foncha said last week in a Press conference summoned by him that the late "Dr Felix Moumie was a rebel and it was improper to pay him tribute after his death. His presence or absence or that of the organisation he led is not felt."

He then revealed that the One Kameroun party is an offshoot of the outlawed U.P.C. which Moumie led and

has warned K. N. D. P. supporters and lecturers not to associate with the O.K. party.

Mr. Foncha added that the result of the plebiscite whichever way they may take will mean a new chapter in the history of the territory through the days ahead as they try and rebuild.

He confirmed his statement that he "would fear the fibs rather than the Bamilekas" and that on the achievement of unification those who do not favour it should migrate. Mr. Foncha remained uncompromising in a foreign policy for a Federal Kameroun and asked that the discussion be called off.

### PUBLIC NOTICE.

#### The Administration Of The Southern Cameroons After The Plebiscite.



His Honor Mr. J. D. Field, Commissioner of the Cameroons.

THE public are reminded that Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will remain responsible for the administration of the Southern Cameroons after the plebiscite and that this responsibility will continue until the date that the General Assembly of the United Nations, with the agreement of the United Kingdom Government, lays down for the termination of Trusteeship, and the granting of sovereignty.

The responsibilities of Her Majesty's Government as Administering Authority include the maintenance of good government and the preservation of law and order, and these responsibilities will be firmly carried out until Trusteeship ends.

The above Notice is issued by Command of His Honour the Commissioner of the Southern Cameroons.

R. B. SCOTT,  
Secretary to the Commissioner  
Buea,  
15th February, 1961.

### 45 Killed in Ngambe Prison Yard.

IT is reliably learnt that 45 persons were killed and many others seriously injured in Ngambe prison yard in the Cameroon Republic recently, by the French Security Force.

The Security Force entered the prison yard and killed these persons who are believed to be members of a terrorist gang.

This move followed as a result of concurrent raids of villages where French Soldiers are killed and brutally treated by terrorists.

Reports reaching here reveal that several fatal attacks on villages have occurred in the Sangha Maritime Region where the flights of refugees to the Southern Cameroons have increased considerably.

### Lumumba is Dead.

PATRICE Lumumba reported last week to be at large after escaping from detention was found dead and buried in a place 60 miles away from Elizabethville.

Lumumba, 35, rose from a Post Office clerk to be the Prime Minister of the Congo after a general election in which he and Joseph Kasavubu formed a coalition government leading to the independence of the Congo, in June last year. Trouble soon broke out and since then there has been no peace as a result of the ineptitude of U.N. to solve the problem as once and for all.

Two of his cabinet ministers were found dead and buried with him.

**Editor's Note:**  
The Cameroons Champion regrets the death of an African leader. The people of this territory might not have approved of his methods in politics, but his treatment he received before his death suggests something of a plot.

It is such an occurrence that the people of this territory are asking the United Nations to avoid for no reason the death of Mr. Foncha or the Lumumba of the Southern Cameroons.

Scanned with CamScanner

Source: Cameroons Champion of February 15th 1961.

APPENDIX, XXIII: George Mbaraga, the unification question and the KNDP

EDITORIAL

Wave of Hoodiganism.

POLLING has been a very orderly and peaceful one during the elections both in the Northern and Southern territories of the Territory of the Cameroons. No incidents have been reported. This is very commendable.

Mr. Foncha appealed for peace and quiet during the elections, and it is in his own interest that he should see that the Nigerians resident in the Territory do not become trouble-makers. This one side of appeal does not impress those of us who know those who will start trouble, but to their type like a clip of the old book.

Since the results started pouring in there has been a very noticeable wave of provocative acts of hoodiganism. Hoisting of flags, as a badge of honour, and the hoisting of CPNI field secretaries, wearing a national flag, and other acts of hoodiganism against those who have unification make the position any one can see. It would drive them not only to have unification, but more, it would embetter them and could even drive them to desperation.

A greater number of Cameroonians may have voted for unification, but does not make unification a fait accompli. It is not automatically palatable or acceptable to the other Cameroonians who cast their votes against it. Would mockery and acts of hoodiganism against those who have unification make the position any one can see? No! It would drive them not only to have unification, but more, it would embetter them and could even drive them to desperation.

These types of acts are new to the Southern Cameroons. They come fresh from the Cameroon Republic. These are the men Mr. Foncha should have appealed to, those who forced themselves register even against regulations, and not Nigerians who have acted like gentlemen leaving Southern Cameroonians to decide of their future themselves.

The only hope of those who have voted against unification is the assurance that it is the British Government as Administrator which would take care of Law and Order and that the Government until Trusteeship is abrogated by U.N.O. in consequence with Her Majesty's Government.

BUSINESS NEWS

December Timber Exports Yield £7,000 Revenue:

DECEMBER exports of timber from the Southern Cameroons reached a total of about 4,000 tons of which about 1,000 tons were of the best quality. The total value of the exports was £7,000.

Table with 4 columns: Species, Volume, Revenue, Average. Lists various timber species like Okoume, Achebe, etc., with their respective volumes and revenues.

New Timber Agreement Signed.

A new timber agreement has been reached with the British Timber Corporation Limited for a further timber licence. The licence was signed on February 1st, 1961, and grants to the company the exclusive rights to export timber of some types in East of Kameru.

The Company which started operations in the Eastern part of Kameru in 1958 since September 1959 was granted a timber licence for an area of 10,000 acres. It has constructed a road between the old Nazing Authority road between Mboko and Nazing in accordance with terms of the original agreement.

Cameroons Development Corporation. Medical Experiments.

Experiments made by the Medical Division of the Cameroons Development Corporation.

Development could already reduce even eliminate the threat of malaria in the Cameroons.

This disease which is an insidious and widespread, especially in the Cameroons, is caused by the bite of infected Mosquitoes. The first report of malaria in the Cameroons was in 1900. The Medical Division adopted a method of treating the malarial fever by the use of quinine.

The results so far have been very successful and the disease has become almost unknown in what was hitherto a malarial area. This is a good indication that a long term application of this system of treatment, especially if extended to other public health measures yet adopted in the Southern Cameroons.

We Convinced K. N. D. P. for Unification Mbaraga

Mr. George Mbaraga, the National Publicity Secretary of the Kameru National Democratic Party (KNDP) has been in a busy conference called by his party. The KNDP was clearly over-joyed with the One Cameroon as the expression of the idea and generally in the battle came to its own end and conviction of the leaders of the KNDP for Unification.

He said that his party is "prepared to cooperate with the U. N. and the Administering Authority that things go on smoothly" though the question of a plebiscite would have arisen if the Western powers were to insist.

"Arrived with a democratic constitution and the rule of law as a cornerstone, we shall march forward in progress in a Federal Kameru," he said.

Mr. Mbaraga who came to the conference with the books "Social Industry and Foreign Trade" by F. Kasser, 1957, and "Abolition of Taxes and other measures to advance the well-being of the people" being a book by a group of N. S. Kesseler in the Nigerian Journal, May 5, 7, 1960, denied constant allegations of Communist infiltration with his party, adding that his party is not the secret branch of the U.P. in the Southern Cameroons.

For trade and measures in a unified Cameroon, he named East and West Germany, China, Poland, America, and Russia. His party, he said, when at the head of state will be friendly to both the East and West but warned against what he called "the Western practice of witch-hunting the Communists."

World News Briefs And Commentary

THE people of the Southern Cameroons have cast their votes and a surprise and final decision is still to come. Early results show the choice was a heavy defeat for the first alternative. This is the effect of the "indefinite wait" which the party demanding the second alternative adopted. The Cameroon Development Corporation reports from where the results are being reported that the results are disappointing in the main. Mr. Foncha's proposal has been rejected. The people have voted for a tribal feud that is nationalistic, religious, class and concepts of power and prosperity as advocated by the CPNI for centuries. The Cameroon Development Corporation has had no appeal to the voters. Dr. Abidjan in the United Nations some weeks ago had a similar result. He has a great task with the people. He has a great task with the people. He has a great task with the people.

By DON HAIG. The people of the Southern Cameroons have cast their votes and a surprise and final decision is still to come. Early results show the choice was a heavy defeat for the first alternative. This is the effect of the "indefinite wait" which the party demanding the second alternative adopted. The Cameroon Development Corporation reports from where the results are being reported that the results are disappointing in the main. Mr. Foncha's proposal has been rejected. The people have voted for a tribal feud that is nationalistic, religious, class and concepts of power and prosperity as advocated by the CPNI for centuries. The Cameroon Development Corporation has had no appeal to the voters. Dr. Abidjan in the United Nations some weeks ago had a similar result. He has a great task with the people. He has a great task with the people. He has a great task with the people.

THE Church and state are currently engaged in a battle. The Church might refuse Communist teachings, but the attempt of eliminating the Church or making it an allied organ of the government is a battle for the Church. The Church is a battle for the Church. The Church is a battle for the Church. The Church is a battle for the Church.

Soviet Rocket For Venus. THE Soviet Scientific Commission has successfully launched a space rocket bound for the planet Venus. This Soviet success has been described as 'terrific' by those who admit that by this success, Russia is well ahead of America in space science.

Another Clash In Oran. In Oran, Algeria, one man has been killed and others seriously injured when supporters of the FLN (Front National Libérateur) clashed with officials of the Algerian Government who were operating a machine gun.

Source: Cameroons Champion of February 15th 1961.



# APPENDIX, XXIV: CPNC Rejects the Plebiscite Results and asked for the partition of Sothern Cameroon

Thursday 22 December 1960

Pages 3

BUEA Dec. 21

## The Case For Unification : Series III

BY KONTIKI

### Facts and Fiction.

Some die-hards whose minds have been accustomed to thinking like adolescents are unable to differentiate between facts and fiction. If one listened to lectures by supporters of C. P. N. C., one would hear them referring to Cameroonians in the Republic as French Cameroonians, as if the President of the Republic was a Frenchman and his ministers were ruled by French officials.

Some expatriate officials even say "Foncha wants to go French".

The truth is that no matter what these people say, French rule in the Cameroons is over and the people in the Republic of Cameroon are Cameroonians exactly as the people in Nigeria are not now referred to as British Nigerians. There is a Cameroonian Ambassador in Paris.

In the United Nations there is a representative of the Republic of Cameroon. President Ahidjo has a minister of Foreign affairs and a department of defence. Some former French Colonies that opted to remain members of the French community have no such embassies nor departments of foreign affairs and defence.

President Ahidjo has signed some pacts with France for financial assistance and perhaps for a naval base in the port of Bata, but so has the United Kingdom Government signed some pacts with the U.S. Government for military bases in U.K. so also has Nigeria signed military and financial agreements with the U.K.

These pacts and agreements are not irrevocable. They can be amended or revoked by a new government just in the same way as the Republic of Egypt cancelled the Suez Canal Agreement, and the government of Dr. Mousadegh annulled the oil agreements in Abadan in Iran.

The amounts of money which Nigeria has received from Britain and U.S.A. be they loans or Colonial Development funds, far exceed what the French Government has given to the Republic of Cameroon.

### NIGERIANS DOMINATE C. P. N. C.

In one of the articles by a C.P.N.C. supporter, the writer grumbled at "French" Cameroonians were interfering in politics in S. Cameroon. He pretended to be ignorant of the fact that Nigerians dominated the political life of C.P.N.C. Without Nigerian votes in the last general election, there would have been no successful opposition candidates in the whole of Victoria Division. Important political meetings are held in houses owned by Nigerians in Victoria and Kumba. One wonders why a Cameroonian who happens to be born in the Republic should be expected to show less interest in the future of his country than a Nigerian?

There is the usual familiar accusation that Mr. Foncha government has brought graft-ridden domination. In any democ-

cracy as in Nigeria, one would expect the Prime Minister to come from the area with the biggest population. This may be an unpalatable truth which we have to swallow. But is it not true that many Bakweri young men have received more promotions than in the regime of the K. N. C. ? Posts which were previously closed to Cameroonians e.g. chief clerks, District Officers, collectors of customs etc are now filled by Cameroonians?

Talking to a lad who comes from Victoria Division last week, she said that civilised people in the Cameroons come from the coast (Victoria Division) and if there were say, ten vacancies for promotion to the senior service, five should be given to people in Victoria Division and the rest of the divisions in the territory should have the other five posts.

When asked how many police men came from Victoria division, she refused to answer. Population factor and recruitment of candidates who were prepared to start from ranks as third class constable, prison warders, agricultural labourers made no impression on her.

Thank God, not all the inhabitants of Victoria Division think like this grand lady. Sentimentalism about past glories would not help any country. Merit by hard work, whether in the academic or industrial field is what would make a tribe or nation survive.

### ACCUSATIONS OF COMMUNISM A LIE

A sore point should be mentioned in this article. The oft repeated accusation that communists would rule in Republic of Cameroon is the most fantastic lie ever invented by imperialists and C.P.N.C. supporters.

It is said that U.P.C. is a communist organisation. How many of its members know what is communism, and how much is its influence?

No one should condone terrorism. Its effects on trade and progress are calamitous. They have seen terrorist activities in Northern Nigeria and sporadic outbursts of murder in Abakaliki Division and the Leopard Division in Calabar Province in which several lives were lost.

Some of these activities stemmed from discontent of political origin.

Only by careful examination of the facts and the remedying of the ills can one hope to restore order. Dr. Nkrumah was once labelled a communist before he became Prime Minister. Now all communists in his territory are in cells.

There is no doubt that some of the leaders of U.P.C. had communist association, but there were few, just as a few Nigerian students have had communist leanings. Now, what proportion of the population would they influence?

Before communism could thrive, there must be a society in which the masses exist in abject poverty while a few live in great luxury. Such a state of affairs does not exist in the whole of the Cameroons.

### C.P.N.C. Decides on Partitioning of the Southern Cameroons.

By Kamerun Times Staff Report.

The Cameroons people National Convention, the Opposition Party in the Southern Cameroons Parliament, has given notice of its intention to call on the United Nations to partition the territory between the groups of Cameroonians desiring union with the Independent Federation of Nigeria, and those seeking to join the Cameroons Republic.

Indications of this are contained in a resolution taken by the National Executive of the Party which has just concluded a conference in Kumba.

At a Press Conference held in Buea this morning Dr. E. M. I. Endeley, the national president of the party explained that the decision to call for partitioning of the territory has been occasioned by the following reasons:-

1. The failure of the Administrator Authority to comply with the U.N. plebiscite resolution requiring that full attention be given to the K.N.D.P. proposals for the creation of a separate Republic for the people, as has been the case for those desiring to join the Federation of Nigeria.

2. The tribalistic twist, introduced into the plebiscite process by the K.N.D.P. which has endangered the harmony and encouraging the emergence of camps to view the camp between personalities instead of for national survival.

3. The refusal of the CPNC for a post demanded by the party, for the creation of a separate independent Southern Cameroon.

(Editor's Note:

The Kamerun Times wishes to state that a further partition of the Southern Cameroons is not only unjustified but also that under no circumstances would the United Nations approve of such partition.)

### Limbe River Club, Bota, PRESENTS Social Christmas Evening.

Members and their wives are invited to attend a very Grand Social Evening in the Club Hall at Bota, on Monday the 26th of December, 1960, to mark the Annual Celebration of Christmas.

Members will perhaps be served with Free Refreshment and some confectioneries to keep their molars exercised. Members are further informed that the time for the social gathering shall be 12.00 noon and they are therefore advised to be punctual so as to enjoy their membership rights and facilities to the end.

There shall be music produced by an amplifier for members to dance their joys over.

Monsieur W. Pefok  
Gen. Secretary  
L. R. C. Bota.

The Kamerun still will

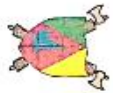
open. Read next issue :  
"Those who do not care a rotten egg about the identity of the Kamerun".

By Joyce Sparkles



## APPENDIX, XXV: List of Legalised Political Parties in Cameroon since 1990

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN  
Paix - Travail - Patrie  
MINISTERE DE L'ADMINISTRATION TERRITORIALE  
ET DE LA DECENTRALISATION



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON  
Peace - Work - Fatherland  
MINISTRY OF TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION  
AND DECENTRALIZATION

**PARTIS(S) POLITIQUES(S) LEGALISE(S) :**

Tous les partis politiques légalisés publiés(s)

N°	Dénomination	Promoteur	Siège social
1	Party for Cameroon's Democratic Change (PCDC) 000000268/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 12 juin 2017	Godlove WILLETT TANYU	DONGA MANTUNG YAOUNDE
2	Debout le Cameroun (DLC) 000000469/D/MINATD/DA/P/SDE/SPP du 14 novembre 2017	TULE TULE Roger	DOUALA
3	Very Important People (VIP) 000279/D/MINAT/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 06 décembre 2018	KEBRAL Alier	BERTOUA
4	Parti National des Patriotes Camerounais (PNPC) 00000332/D/MINATD/DA/P/SDE/SPP du 31 juillet 2017	DJACURO Ruben	YAOUNDE
5	Parti Républicain du Peuple (PRP) 00000358/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 28 décembre 2017	PENDA NDONG Conrad	YAOUNDE
6	Démocratie d'Union Populaire (DUP) 00000522/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08 novembre 2016	M. MAYAGA ANABA Franc Eric	YAOUNDE
7	Alliance Plus Pour l'Emergence du Cameroun (APPE) 0000485/D/MINATD/SG/SDE/SPP du 17 octobre 2016	M. NGOUNOU Jean Paul	YAOUNDE
8	Mouvement de Lumière du Peuple Camerounais (MLPC) Décision n° 000000222/D/MINATD/DA/P/SPP du 02 février 2016	NOULIEU Emmanuel	YAOUNDE
9	Union Camerounaise pour la Démocratie (UCD) Décision n° 000000027/D/MINATD/DA/P/SPP du 02 février 2016	M. DEWA IBRAHIMA	YAOUNDE
10	National Programme for Peace in Cameroon (NPCC) 00000407/D/MINATD/DA/P/SDE/SPP du 28 septembre 2017	NDIFOR AFANWI Frankie	DOUALA
11	United People's Party (U.P.P) 000000563/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP	M:rne GABSA GLRY A.ACHONDUH	BAMENDA
12	Union Nationale Camerounaise pour la Démocratie (UNCD) 000000036/D/MINATD/DA/P/SDE/SPP du 15 février 2018	INGUA BABA	NGAOUNDERÉ
13	Mouvement de Justice et de Démocratie du Cameroun (MJD) 000000047/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 21 février 2018	CMBE ONANA Jean Marie	YAOUNDE
14	Mouvement Démocratique et Unie du Cameroun (MDUC) 000000029/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 24 avril 2018	MASSADA Dieudonné	YAOUNDE
15	Front des Démocrates Camerounais (FDC) 000000115/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 09 juillet 2018	ATANGANA Denis Emilien	YAOUNDE
16	Nouvelle Carte Africaine (NOUCA) 000136/D/MINAT/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 26 juillet 2018	NGANDU BAGANTE Jean Marie	YAOUNDE

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17	Alliance Républicaine (AR) 000278/D/MINAT/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 06 décembre 2018	MABOULA MBOYA Jacques	NDOGBAO par YABASSI
18	Solidarité pour la Libération des Barrières au Cameroun (SLBBC) 00000399/D/MINAT/DI/DAP/SDE/SPP du 25 septembre 2017	BAHEL Louis	SONG MBENGUE (LITTORAL)
19	Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Camerounais (RDPC) Union Nationale 01/09/1966 (changement de dénomination UNC en RDPC 25/03/1985)	Paul BIYA	Yaoundé
20	Démocratie Intégrale du Cameroun (DIC) Décision n°0448/D/MINAT/DU du 12/02/1991	ESSAKA Annette	Douala
21	Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC) Décision n°0049/D/MINAT du 12/02/1991	W. NDE NTUMAZAH	Douala
22	Social Démocratique Front (SDF) Décision n°0065/D/MINAT du 01/03/1991	NI Njoh FRU NDI	Bamenda
23	Parti Républicain du Peuple Camerounais (PRPC) Décision n°0066/D/MINAT du 01/03/1991	ATEBA NGOA André	Yaoundé
24	Union des Forces Démocratiques du Cameroun (UFDC) Décision n°0067/D/MINAT du 01/03/1991	ATEBA NGOA André	Yaoundé
25	Rassemblement pour l'Unité Nationale (RUN) Décision n°0070/D/MINAT du 11/03/1991	SEUNKAM François	Yaoundé
26	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Décision n°0071/D/MINAT du 25/03/1991	OBERNSON Gabriel	Buëa
27	Parti Socialiste Démocrate (PSD) Décision n°0097/D/MINAT du 25/03/1991	NSAME MBONGO Joseph	Douala
28	Union des Républicains du Cameroun (URC) Décision n°0098/D/MINAT du 25/03/1991	KOUMBIN BILITIK Ernest	Douala
29	Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (UNDP) Décision n°0099/D/MINAT du 25/03/1991	BELLO BOUBA MARGARI	Yaoundé
30	Parti des Démocrates Camerounais (PDC) Décision n°0111/D/MINAT du 05/04/1991	MBIDA Louis Tobie	Yaoundé
31	Congrès Panafricain du Cameroun (CPC) Décision n°0112/D/MINAT du 05/04/1991	NDUCTI TCHOKWAGO	Douala
32	Action Social Démocratique du Cameroun (ASDC) Décision n°0113/D/MINAT du 05/04/1991	EL HADJ SADIO SAID SINDAN	Maroua
33	Union Démocratique du Cameroun (UDC) Décision n°0133/D/MINAT du 26/04/1991	ADAMOU NDAM NJOYA	Yaoundé
34	People's Action Party (PAP) Décision n°0134/D/MINAT du 26/04/1991	MUKWELE NGOH Victor	Kumba
35	Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU) Décision n°0135/D/MINAT du 26/04/1991	SOHFONE Daniel	Douala
36	Parti Socialiste Camerounais (PSC) Décision n°0139/D/MINAT du 03/05/1991	NSETH NSETH Appolinaire Guillaume	Douala
37	Cameroun National Democratic Party, précédente dénomination Cameroon National Party(CNP) (CNDP) Décision n°0140/D/MINAT du 03/05/1991.	Président : SANBUN Richard	Bamenda
38	National Democratic Party (Buëa) Décision n°0141/D/MINAT du 03/05/1991. Fusion avec le LDPI(n°7) pour devenir : Liberal Democratic Alliance (LDA)	FOSSUNG Henry	NDP
39	Mouvement Socialiste pour la Nouvelle Démocratie (MSND) Décision n°0142/D/MINAT du 03/05/1991	YONDO MANDENGUE Black	Douala
40	Parti de la Solidarité du Peuple (PSP) Décision n°0153/D/MINAT du 15/05/1991. Fusion avec l'UPC	NGOUO WOUNGLY MASSAGA	Yaoundé
41	Union pour la Patrie et la Solidarité (UPS) Décision n°0164/D/MINAT du 04/06/1991. Précédente dénomination : Union Social Démocrate (USD)	MBELE Jean Pierre	Yaoundé
42	Union Pour la République (UPR) Décision n°0165/D/MINAT du 04/06/1991. Précédente dénomination : Alliance Camerounaise pour le Progrès et l'Emancipation des Dshérités (ACPE)	Président : BOCHIN BOHIN Augustin	Yaoundé
43	Alliance pour la Démocratie et le Développement du Cameroun . (ADD) Décision n°0166/D/MINAT du 04/06/1991. Précédente dénomination : Alliance pour la Démocratie et le Progrès du Cameroun (ADPC)	GARGA HAMAN ADJI	Garoua
44	Parti de l'Alliance Libérale (PAL) Décision n°0175/D/MINAT du 10/06/1991	BEDZIGUI	Yaoundé



45	Parti Progressiste Camerounais (PPC) Décision n°0176/D/MINAT du 10/06/1991	PAHAL Jean	Yaoundé
46	Convention Libérale (CL) Décision n°0177/D/MINAT du 10/06/1991. Fusion avec l'UNDP	NGAYAP Pierre Flambeau	Douala
47	Union des Initiatives pour l'Entente Nationale (UIEN) Décision n°0203/D/MINAT du 10/06/1991	TCHÉMO DJAMEN Blaise	Douala
48	Démocrates Authentiques du Cameroun (DAC) Décision n°0209/D/MINAT du 04/07/1991	AYISSI NTSAMA Jean Baptiste	Yaoundé
49	People's Democratic Front (PDF) Décision n°210/D/MINAT du 08/07/1991. Précédente dénomination : le Parti des Fournis (PF)	BOO Daniel	Yaoundé
50	Cameroun Ideological Party (CIP) Décision n°211/D/MINAT du 08/07/1991	OBE NIssac ENOW	Muyuka
51	Nationalisme des Pacifiques du Cameroun pour le Bien-être et l'Unité Réelle contre les Souffrances Des Humains (NPC/BUSH) Décision n°230/D/MINAT du 30/07/1991	MOUAFI Justin	Bafoussam
52	Parti Vert pour la Démocratie au Cameroun (PVDC) Décision n°231/D/MINAT du 30/07/1991	FOGOUM Justin Aimé	Douala
53	Union pour la République (UPR) Décision n°232/D/MINAT du 30/07/1991. Précédente dénomination : Parti National pour le Progrès (Président décédé).	ANTAR GASSAGAY	Douala
54	Mouvement progressiste (MP) Décision n°247/D/MINAT du 23/08/1991	EKINDI Jean Jacques	Douala
55	Action pour le redressement National (ARN) Décision n°248/D/MINAT du 23/08/1991. Précédente dénomination : Union Nationale du Peuple Camerounais (UNPC)	ALHADJI BAKO N. MAHAMAN	Douala
56	Regroupement des Forces Nationalistes (RFN) Décision n°249/D/MINAT du 23/08/1991	POLOG Richard	Douala
57	Regroupement des Forces Patriotiques (RFP) Décision n°250/D/MINAT du 23/08/1991	TCHANKOU Emmanuel	Yaoundé
58	Cameroun Libéral Congress (CLC) Décision n°251/D/MINAT du 23/08/1991	TAFOH NGUNDOH	Bamenda
59	Mouvement pour la Justice et les Libertés (MJL) Décision n°252/D/MINAT du 23/08/1991	TCHOUNGUI François Xavier	Yaoundé
60	Mouvement Démocratique pour la Défense de la République (MDR) Décision n°263/D/MINAT du 09/10/1991	DAKOLE DAUSSALA	Yaoundé
61	Mouvement Patriotique Camerounais (MPC) Décision n°284/D/MINAT du 09/10/1991	ALLI ADAM ARAB	Douala
62	Front Uni du Cameroun (FUC) Décision n°285/D/MINAT du 09/10/1991	NEUNGA Jean	Douala
63	Mouvement pour le Progrès de la République (MPR) Décision n°286/D/MINAT du 09/10/1991	POSSI NEUNKOU Zacharie	Yaoundé
64	Mouvement des Paysans Camerounais (MDPC) Décision n°287/D/MINAT du 09/10/1991	MATIP LIBAM Henri	Eseka
65	Rassemblement Camerounais pour la République (RCR) Décision n°302/D/MINAT du 23/10/1991	WAMBO Samuel	Bafoussam
66	Parti Ouvrier Unifié du Cameroun (POUC) Décision n°303/D/MINAT du 23/10/1991	BIZOLE Dieudonné	Yaoundé
67	Parti Socialiste Autonome (PSA) Décision n°313/D/MINAT du 29/10/1991	Douala	DIFFOUM David
68	Défense de l'Environnement Camerounais (DEC) Décision n°334/D/MINAT du 18/11/1991	NKEH NDJH	Yaoundé
69	Parti Social Démocrate Camerounais (PSDC) Décision n°335/D/MINAT du 18/11/1991	TEKAM Jean Michel	Bafoussam
70	Mouvement Rénovateur du Peuple Africain (MORPA) Décision n°361/D/MINAT du 09/12/1991	TEGUE Joseph Ledoux	Douala
71	Union des Progressistes KARTS (UPK) Décision n°370/D/MINAT du 26/12/1991	BAONE Jean Marc	Douala
72	Union pour la Bienveillance du Cameroun (UBC) Décision n°371/D/MINAT du 26/12/1991	BOUTAL BELE Louisard	Yaoundé
73	Cameroun People's Party (CPP) Décision n°372/D/MINAT du 26/12/1991	TITA Samuel FON	Bamenda
74	Alliance Nationale Camerounaise (ANC) Décision n°377/D/MINAT du 31/12/1991	BABA YOUSOUFA	Yaoundé
75	Union Sociale Camerounaise (USC) Décision n°376/D/MINAT du 31/12/1991	OKALA Nicole	Yaoundé



76	Front Patriotique de Libération du Peuple (FPLP) Décision n°379/D/MINAT du 31/12/1991	MEBADA Antoine Samuel	Yaoundé
77	Démocrate de la République Nouvelle (DRN) Décision n° 01/D/MINAT du 06/01/1992	OLINGA Dominique	Yaoundé
78	Espoir du Peuple Camerounais (EPC) Décision n°02/D/MINAT du 06/01/1992	NKANA BAYA Emmanuel	Ngaoundéré
79	Mouvement des Démocrates Indépendants (MDI) Décision N°03/D/MINAT du 06/01/1992	DJEUKAM TCHAMENI	Douala
80	Parti des Ouvriers et Paysans Camerounais (POPC) Décision N°04/D/MINAT du 06/01/1992	ABEGA Adolphe	Yaoundé
81	Rassemblement National pour la Démocratie et le Développement (RNDD) Décision n°28/D/MINAT du 07/01/1992	OWONA Paul Christophe	Douala
82	Union Nationale Démocratique (UND) Décision n°29/D/MINAT du 07/01/1992	GARGA BALLA	Yaoundé
83	Rassemblement Pour la Patrie (RAP) Décision n°30/D/MINAT du 07/01/1992	NINTCHEU Jean Michel	Douala
84	Unité Nationale (UN) Décision n°31/D/MINAT du 16/01/1992	FOTSO AVATA	Douala
85	Union Démocratique des Patriotes Camerounais (UDPC) Décision n°32/D/MINAT du 31/01/1992	TSOBEHI Joseph	Yaoundé
86	The Conservative Republican Party (CRP) Décision n°67/D/MINAT du 08/02/1992	OBENG BESONG Samuel	Limbe
87	Mouvement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (MDP) Décision n°88/D/MINAT du 13/03/1992	MUKKURI MAKKA Aron	Yaoundé
88	Congrès Républicain (CR) Décision n° 95/D/MINAT du 26/03/1992	IMANGUE HEMADE Emile	Bafoussam
89	Révolution Camerounaise du Peuple Uni (RCPU) Décision n° 271/D/MINAT du 06/10/1992	ABBA ABOUBAKAR	Ngaoundéré
90	Front de Solidarité (FSN) Décision n° 353/D/MINAT du 16/12/1992	ABBA PAHMI GARRIN Zachée	Douala
91	Parti pour la Progrès des Jeunes (PPJ) Décision n° 354/D/MINAT du 16/12/1992	BIEDI Jules	Yaoundé
92	Front National pour le Salut Populaire pour la Réconciliation (FNSPR) Décision n° 19/D/MINAT du 28/01/1993	MOO BIBOUM Djeudonné	Douala
93	Union Démocratique et Fraternelle Universelle (UDFU) Décision n° 35/D/MINAT du 12/02/1993	ONANA ABOGO SOUPA Louis	Yaoundé
94	Force du Peuple Camerounais (FPC) Décision n° 40 /D/MINAT du 22/02/1993	MALANGA NDINIBOLE Guy Roger	Yaoundé
95	Mouvement des Démocrates Sociaux (MDS) Décision n° 39 /D/MINAT du 27/02/1993	BOSTON NJOYA ALIDOU	Douala
96	Forum des Patriotes et Démocrates du Cameroun (FPD) Décision n°58/D/MINAT du 29/03/1993	FOGUE Jean Jacques	Garoua
97	United Democratic Party (UDP) D/MINAT du 02/04/1993	EL HADJ LAIVAN BAKO	Barrenda
98	Front National pour le Redressement (FNR) Décision N°75/D/MINAT du 27/04/1993	WASSILE WASSOUNI	Maroua
99	Front Uni de la Solidarité (FUS) Décision n°125/D/MINAT du 01/07/1993	TONYE Louis	Douala
100	Front Démocratique Révolutionnaire (FDR) Décision n°146/D/MINAT du 05/08/1993	OLINGA Cyrren	Yaoundé
101	Mouvement pour la Libération de la Jeunesse Camerounaise (MLJC) Décision n°147/D/MINAT du 05/08/1993	TINA Djeudonné	Eséka
102	Front Populaire (FP) Décision n°267/D/MINAT du 06/09/1993	DIMI Charles Robert	Yaoundé
103	Option Nationaliste pour le Développement et la Démocratie (OND) Décision n°270/D/MINAT du 09/09/1993	SAL YMO	Yaoundé
104	Parti des Démocrates Progressistes Camerounais (PDPC) Décision n°275 /D/MINAT du 22/09/1993	MAMA ETOGO François	Yaoundé
105	Rassemblement Patriotique pour le Salut (RPS) Décision n° 276/D/MINAT du 23/09/1993	LITOPÉ	Edéa
106	Rassemblement des Patriotes Républicain (RPR) Décision n° 280/D/MINAT du 13/10/1993	BINDZI ERODE	Yaoundé
107	Jeunesse Bas Peuple Camerounais Universel (JBPCU) Décision n° 286/D/MINAT du 26/10/1993	MESSOS MEDOUNG Albert	Douala



108	Parti Communiste du Cameroun (PCC) Décision n° 306/D/MINAT du 23/11/1993	GAMBI J. Pierre	Yaoundé
109	Front National Patriotique Camerounais (FNPC) Décision n° 307/D/MINAT du 24/11/1993	KAMDEM	Douala
110	Union des Ecologistes du Cameroun (UEC) Décision n° 322/D/MINAT du 13/12/1993	KAMGANG François Marie	Yaoundé
111	Parti National pour la Libération (PNI) Décision n° 03/D/MINAT du 10/01/1994	DZANA AHANDA Laurent	Yaoundé
112	Union Populaire des Démocrates Camerounais (UPDC) Décision n° 72/D/MINAT du 12/04/1994	MINKOE Vincent	Yaoundé
113	Parti populaire Panafricaniste (PPP) Décision n° 96/D/MINAT du 04/04/1994	BOUBA Hubert	Yaoundé
114	Parti pour le Progrès de la Démocratie (PPD) Décision n° 108 /D/MINAT du 04/05/1994	AMBASSA B. Paul	Yaoundé
115	Front Camerounais (FC) Décision n° 161 /D/MINAT du 19/07/1994	TANKWIE NYA Bernard	Douala
116	Alliance Démocratique pour la Solidarité (ADS) Décision n° 198/D/MINAT du 19/08/1994	MESSI Philippe Adonis	Yaoundé
117	Front Démocratique Populaire (FDP) Décision n° 209/D/MINAT du 27/08/1994	FONDJAN NGOMSI	Douala
118	Union des Démocrates Libéro-Humanistes (UDLH) Décision n° 254/D/MINAT du 05/10/1994	NGON à ZIEM	Bafia
119	AHON D'Africa (ADA) Décision N° 281/D/MINAT du 26/10/1994	BNHON Walker MBONG MESUMBE	Kumba
120	Union des Communistes Progressistes (UCP) Décision n° 19/D/MINAT du 24/01/1995	BIYAGA Monclard	Yaoundé
121	Mouvement Africain pour la Nouvelle Indépendance et la Démocratie (MANIDEM) Décision n° 54/D/MINAT du 03/03/1995	EKANE Anicet	Douala
122	Union des Forces Nouvelles (UFN) Décision n° 057 /D/MINAT du 08/03/1995	MVOULA Gallus	Yaoundé
123	Parti d'Action Paysanne (PAP) Décision n° 058/D/MINAT du 08/03/1995	WANDA Justin	Yaoundé
124	Social Democratic Party (SDP) Décision n° 062/D/MINAT du 17/03/1995	Mme NGATCHOU	Yaoundé
125	Mouvement National (MN) Décision n° 078/D/MINAT du 07/04/1995	MBANGA Paul	Yaoundé
126	Front Démocratique du Peuple (FDP) Décision n° 084/D/MINAT du 12/04/1995	DJEUNGUE Emile	Douala
127	Parti de la Reconnaissance du Peuple (PARENA) Décision n° 114/D/MINAT du 08/05/1995	ENOH Dieudonné	Yaoundé
128	Mouvement Patriotique de la Jeunesse Camerounaise (MPJC) Décision n° 131/D/MINAT du 18/05/1995	NDONGO Didier	Yaoundé
129	Parti Révolutionnaire Africain pour la Démocratie et l'intégration Economique et Sociale (PARADIES) Décision n° 165/D/MINAT du 12/07/1995	MBIDA Vincent	Abong-Mbang
130	Union des Démocrates pour le Travail au Cameroun (UDT) Décision n° 166/D/MINAT du 12/07/1995	KAMENI DJONTEU Dieudonné	Douala
131	Parti des Sociaux Démocrates pour le Redressement du Cameroun (PSR) Décision n° 188/D/MINAT du 19/07/1995	BAMAI Jacques	Douala
132	Front Patriotique National (FPN) Décision n° 217/D/MINAT du 29/08/1995	NGOUD MBARGA Benoit	Yaoundé
133	Mouvement des Nouveaux Démocrates (MONODE) Décision n° 219/D/MINAT du 31/08/1995	NDI Benoit	Yaoundé
134	Parti Démocrate Camerounais Innové (PDICI) Décision n° 220/D/MINAT du 31/08/1995	BOUBAKARY SIDIK	Garoua
135	Alliance Nationale Pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (ANDP) Décision n° 222/D/MINAT du 31/08/1995	HAMADOU MOUSTAPHA	Yaoundé
136	Furum des Sociaux Démocrates (FURUM) Décision n° 241/D/MINAT du 22/09/1995	SIGA ASANGA	Yaoundé
137	Parti Unifié Républicain (PUR) Décision n° 246 /D/MINAT du 27/09/1995	ABE Narcisse	Yaoundé
138	Parti Populaire du Cameroun (PPC) Décision n° 252/D/MINAT du 09/10/1995	FONDJO FOMO Elie	Batang

139	Rassemblement Démocratique pour la Modernité au Cameroun (RDMC) Décision n° 260/D/MINAT du 12/10/1995	NGOUBENE	Yaoundé
140	Front Patriotique pour la Reconstruction du Cameroun (FPRC) Décision n° 277/D/MINAT du 01/11/1995	ENGAMA NGONO	Yaoundé
141	Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple sans Frontière (RDPF) Décision n° 295/D/MINAT du 22/11/1995	NDEMMANU Antoine	Dschang
142	Mouvement Démocratique de Conscience Nationale (MOCENNA) Décision n° 320/D/MINAT du 31/12/1995	DEFFO Bruno	Yaoundé
143	Mouvement National pour le Progrès du Cameroun (MINPC) Décision n° 318/D/MINAT du 31/12/1995	MCHAMADOU	Ngaoundéré
144	Parti pour la Promotion du Capitalisme Humanisé (PCH) Décision n° 123/D/MINAT du 06/03/1996	NKANDA BETANDI Pierre	Yaoundé
145	Parti Libéral Démocrate (PLD) Décision n° 229/D/MINAT du 18/06/1996	LIPOE Jean Robert	Beyerngam
146	Union pour la Nouvelle Démocratie (UNND) Décision n° 349/D/MINAT du 19/07/1996	MBARGA Thaddée	Yaoundé
147	Parti de l'Égalité dans la Légimité et le Respect des Droits de l'Homme (PELRDH) Décision n° 581/D/MINAT du 30/09/1996	NDJENG Albert	Yaoundé
148	Mouvement pour le Développement et la Démocratie (MDD) Décision n° 606/D/MINAT du 21/10/1996	MVOGO Léopold Marie	Okola
149	Mouvement de la Fraternité Nationale (MFN) Décision n° 614/D/MINAT du 05/11/1996	KETSCHIEMEN Paul Denis	Yaoundé
150	Union des Populations Africaines (UPA) Décision n° 650/D/MINAT du 27/12/1996	KAMGANG Hubert	Yaoundé Bastos
151	Parti Libéral démocrate Camerounais (PLDC) Décision n° 013/D/MINAT du 15/01/1997	TEUPA Abraham	Douala
152	Rassemblement des Travailleurs pour le Développement (RTD) Décision n° 014/D/MINAT du 15/01/1997	ALI	Yokadouma
153	Potential Hurrain (PH) Décision n° 015/D/MINAT du 15/01/1997	KONGNE TCHENTCHOUA Désiré	Bafoussam
154	La Nationale (La Nationale) Décision n° 023/D/MINAT du 27/01/1997	ABEL EYINGA	Ebolowa
155	Union Nationale (UN) Décision n° 024/D/MINAT du 27/01/1997	FRAM Théophile Gilbert	Bafia
156	Cameroun Peopel's National Convention (CPNC) Décision n° 052/D/MINAT du 17/02/1997	MOTUBA SAKWE Tobias	Limbé
157	La Coordination des Forces Alternatives (La CFA) Décision n° 060/D/MINAT du 03/03/1997	Mme ETEKI OTABELA	Douala
158	Mouvement de la Jeunesse Camerounaise (MJC) Décision n° 061/D/MINAT du 03/03/1997	CHEKOUTOU Flambert	Couala
159	Parti du Peuple Démocrate (PPD) Décision n° 065/D/MINAT du 12/03/1997	SOUR Lazare	Douala
160	Organisation des Jeunes Libéraux du Peuple Camerounais (OJLPC) Décision n° 072/D/MINAT du 31/03/1997	FONKOUA David	Douala
161	Parti pour le Progrès Social et Economique (PPSE) Décision n° 073/D/MINAT du 31/03/1997	MBELLE ABANDA	Bertoua
162	Regroupement Camerounais pour le Progrès (RCP) Décision n° 092/D/MINAT du 15/04/1997	MONTHE Pierre	Douala
163	Union pour le Redressement Economique du Cameroun (UREC) Décision n° 094/D/MINAT du 15/04/1997	NDJOUNOU Léopold Stèves	Yaoundé
164	Union Camerounaise des Ethnies (UCE) Décision n° 101/D/MINAT du 21/04/1997	FOTIE Pierre	Yaoundé
165	Retorm Party (RP) Décision N° 300/D/MINAT du 28/07/1997	AGBOR ASHU Emmanuel	Douala
166	Action pour la Méritocratie et l'Égalité de Chances (AMEC) Décision n° 301/D/MINAT du 28/07/1997	TABI OWONO Joachim	Yaoundé
167	Labour Democratic Party (LDP) Décision n° 337/D/MINAT du 15/09/1997	AKONCHONG Samuel BETEK	Marité
168	Action Démocrate des Sauveteurs Transporteurs et Commerçants du Cameroun (ADSTC) Décision n° 338/D/MINAT du 15/09/1997	WAFFO Albert	Douala
169	Congrès National Camerounais (CNC) Décision n° 340/D/MINAT du 19/09/1997	LOUNTOUO Marcus	Yaoundé



170	Mission Absolue et Suprême (MAS) Décision n° 359/D/MINAT du 22/09/1997	KEME WANGUE	Garcua
171	Mouvement Socialiste Démocrate (SDM) Décision n° 444/D/MINAT du 30/12/1997	MAHAMAT Soulemane	Yaoundé
172	Groupe Démocratique Camerounais (GDC) Décision n° 03/D/MINAT du 05/01/1998	OKALI BELBI Bernard	Yaoundé
173	Rassemblement des Forces Ecologistes pour la Relance de l'Economie (RFEERE) Décision n° 17/D/MINAT du 14/01/1998	BESSIPING	Yaoundé
174	Dynamique pour la Renaissance Nationale (La DYNAMIQUE) Décision n°038/D/MINAT du 12/02/1998	NDZONGANG Albert	Douala
175	Unité pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social au Cameroun (UDPSC) Décision n° 162/D/MINAT du 29/06/1998	NFALEU Rousseau	Douala
176	One Cameroon (OC) Décision n° 163/D/MINAT du 29/06/1998	MOUKOURI Daniel	Douala
177	Mouvement des Ecologistes Camerounais (MEC) Décision n°189/D/MINAT du 02/09/1998	NGO FRITZ Pierre	Douala
178	Mouvement pour la Libération et le Développement du Cameroun (MLDC) Décision n° 249/D/MINAT du 15/12/1998	YONDO Marcel	Edéa
179	Forces Sociales Démocratique (FSD) Décision n°23/D/MINAT du 12/02/1999	NANA Jean Pierre	Yaoundé
180	Parti Républicain Social Camerounais (PRS) Décision n° 091/D/MINAT du 10/05/1999	MONGBET LAMARE Marc	Yaoundé
181	Parti Démocrate Socialiste (PDS) Décision n°011/D/MINAT du 04/05/2000	TEKAM Jean Michel	Batoussam
182	Mouvement de la Jeunesse Ecologique du Cameroun (MOJEC) Décision n°046/D/MINAT du 10/05/2000	BILONG Théophile Junior	Yaoundé
183	Parti Social Republicain (PSR) Décision n°050/D/MINAT du 05/06/2000	NJAPOU KAPNANG Blaise	Douala
184	Social Liberal Congress (SLC) Décision n°056/D/MINAT du 13/06/2000	NYAMNDI George DOBGIMA	Biéa
185	Jeunesse Socialiste pour la Démocratie (JSD) Décision n°069/D/MINAT du 10/07/2000	MIVEME MIYEME Michel	Yaoundé
186	Union Socialiste pour le Progrès (USP) Décision n°107/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 04/10/2000	MBOCK MBEGDE Daniel	Yaoundé
187	Rassemblement pour le Travail (RPT) Décision n°108/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 13/11/2000	EKASSI Magcire	Yaoundé
188	National Labour and Development Party (NLDP) Décision n°109/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 13/11/2000	GMOH Nicodemus ASEH	Bamenda
189	Parti du Progrès (PP) Décision n°31/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 20/02/2001	MDOUNBAGA Emmanuel Saydou	Yaoundé
190	Unity Social Front (USF) Décision n°202/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 24/08/2001	KUEGOU Edouard	Yaoundé
191	Union Républicain des Démocrates Camerounais (URDC) Décision n°31/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 27/08/2001	NJOYA Lamareé MADI-MAMA	Foumbot
192	Mouvement pour l'Emergence et le Réveil du Citoyen (MEERC) Décision n°254/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 12/10/2001	FEUZEU Isaac	Yaoundé
193	Rassemblement du Peuple de l'Alliance (RPA) Décision n°289/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 25/11/2001	NGOURAN MBODONGO	Yaoundé
194	Mouvement des Démocrates Camerounais (MDCP) Décision n°44/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 13/02/2002	GAMEL ADAMOU ISSA	Yaoundé
195	Union Nationale pour l'Indépendance Totale du Cameroun (UNITOC) Décision n°47/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 19/02/2002	TATSIKANG Daniel	Yaoundé
196	Nouvelle Force Populaire (NFP) Décision n°48/D/MINAT/DAP/SDLP/SPP du 20/02/2002	NJINDO Léandre	Douala

197	Alliance Démocratique pour la Liberté du Peuple (ADLP) Décision n° 480/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 12/11/2002	MBE Mathieu Blaise	Batoussam
198	Parti Camerounais pour la Réconciliation Nationale (PCRN) Décision n°17/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 14/02/2003	KONA Robert	Yaoundé
199	Alliance des Forces Progressistes (AFP) Décision n° 57/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 16/04/2003	SAIDOU MAIDARI	Douala
200	Justice and Development Party (JDP) Décision n°198/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 25/08/2003	FORBIN Boniface	Yaoundé
201	Mouvement Social du Cameroun (MSC) Décision n°00237/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 30/09/2003	KARI HAMADOU	Yaoundé
202	Parti Populaire du Salut (PPS) Décision n° 00057/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 01/04/2004	DIN EDOUNG Mathurin	Douala
203	Front Populaire de la Jeunesse (FPJ) Décision n° 108/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 14/05/2004	MBANG Luc Frédéric	Yaoundé
204	Renaissance Démocratique du Cameroun (RDC) Décision n° 00109/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 14/05/2004	Mme OBAMA née OWONA Juliette	Yaoundé
205	Parti de l'Unité Nationale (NUP) Décision n° 00181/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 01/09/2004	MANI Marcel Joseph Aubin	Yaoundé
206	Opinion Publique Démocratique (OPDC) Décision n° 00182/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 01/09/2004	TAPEO FOUOTSAGOUNG Napoleon	Mboura
207	Parti de l'Alliance du Cameroun (PAC) Décision n° 00001/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 11/01/2005	MWILONGO Paul	Yaoundé
208	Mouvement Espoir de la Jeunesse (MEJ) Décision n° 00002/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 11/01/2005	NTSELE Jean Claude	Yaoundé
209	Front des Sauveteurs Démocrates (FSD) Décision n° 00025/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 15/02/2005	LEPODE Dieudonné	Deschang
210	The Republican Party of Cameroon (REPAC) Décision n° 00038/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 01/03/2005	Mme KAMGA Ranneline	Yaoundé
211	Parti Indépendant des Grands Electeurs (PIGE) Décision n° 00075/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 09/05/2005	ENOGA Sébastien Honoré	Yaoundé
212	Groupeement des Agriculteurs du Cameroun (GAC) Décision n° 00231/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 13/10/2005	BIDJONG François	Makak
213	Cameroun des Valeurs (CAMVAL) Décision n° 00285/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 28/12/2005	DJEOKENG Jean Marie	Yaoundé
214	Parti Libéral Camerounais (PLC) Décision n° 00286/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 28/12/2005	MBOUNGUENG Bernard	Douala
215	Parti des Jeunes du Cameroun (PJC) Décision n° 00290/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 28/12/2005	FAGNA TCHAKOUNTE FARQUET Yves	Douala
216	Mouvement pour la Réconciliation et l'Unité des Camerounais (MRUC) Décision n° 00155/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 05/07/2006	NZESSEU TCHIENGANG Mathieu	Douala
217	Mouvement pour le Développement Intégral de la République (MDIR) Décision n° 00195/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 06/12/2006	ZAMBO Paul	Yaoundé
218	Parti du Cameroun Nouveau (PCN) Décision n° 00257/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 06/12/2006	MBOULE DJAKA Guillaume	Douala
219	Mouvement pour la Justice Sociale, le Développement et la Protection de la Nature (MOUSODENA) Décision n° 00258/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 06/12/2006	TCHAMBE Guy Alain	Yaoundé
220	La Nouvelle Dynamique pour la Prospérité (NDP) Décision n° 00259/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 06/12/2006	AYINA née BIDZOGO Brigitte	Yaoundé
221	Alliance Nationale pour la Paix la Démocratie et le Progrès Social (ANPDPS) Décision n° 00013/D/MINAT/DAP/SDL/P/SPP du 06/02/2007	LELE YOUNBISSI DEFFO ABORDE	Yaoundé



222	Rassemblement des Citoyens Camerounais (RCC) Décision n° 00015/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08/02/2007	TONYE Jean Alphonse	Douala
223	Révolution Pacifique du Cameroun (RPPC) Décision n° 0034/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 02/03/2007	DJOUKENG Michel	Bafoussam
224	Mouvement Réformateur (MR) Décision n° 00035/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 02/03/2007	BILONG Samuel	Yaoundé
225	Parti de l'Esprit d'Avril 48 (PEA 48) Décision n° 00037/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 06/03/2007	NGOSS Jean Marc	Douala
226	Parti Travailliste Camerounais (PTC) Décision n° 00064/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 21/03/2007	ONGONO Louis Thierry	Yaoundé
227	Front pour le Salut National du Cameroun (FNSC) Décision n° 00072/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 03/04/2007	ISSA TCHIROMA BAKARY	Yaoundé
228	Parti de la Reconversion du Peuple (PRP) Décision n° 00074/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 03/04/2007	ATEBA Henri	Yaoundé
229	Rassemblement du Peuple Intègre pour le Changement (RPI/C) Décision n° 00075/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 07/05/2007	KWEDJEU NGOPA Adèle	Yaoundé
230	Mouvement Citoyen National Camerounais (MCNC) Décision n° 00100/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 10/05/2007	MONTHE NKOUOBITE Jean	Bafang
231	Front pour la Justice Sociale et les Libertés (FJSL) Décision n° 00112/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 22/05/2007	SAMA Isaac	Bafang
232	Alliance Nationale pour le Progrès du Cameroun (ANPC) Décision n° 00030/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 03/01/2008	HAMADOU HAMIDOU	Bafang
233	Union Sociale Démocratique (SDU) Décision n° 00071/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 10/01/2008	DEMMANO Gustave	Yaoundé
234	Parti National du Nouvel Air du Cameroun (PNNA/C) Décision n° 00008/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 15/01/2008	NDOUNTENG BANGMI Prince Henri	Ebolowa
235	Rassemblement pour le Progrès et la Démocratie (RPD) Décision n° 00399/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 05/03/2008	BEKILA François Joel	Garoua
236	Rassemblement Républicain et Démocratique du Cameroun (RRDC) Décision n° 000041/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 10/03/2008	BOUBA Michel	Douala
237	Démocratie avec la Participation Active au Développement (DPAD) Décision n° 000098/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 15/04/2008	BIKONG OBANUS BANYE	Yaoundé
238	Parti Essentiellement Unifié pour la Liberté d'Expression (PEUPLE) Décision n° 000099/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 16/04/2008	NGAPOUT Jean Jaures	Yaoundé
239	Parti pour la Justice Sociale au Cameroun (PJS/C) Décision n° 001011/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 17/04/2008	KISOP Bertin	Santa
240	Parti Camerounais pour la Démocratie (PCD) Décision n° 00115/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 17/04/2008	BENZ ENDOW BATE	Yaoundé
241	Jeunesse Patricienne du Cameroun (JPC) Décision n° 0001811/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 03/07/2008	KENNEUGNE Apollinaire	Douala
242	Mouvement Socialiste et Démocratique des Jeunes Camerounais pour le Changement (MSDJC) Décision n° 000182/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 03/07/2008	MASSIS JELLE Joel Florentin	Douala
243	Mouvement Républicain Populaire (MRP) Décision n° 002211/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 25/07/2008	FOGUE TEDOM Alain	Yaoundé

244	Mouvement Démocratique des Dëshërités du Cameroun (MDDC) Décision n°00318/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 03/10/2008	DANGWIE Luc	Garoua
245	Parti de la Génération Nouvelle (PAGEN) Décision n°00005/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 19/01/2009	TAGNE NLAÏTE Jean Magloire	Bafoussam Yaoundé
246	Parti de l'Action Sociale et Démocratique (PASD) Décision n°000043/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 23/03/2009	AMANG A BIABAK	Douala
247	Groupe des Démocrates pour le Changement (GRDEC) Décision n°00124/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 28/05/2009	GVET Jean	Douala
248	Mouvement Patriotique pour le Changement du Cameroun (MPCC) Décision n°00174/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 02/10/2009	FONGANG Valéry	Bafoussam
249	Peuple Camerounais pour le Socialisme et les Etats Unis d'Afrique (PCASEUA) Décision n°00175/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 02/10/2009	BABIO NGONO TOWO Raphaël	Yaoundé Yaoundé
250	La Ligue Démocrate (LD) Décision n°000308/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 12/11/2009	NGENE BIGAN née LISSOUK Monique	Yaoundé
251	Unité du Cameroun (UC) Décision n°000309/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 12/11/2009	FRU Martin MANTOHANG (démisionnaire)	Bamenda
252	Coordination des Démocrates Camerounais (CDC) Décision n°000311/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 16/11/2009	NYEMECK Noé CHI NGANTE Francis	Douala Bamenda
253	Cameroun Green Movement (CGM) Décision n°0004/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 07/01/2010	M. ZEBAZE DONFACK Narcisse Gaëtan	Douala
254	Front Patriotique Républicain (FPR) Décision n°0012/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 13/01/2010	M. DOUKOU DARMAN	Ngaoundéré
255	Cameroun Party of Promise (CPP) Décision n°00015/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 05/01/2010	KFOULLA DAMBALDI	Yaoundé
256	Les Patriotes Démocrates pour le Développement du Cameroun (PADDEC) Décision n°00047/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 16/03/2010	ATANGANA NSOE Simon Pierre	Yaoundé
257	Front Populaire pour le Développement (FPD) Décision n°00050/D/MINATD/SG/DAP/SDE/SPP du 16/03/2010	BINKO Abraham	Douala
258	Rassemblement Démocratique pour la Défense de la République (RDDR) Décision n°000064/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 05/04/2010	KOUJOTOU Roland Romain	Yaoundé
259	Grand Cameroun (GC) Décision n°000079/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 07/04/2010	MATOMBA Serge Espoir	Douala
260	Parti d'Amour, de Foi et d'Espérance (PAFE) Décision n°0000080/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 07/04/2010	MBEM Jean Delors	Douala
261	Forum Républicain (FORE) Décision n°0000081/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 07/04/2010	BILE Olivier Anticet	Yaoundé
262	Peuple Uni pour la Renovation Sociale (PUKS) Décision n°0000152/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 14/05/2010		
263	Egalité Sociale Démocratique du Cameroun (ESDC) Décision n°00000423/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 22/10/2010		
264	Union pour la Fraternité et la Prospérité (UFP) Décision n°0000424/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 22/10/2010		

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265	Parti Nationaliste Républicain du Cameroun (PNRC) Décision n°0000446/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 22/10/2010	NDOLIMBE Quasimodo	Yaoundé
266	Parti Socialiste Populaire Camerounais (PSPC) Décision n°0000469/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 19/11/2010	TEUABO André	Yaoundé
267	Mouvement pour la Libération des Camerounais (MPLC) Décision n° 0000478/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 19/11/2010	GATSI Jean	Yaoundé
268	Bloc pour la Reconstruction et l'Indépendance Economique du Cameroun (BRIEC) Décision n° 0000483/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 23/11/2010	PEKEUHO TCHOFFO Ernest	Douala
269	Mouvement Citoyen (MOCI) Décision n°0000488/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 30/11/2010	YIMGAING MOYO Théophile	Yaoundé
270	Mouvement Patriotique Africain (MPA) Décision n°0000494/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08/12/2010	NDOM Pierre	Yaoundé
271	Parti des Serviteurs Loyaux de la Nation (PSLN) Décision n°0000500/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 10/12/2010	TSALA Jacques Désiré	Yaoundé
272	Renaissance Sociale Démocratique du Cameroun (RSDC) Décision n° 0000526/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 29/12/2010	FOMO NGOTA Jean Marie Philippe	Yaoundé
273	Cameroun Uni (CU) Décision n° 000040/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 29/02/2011	TCHUANDJIO Paul	Douala
274	Rassemblement du Peuple pour la Paix et le Changement (RPPC) Décision n° 0000059/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 07/03/2011	MBOGUI Jean Jacques	Yaoundé
275	Union des Mouvements Socialistes (UMS) Décision n° 0000073/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 09/03/2011	KWEMO Pierre	Yaoundé
276	Forces Démocratiques pour l'Action et le Changement (FORDAC) Décision n° 0000089/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 14/03/2011	SUMO Honoré François	Douala
277	Conseil National de Démocratie et de Prospérité (CNDP) Décision n° 0000090/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 14/03/2011	MBETEBE EYEBE Justin	Yaoundé
278	Parti Camerounais du Peuple (PCP) Décision n° 0000094/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 15/03/2011	SIME Cyrille	Bafoussam
279	Union Nationale pour l'Intégration vers la Solidarité (UNIVERS) Décision n° 0000115/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 28/03/2011	ATANGANA Dieudonné	Ngaoundéré
280	Le Cameroun Nouveau (LCN) Décision n° 000116/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 28/03/2011	NJOCK NJOCK Hermann Claude	Douala
281	Mouvement Patriotique du Peuple Camerounais (MPPC) Décision n° 0000127/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 07/04/2011	ESSOME NYAME Victor	Douala
282	Parti Camerounais de la Restauration (PCR) Décision n°000323/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08/08/2011	MBOUKE Prosper	Yaoundé
283	Nouveau Mouvement Populaire (NMP) Décision n°000324/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08/08/2011	BANDA KANI André	Douala
284	Hopes Democratic Party (HDP) Décision n°000325/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08/08/2011	SHIFU Muhammadu NFOR	Yaoundé
285	Temps Nouveau (TN) Décision n°000326/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08/08/2011	KONGNE Goldfroy	Bafoussam
286	Comité National de Démocratie et de Prospérité (CNDP) Décision n°000327/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 18 août 2011	Mme TCHANA Lamartine	Yaoundé

287	Union pour la Paix et le Développement au Cameroun (U.P.D.C) Décision 0329/D/ MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 18 août 2011	M. NGUIMBOUS NKOUM François	Yaoundé
288	Parti Socialiste et des Ecologistes Camerounais (P.S.E.C) Décision 0332/D/ MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 18 août 2011	DJAPA Charly	Yaoundé
289	Défense Intégrale du Peuple Camerounais (D.I.P.C) Décision 0333/D/ MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 18 août 2011	TCHINDA Jean Paulin	Mbourda
290	Parti Socialiste Démocratique Uni (P.S.D.U) Décision n° 000403/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 05 septembre 2011	Prince Michael NGWESSE EKOSSO	Yaoundé
291	Union pour un Mouvement Patriotique du Cameroun (U.M.P.C.) Décision n° 000447/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 12 octobre 2011	ABOH Honoré	Douala
292	Revival for the Development of Cameroon (R.F.D.C) Décision n° 000489/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 26 octobre 2011	OYONO-ENGUELE Jean-Collins	Yaoundé
293	Bloc Camerounais pour la Bonne Gouvernance (B.C.B.G) Décision n° 00058/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 05 mars 2012	SONG Théodore	Yaoundé
294	Cameroun Redemption Democratic Front (C.R.D.F.) Décision n° 00059 /D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 05 mars 2012	NGANG George CHE	Bamenda
295	Mouvement des Hommes Indépendants pour le Changement au Cameroun (M.O.H.I.C) Décision n° 000202/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 11 juin 2012	TCHINDA Jean Paul	Douala
296	Front Révolutionnaire pour le Redressement du Cameroun (F.R.R.C) Décision n° 000203/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 11 juin 2012	WOKWENI	Yaoundé
297	National Democratic Party for Youth Development (N.D.P.Y.D.) Décision n° 000269/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 24 juillet 2012	MBATANG SONG Stephen	Buea
298	Union pour la République, la Démocratie et la Solidarité (U.R.D.S.) Décision n° 000311/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 22 août 2012	MOHAMADOU OUMAROU	Yaoundé
299	Rassemblement des Forces Patriotiques du Cameroun (E.F.P.C.) Décision n° 000334/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 10 septembre 2012	NGAME NGOMBA Charles	Yaoundé
300	Rassemblement Démocratique pour le Développement de la République du Cameroun (R.D.R.) Décision n° 000374/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 26 septembre 2012	FOULLA DAMBALDI	Yaoundé
301	Mouvement Démocratique des Débrouillards du Cameroun (M.D.D.C) Décision n° 00024/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 05 mars 2013	DJANTOU APPOLINAIRE	Yaoundé
302	Regroupement des Démocrates Indépendants (R.D.I.) Décision n° 00025/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 05 mars 2013	MANZA PIERRE WENDELIN	Lomé
303	Mouvement de la Nouvelle Alliance pour le Salut (M.O.N.A.S) Décision n° 00086/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 15 avril 2013	NDASSI SIMO FLAUBERT	Douala
304	Parti Républicain (P.R) Décision n° 00087/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 15 avril 2013	BAONGLA GEORGES GILBERT	Yaoundé



305	Parti Nationaliste Démocrate Camerounais (P.N.D.C) Décision n° 000109/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 29 avril 2013	ESSAMA MODO ROMARIC DANIEL	Yaoundé
306	One Cameroon for Reconstruction Movement (O.C.R) Décision n° 000110/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 29 avril 2013	FRU MARTIN MANTOHANG	Bamenda
307	Cameroon Reformation Party (C.R.P) Décision n° 000229/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 02 juillet 2013	LANG KUM FOLIGAR	Yaoundé
308	Mouvement Patriotique du Salut Camerounais (M.P.S.C) Décision n° 000233/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08 juillet 2013	ABOUBAKARY SIDDIKI	Douala
309	National Pluralist Democratic Movement (N.P.D.M) Décision n° 000238/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 08 juillet 2013	TALLA BLAISE LEONIDE	Limbé
310	Alliance Républicaine Camerounaise (ARC) Décision n°000675/D/MINATD/ DAP/SDE/SPP du 19 novembre 2013	Nkili Arthur Orphée	Mbalmayo
311	Parti pour la Dynamique du Cameroun et ses Valeurs Institutionnelles (PADY-CAMVALINS) Décision n° 000211/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 24 février 2014	BOBO ABEGA Juste Martin	Yaoundé
312	Mouvement Camerounaise Pour la Social-Démocratie (M.C.P.S.D) Décision n° 000320/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 10 mars 2014	FOUDA ESSOMBA Sosthène	Yaoundé
313	Croire au Cameroun (C.R.A.C) Décision n° 000250/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 15 juillet 2014	NIONGA Bernard	Yaoundé
314	Parti des Démocrates Chrétiens (P.D.C.H) Décision n° 000312/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 26 août 2014	TCHUMMOU MBOUGUENG SANDRINE épouse KANMOGNE	Bafoussam
315	Front des Forces Républicaines ( F.F.R) Décision n° 000395/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 22 octobre 2014	DOKA NARKE Jean	Bertoua
316	Cameroon Citizens Council (C.C.C) Décision n° 000431/D/MINATD/DAP/SDE/SPP du 07 novembre 2014	EYONG Elvis EYONG	Buéea

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**APPENDIX, XXVI: John Fru Ndi Launching the SDF Party at Ntarikon Motor Park  
26<sup>th</sup> May 1990**



**Source:** Dibussi Tande, Memory Lane May 26· 1990 TheSDF is Launched in blood in *scribbles from the Den*



**APPENDIX, XXVII: SDF Militants Defile the over 2000 Government Troops to restore  
Multiparty Democracy in Cameroon**



**Source:** Dibussi Tande, Memory Lane May 26' 1990 TheSDF is Launched in blood in *scribbles from the Den*

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