

THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

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FACULTY OF ARTS, LETTER AND  
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POST GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR  
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# THE ECONOMIC ISSUE IN BRITISH SOUTHERN CAMEROONS DURING THE TRUSTEESHIP PERIOD, 1946-1961

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My late parents, Peter TIEMAH FAKET and ADIJA FERYIWAN

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## ABSTRACT

This research work entitled: “The Economic issue in former British Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship system, 1946 to 1961”, focuses on the economic debates on its viability during the trusteeship period in Southern Cameroons. At the end of the Second World War, the United Nations instituted the Trusteeship system to replace the League of Nations’ Mandate system. Trusteeship agreements, laid down basic guidelines as to prepare trust territories towards political, economic and social developments, and its eventual independence. However, when it came to deciding the future of the territory, a third option was not included as to whether they desired to vote for outright independence. This urged us to ponder over the following questions: How was the economic situation of Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship period? Was the territory economically viable to stand on its own? We then resorted to the qualitative and quantitative research methods for a better appreciation of the work. We found out that the former Southern Cameroons had numerous economic potentials, when compared to other British colonies like the Gambia, that obtained its independence on 18 February, 1965. Again, Gambia was geographically and economically smaller than Southern Cameroons, but was given independence. We further realised that the issue of the economic viability of Southern Cameroons was more political, especially through the British attitude of neglecting the territory and administering it as part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria.

## RÉSUMÉ

*Ce travail de recherche intitulé "The Economic issue in former British Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship system, 1946 to 1961" se concentre sur les questions économiques pendant la période de tutelle dans le Southern Cameroons. À la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, les Nations unies et le système de tutelle ont été institués pour remplacer la Société des Nations et le système des mandats. Les accords de tutelle définissent des lignes directrices de base pour préparer les territoires sous tutelle au développement politique, économique et social et à l'indépendance. Cependant, lorsqu'il s'est agi de décider de l'avenir du territoire, une troisième option n'a pas été incluse, à savoir s'ils souhaitaient voter pour l'indépendance pure et simple. Cela nous a incités à réfléchir aux questions suivantes : Quelle était la situation économique du Southern Cameroons pendant la période de tutelle ? Le territoire était-il économiquement viable pour se suffire à lui-même ? Nous avons alors eu recours à des méthodes de recherche qualitatives et quantitatives pour une meilleure appréciation du travail. Nous avons constaté que l'ancien Southern Cameroons disposait de nombreux potentiels économiques, comparés à d'autres colonies britanniques comme la Gambie, qui a obtenu son indépendance le 18 février 1965. La Gambie était géographiquement et économiquement plus petite que le Southern Cameroons, mais elle a obtenu son indépendance. Nous avons également réalisé que la question de la viabilité économique du Southern Cameroons était plus politique, notamment en raison de l'attitude britannique consistant à négliger le territoire et à l'administrer comme une partie du Nigeria.*

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

**ADO:** Assistant Divisional Officer

**AG:** Action Group

**CCC:** Cameroon Commoners Congress

**CDC:** Cameroon Development Corporation

**CDWF:** Colonial Development and Welfare Fund

**CFU:** Cameroon Federal Union

**CNF:** Cameroon National Federation

**CPNC:** Cameroon People National Congress

**CUC:** Cameroon United Congress

**CWU:** Cameroon Welfare Union

**CYL:** Cameroon Youth League

**DO:** Divisional Officer

**FIDES:** *Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Économique et Social*

**GDP:** Gross Domestic Product

**GNDP:** Gross National Domestic Product

**KEG:** *Kamerun Einsenbahn Gesllshaft*

**KNC:** Kamerun National Congress

**KNDP:** Kamerun National Democratic Party

**KPP:** Kamerun People Party

**KUNC:** Kamerun United National Congress

**KUNU:** Kamerun United National Union

**KUP:** Kamerun United Party

**NA:** Native Authorities

**NAB:** National Achieves Buea

**NAC:** National Africa Company

**NAY:** National Achieves Yaoundé

**NCNC:** National Council for Nigeria and Cameroon

**NGOs:** Non-Governmental Organizations

**PAB:** Provincial Archives Bamenda

**SCDA:** Southern Cameroon Development Agency

**UAC:** United African Company

**UN:** United Nations

**UNO:** United Nations Organization

**UPC:** Union des Populations du Cameroun

**WAPV:** *Westafrikanische Pflanzungsverein*

**WWI:** World War One

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The contact between Africa and Europe dates back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century when European nations began the famous age of discovery or exploration. Prominent among these were the Portuguese, Dutch, British, French, Germans and British. They were involved in exploration, slave trade, evangelization, commerce and conquests. The scramble for Africa in general and Cameroon in particular was economically motivated, because after the abolition of slave trade, legitimate trade was introduced. This involved the selling and buying of articles rather than human beings. One of the main reasons of the abolition of slave trade was the advent of the industrial revolution whereby, work done by hand began to be done by machine, a process that led to the scramble and colonization of African territories<sup>1</sup>.

By the 1880s, traders, explorers and missionaries of three European powers: Britain, France and Germany had begun to scramble to annex Cameroon on behalf of their home governments. This is said to have been economically motivated because, the industrial revolution created a need for raw materials like palm products, ivory, timber and others that were found along the coast of Cameroon and its vicinities<sup>2</sup>. Also, trade competitions among these powers, their quest for monopolies and markets to sell surplus goods increased the rivalry over the annexation of the territory as each of them rivalled to dominate trade within the area. Moreover, trade rivalry pushed some traders to give “trust” or credit to the natives<sup>3</sup>.

Some extended the period for the payment of debts in order to secure their trade. Others wanted to invest the surplus capital from Europe in plantation agriculture, because of the fertile nature of soils along the coast and foot of the volcanic mountain (Mount Cameroon)<sup>4</sup>. More so, some Europeans and natives put pressure on European governments to annex the territory in order to secure their interests. For example, the British wrote letters and Duala kings petitioned on behalf of the natives, while German traders on their part had secret meetings with indigenous chiefs all in a Side to urge both Britain and Germany to annex Cameroon.

The Germans over took the British and on July 12<sup>th</sup> 1884 annexed Duala and on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 1884 hoisted the German flag, marking its annexation of the territory<sup>5</sup>. From November

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<sup>1</sup>V. G. Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, Vol.2, London, Macmillan Publisher, 1989 p.46.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>B. S. Takang, *An Illustrated History of Cameroon since 1800*, Buea, (Revised Edition 2013), p.171.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>D. Abwa, *Cameroon: Histoire d'un Nationalisme 1884-1961*, Yaoundé, Edition Clé, 2010, p.57.

1884 to February 1885, a conference was organized known as the Berlin West African conference; to set the bases for the scramble and partition of Africa. Some of the major points that were discussed at the conference were: Effective occupation which was to mean that when a country or power annexed a territory in Africa it should effectively be occupied. Notification; after the annexation of a territory, it should notify other powers. The hinterland theory; that is a power should not only limit itself at the coast, it should exploit the interior of the territory<sup>6</sup>.

The Berlin act made it such that any power wanting to claim territory in Africa should send representatives there and that was exactly what happened after the conference. The German economic policy in its territories was based on plantation agriculture controlled by its traders. Before the annexation of Cameroon some important German firms existed along the coast of the territory such as Karl Woermann and Jantzen und Thomahlen to achieve their economic goals. The Germans instituted the colonial *wirtschaftliches*, (the colonial economic committee) in 1898. This was charged with the control of the importation of products from the German colonies which had been founded<sup>7</sup>. It was also in charge of German overseas economies. The Germans put more interest on plantation agriculture, transportation, communication and trade. They were also based on developing forests through the establishment of a botanical garden in Victoria and several others for experimentation of tree species all over the territory<sup>8</sup>.

With the outbreak of the First World War (WWI) between allied and central powers in Europe, Britain and France deported it to Africa in general and Cameroon in particular<sup>9</sup>. The war ended with the defeat of Germany in Cameroon in 1916. That same year, Britain and France tried to administer the territory together, but this did not work. The territory was arbitrarily partitioned between both powers<sup>10</sup>. In 1922 it became a mandated territory of the League of Nations. The French administered her own portion through direct rule and introduced an economic policy called ‘*la mise en valeur des colonies*’ influenced by Albert Sarrauts. *La mise en valeur* was aimed at deriving maximum economic benefits for France before serving the economic interests of the colonies<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup>V.J Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985: A Hundred Years of History*, Limbe, Navi Group Publications, 1988, p.48.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>T. E. Mbuagbaw, *A History of Cameroon*, London, Longman Group Ltd, 1975, p.23.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.199.

<sup>11</sup> Ngoh, *History of Cameroon since 1800*, Limbe, Pressbook Limited, 1987, p.54.

The British government put these up for sale but initially excluded German nationals from purchasing and when British business circles showed little or no interest, the sale was opened to other buyers and in 1924 the Germans bought back all the plantations<sup>12</sup>. The economy of British Southern Cameroons was controlled by the Germans during the mandates period. Plantation agriculture and subsistence farming were the main activities of the economy in Southern Cameroons when it acquired a separate status from the Eastern Region of Nigeria<sup>13</sup>.

More so, the Second World War (WW II) which started in 1939 when the Germans under Adolf Hitler invaded Poland this war ended in 1945 with the defeat of Germany. After the war, the league of Nation was replaced by the United Nations Organization (UNO); British Southern Cameroons witnessed virtually no significant political and economic development. In 1946, the British declared that their general economic objective in Southern Cameroons was to do everything in the interest of the economic advancement of the territory. The Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC) was created in 1946 as a statutory corporation to take over and administer most of the plantations confiscated from the Germans in 1939 for the benefit of the inhabitants of the trust territory<sup>14</sup>.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The main concepts of the study cannot be understood unless we attempt defining them, we shall define economic development, trusteeship, decolonization and self-determination. These would enable us understand what we intend to examine in the study. This is because different authors have varied definitions to these same terms given their various contexts.

### **Economic Development**

The word “Economics” is derived from *olkonomia* which is a Greek word meaning management of a household. A household in the Greek sense meant an extended family including arts men, freemen, slaves and what we can link to a household in the Greek sense to a modern economy like that of Cameroon. We then see the importance of management where the economic resources or input used in the process of production is very scarce or limited in supply. It is in this line that Adam, the founder of Economics perceived discipline as an inquiry in to the nature and cause of word of Nations. Moreover, Mill saw Economics

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<sup>12</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.200.

<sup>13</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon History 1884-1985*, p.89.

<sup>14</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.87.

as the practical science of the production and distribution of wealth. Slavin on the other hand believed that it is what has to do with the efficient allocation of the scarce means of production towards the satisfaction of human wants. Hicka perceives this same concept as an organization of producers to satisfy the wants of consumers.

Bruce Herrick on the other hand examines it as a change in the composition of the input and output that generally include shift in the underlying structure of production away from agriculture towards industrial activities<sup>15</sup>. The organization of the economy in such a way that productive employment is generally among the working age population rather than the situation of a privileged minority<sup>16</sup>. An economic issue in the context of our study means the problem or argument on the state of the economy of Southern Cameroons.

We shall look at economic development as the resources that defined a territory's self-reliant capabilities. This implies that it is a process where the economy well-being and the quality of life of a nation, region or local communities are improved. This adds more weight to our perception of economic issue, which is the financial status of a community at a specific period of time. This may be known through the use of statistics considering the unemployment rate, stock market data and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) information among other metrics<sup>17</sup>.

The Economic situation is most often related to its GDP within a shorter or longer period of time. The GDP is measured by the size of a country's economy. The most conventional analysis of a country relies heavily on economic indicators like the GDP and Gross National Product (GNP) per capital. The GDP includes economic activities for which money is exchanged<sup>18</sup>.

## **Trusteeship**

This is one of the main organs of the United Nation (UN) set up to supervise the administration of former German territories. The socio-economic philosophy that was propounded by Mahatma Grandhi provided a means for the wealthy to be trustees of the trusts that looked after the welfare of the people<sup>19</sup>. Under the UN charter, the trusteeship council was authorized to examine and discuss reports from the administering authorities (Britain and France) on the political, economic and social advancement of the people of trust

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<sup>15</sup> E. Nkom, *The Principles of Modern Economics*, Yaounde, Edition Clé, 2010, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> United Nations, *Basic Facts About the United Nations*, p.4.

territories. It also did consultation with the administering authority to examine petitions from and undertake periodic and other social missions to trust territories<sup>20</sup>.

In the context of British Southern Cameroons, the UN charter under the trusteeship council that replaced the mandate commission was put in place to prepare the territory for self-determination. It was also put in place to revamp the economy of the territory. In this line, the Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC) was established in 1946 to enrich the economy of the territory<sup>21</sup>.

### **Self-Determination**

This is the process where a country determines its own statehood and forms its government. The right of the people to self-determination is a cardinal principle in modern international law, binding as such, on the United Nations charter as authoritative interpretation of the chapter's norms. According to Hurst Hannum, self-determination has two aspects: internal and external. He holds that the former is the right of the people of a state to govern themselves without outside interference while the latter is the right of the people to determine their own political status and be free from alien domination including, the formation of their own independent states<sup>22</sup>. With respect to this study, self-determination is how a state can control its own destiny. This implies that it is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for themselves and to take the initiatives to reach these goals.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of the study builds on a number of economic theories. This choice was made for the fact that considerations influencing the granting of independence to states as a separate entity in Africa were innate in the history of economic resources or development. These factors were diverse and not unique as seen in the following paragraphs that characterize the Dependence and Self-Determination theory. Given that we are dealing with the economic issue in British Southern Cameroons, we should understand that the nature of the independence of the territory was influenced by this model of economics.

The Dependency Theory is an economic development theory, which holds that the effects of colonialism on developing countries must be considered when creating future development. This theory grew out of Latin America, especially when scholars like Raul

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2

<sup>21</sup> Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.

<sup>22</sup> E. J. Andui, *Standard Africa History 1800-Present*, Limbe, Press print, 2011, p.171.



Presbisch observed that some theories were failing to address the consequences of colonialism, such as the levels of political awareness, trade, education among others<sup>23</sup>. The dependency theory classifies countries into two levels of economic development: center and periphery. The center is the colonizing and developed countries while the periphery consists of the colonized and developing countries<sup>24</sup>.

Brunel opines that the dependency ideology that did captures British Southern Cameroons at dependence, insisted on an anti-center development against international exchanges, viewed as a source of alienation an underdevelopment because of unequal exchanges<sup>25</sup>. She demonstrates this through the sale of manufactured goods at high cost by the European nations to African poor states in exchange of lowly paid primary products and thus, conclude that it was through colonial and post-colonial exploitation that the center countries were able to develop. She holds that since exploitation permits the European nations to develop, it is difficult for the same process to lead to development in the previously exploited African states. This theory educates on the considerations the British allowed Southern Cameroons to gain independence the way it gained. This is because the British preferred its association with the Federal Republic of Nigeria for their economic gains.

Another theory connected to our work is the Self-Determination Theory. This is an economic theory developed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan in the 1880s<sup>26</sup>. It focuses on the understanding of human motivation and the factors that contribute to optimal human functioning and well-being. The theory admits that there are three important elements necessary for human growth. They include autonomy, competence and relatedness. By autonomy, indigenes or inhabitants of a region should be the ones to control the resources of the area. They should freely act according to their values and be void of external pressure. By competence, the indigenes should be the ones to improve or develop the area. Relatedness calls for the establishment of relations with other communities and cared for by others, and experience a sense of belonging.

Self-Determination theory opines that when these three fundamental needs are satisfied, individuals are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation (involving in an

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<sup>23</sup> A. B. Djeudo, *Advanced Human, Economic and regional Geography (Area Studies): Concepts and Case Studies in a World of Development Contrast*, Vol. 1, Success Education Publishers, Limbe, Cameroon, 2008, p.5.

<sup>24</sup> W. Kruase, *Economic Development: The Underdeveloped World and American Interest*, San Francisco, Wards Worth, 1961, p.27.

<sup>25</sup> S. Brunel, *La Cooperation Nord-Sud*, Paris, Press Universitaires de France, 1997, p. 94.

<sup>26</sup> E. L. Deci and R. M. Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*, New York, Palgrave, 1985.

activity for its own sake, out of personal interest rather than for external rewards or pressure), vitality and well-being. It further holds that when these needs are thwarted or inadequately made, individuals may experience decrease motivation, low standard of living and depression. This theory is important to our study because it provides a valuable framework for understanding human motivation and the need for satisfying basic psychological needs for optimal growth and well-being. From this theory, one can understand that the economic issue in British Southern Cameroons was a fabricated one. British Southern Cameroonians needed to be given the chance to control their resources and gain independence the way they desired not by imposing two conditions on them to choose one.

### **Significance of Study**

The study is hoped shall be significant to the Cameroon government in that it deals with the socio-political and economic history of the country, which forms an indispensable part of the development of the country. This enables those strategies be implemented such that endeavours in political and socio-economic fields, lead to an improvement over the situation likely to prevail in their absence. Again, it provides measures to the Cameroon government and peace seekers to resolve problems emanating from economic issues in Cameroon and Southern Cameroons in particular.

The study is an essential contribution to the history of self-independence in Southern Cameroons in the sense that it enables the stake holders to understand that the economic strength of the territory during the trusteeship time was feed to permit the territory gain independence own her own. It also helps to retain elements of history through which we could formulate reliable propositions susceptible to guiding policy makers towards inter-community conflict management. It also serves as a source for further research in diverse disciplines.

The study gives a comprehension of the economic issues in Southern Cameroons and how it has undergone changes in respect to its independence. It is an embodiment of a peculiarity that has not been the center of focus of previous research works. This gives an attempt in rethinking the object of reflecting on the UN decision to reject the third option. It also gives an account of how Fulani sites have been a source of conflict in the area. It is hoped that this study will give researchers or scholars an understanding of how Southern Cameroons got the legitimate right to gain independence on her own. This is because one faces difficulties to understand why the territory was denied independence based on

economic viability but given to other states which were not viable as compared to Southern Cameroons. More so, the study is an asset in the understanding of the history of colonization on African traditional institutions. This would obviously show the role of modern and political actors in granting independence to states.

### **Scope and Delimitation**

For the reason of this study, we have decided to call the territory which is the subject of our research from 1946 to 1961, the Southern Cameroons although it was only in 1957 that the appellation was constitutionally recognized. The study begins from 1946 and ends in 1961. The year 1946 marks the year when the UN trusteeship council replaced the League of Nations mandate in Cameroon. The year 1961 signifies the independent date of British Southern Cameroons by reunifying with the Republic of Cameroon<sup>27</sup>.

Southern Cameroons in the context of our work refers to the state that opted to gain independence by joining the Republic of Cameroon following the results of the plebiscite organized by the UN in February 1961<sup>28</sup>. It was under a mandate in 1922 called the Cameroon province, and had a geographical area of 16, 58 square miles with a population of 445,735. It became a trust territory in 1946 under United Nation organization after the Second World War (WWII).<sup>30</sup> In that same year, the Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC) was created to revamp the economy of the territory. It was created as a stationary corporation to take over and administer most of the plantations confiscated from the Germans in 1939 for the benefit of the territory.

### **Literature Review**

This writing on the economic history of the British southern Cameroons occupies a privilege place in African history and Cameroon in particular. The question of the independence in British southern Cameroons has attracted many researchers from diverse disciplines such as anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers, political scientists, and most especially historians. Writing on issues or subject between 1945 and 1961, one has to make use of the many existing lateral sources on the history of British Southern Cameroons.

To begin, Abwa in his book “Cameroon *histoire d’un nationalism 1884-1961*” a presents the potentials, the religion of the territory (Africa miniature), and how it became a

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<sup>27</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*,

<sup>28</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985*, p. 141.

German protectorate through the signing of the Germano Douala treaty of 12 July, 1884<sup>29</sup>. He has examined the First World War and the partition of Cameroon in 1916, and German achievements. He equally unveils the mandate period in the French and British Southern Cameroons with their various colonial policies and most importantly, the trusteeship period of the national territory. He also presents the works of the first indigenous political party, Kamerun National Congress in British Southern Cameroons, formed in 1953 after the Mamfe conference and the KPP Kamerun People Party (KPP) and later the Kamerun National Democrat Party (KNDP) in 1955<sup>30</sup>. He exposes the history surrounding the plebiscites of the country. The work is of great importance as it educates us on the fact that British Southern Cameroonians were ripped to gained independence as they already formed political parties.

Aka in his book entitled the British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961, a study in colonialism and under development discusses the causes and consequences of British Southern Cameroons under development. He presents how colonialism has influenced economic growth and development in the territory, blames the League of Nations which for hindering the development of the territory<sup>31</sup>. He adds that British southern Cameroon was under developed because the British neglected the territory and attached it to Nigeria. He admits that British Southern Cameroons known as Cameroon province could stand on its own.

Ebune is one of those authors that has written on the political history of Cameroon. He examines in detail the birth of political parties and consciousness of British Southern Cameroons<sup>32</sup>. The author projects the role of political parties in the determination of the future of this territory and makes mention of the plebiscite but does not actually lay much emphasis on its impact given that it was not his point of concern in the book. This work is there intended to compliment the work

Ngoh in his book “the untold Story of Cameroon Reunification: 1955 to 1961” analyses the underground work of the reunification, the organization and the conduct of the plebiscite. He opines that the failure of the KNDP to formed a coalition government with the Cameroon People National Congress (CPNC) and presents a common united front in their dealings and negotiations to president Ahidjo, worked on the disadvantage of the Southern

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<sup>29</sup> Abwa, *Histoire d'un Nationalisme*.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* p. 57.

<sup>31</sup> E.A. Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961: A Study in Colonialism and Underdevelopment*, Platteville, Madison, 2002, p. 44.

<sup>32</sup> J. B. Ebune, *The Growth of Political Parties in Southern Cameroons 1916-1961*, Yaounde, CEPER, 1992.

Cameroonian elites thereby leading to their failure during the Fouban conference of July 1961<sup>33</sup>. It by the grace of his work that we learned the circumstances that led to the economic issue in Southern Cameroons.

Ngoh in his other book entitled “Cameroon 1884-1984 a hundred years of history examines the general history of Cameroon from the German annexation to the coming of President Paul Biya in power. He brings out the various policies used by the British and French to administer their various territories (Indirect Rule for the British and Assimilation, Association and policies like indignant, prestation and the police of la ‘*mise en valeur des colonies*’ for the French. <sup>34</sup>He exposes the rule of Union des Population du Cameroun (UPC, formed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 1948 in French Cameroon and later in British southern in 1957) vis-à-vis British Southern Cameroons’ history thereby giving us an insight of the economic issue in our area of study.

Fanso in his book entitled “Cameroon history for secondary and colleges volume I and II the colonial and post-colonial period” examines Cameroon on the eve of colonization and how the territory was socio-politically organized. He discusses treaties of annexation in Cameroon and the role of the Berlin West African conference of 1884-1885.<sup>35</sup> He further presents some indigenous resistances to German rule. He simplifies the history of the First World War and the partition of the territory and highlights that the British did very little to develop British Southern Cameroon during the mandate period, and considered the territory as a Nigerian Colony thereby by giving us a foundation story of the economic issue in British Southern Cameroon.

Ndi revisits the road leading to the Independence and Reunification of British southern Cameroons. He analyses some inescapable traps concerning the third option of the plebiscite question (independence blocked), accentuating how the UN tactfully reduced the chance for British Southern Cameroonians during the plebiscite. He holds that the rejection of the third option weakened Southern Cameroonians and worked in favour President Ahidjo<sup>36</sup>. This offers us a green light to understand how the UN contributed to the issue in Southern Cameroons.

Chem-Langhéé examines the history of Southern and Northern Cameroons where he explains how it was administered as part of Nigeria. He highlights the British mandate and

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<sup>33</sup>Ngoh, *Untold Story of Cameroon Reunification: 1955-1961*, p.8.

<sup>34</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1955 : A Hundred Years*

<sup>35</sup>Ngoh, *Cameroon History Since 1800*

<sup>36</sup> A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited, 1950-1972*, Bamenda, Paul’s Press, 2013, p. 37.

the economic activities during the period. The author examines the issue of viability as it was primordial during the period of independence of British Southern Cameroons and the question was whether or not Southern Cameroon or the Cameroons as a whole could constitute a viable economic and a political entity by itself. He also examines the plebiscite in British Southern and Northern Cameroons<sup>37</sup>. The work is of great importance to us because it gives us an insight on how the third option was rejected.

Chem-langéé again presents the picture of the political evolution of the Cameroons, marked by disagreements, opposing views and conflicting ideologies. He again makes allusions to the Plebiscite<sup>38</sup>. He demonstrates the movements of traditional rulers from one party to the other and how this influenced politics in the territory. Much is said on the plebiscite but the presentation of the resources British Southern Cameroons was endowed with are not presented.

Nfor treats the Southern Cameroons during the plebiscite and what the plebiscite stood for. He presents the UN general assembly resolution 1352 (XIV) of 16 October 1959, where Southern Cameroonians were to vote in a plebiscite to choose either to enjoy independence with Nigeria or the Republic of Cameroon. He further unveils the international boundaries of Southern Cameroons going from the Anglo-German treaties 1885-1914 and the Anglo-French treaties, consequent upon<sup>39</sup>. He also illuminates the relationship of Southern Cameroons with Nigeria and that Southern Cameroons with French Cameroon. The work helps us to understand how the League of Nations contributed to the economic issue in British Southern Cameroons.

Ngeh in his book constitutional development in Southern Cameroons, 1946-1961 from the trusteeship to independence examines the various constitutions found in Southern Cameroons from the Clifford constitution to the Littleton constitution. The author also presents the report of the fiscal commission concerning the financial situation of Southern Cameroons and analyses the road to independence by substantiating the plebiscite conference that took place in Southern Cameroons<sup>40</sup>. It is thanks to the work that we learned how Southern Cameroons was denied independence as separate entity.

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<sup>37</sup> B. Chem-Langhee, *The Paradoxes of Self-determination in the Cameroons Under United Kingdom Administration*, New York, Toronto, Oxford, 2004, p. 117.

<sup>38</sup> Chem-Langee, «The Road to the University State of Cameroon 1957-1972 » in *Annals Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences, University of Yaounde I*, Vol. VI, NO. 1 and 2, January-July 1990,

<sup>39</sup> N. Nfor Nfor, *The Southern Cameroons: The Truth of the Matter*, Bamenda, 2003, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> Ngeh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons, 1946-1961: From Trusteeship to Independence*, CEPER, Yaounde, 1990.

Amazee in his thesis the “Igbo factor in the politics of the southern Cameroon 1916-1961” examines how Southern Cameroons gained independence by joining La Republic du Cameroon. He attributes this to the Igbo domination. According to him, the Igbo caused more trouble to the British southern Cameroonians and that is why during the plebiscite most southern Cameroonians voted to join French Cameroon known as La Republic du Cameroon<sup>41</sup>. The analysis of the work educates us on the reasons that pushed southern Cameroonian to prefer independence by reunifying with French Cameroun.

Mbile who was an eye witness of the events of the plebiscite has equally presented an important work on politics in Cameroon in general and British Southern Cameroons in particular. The author brings out the political evolution of Southern Cameroons and handles issues like nationalism, the Eastern Regional crisis and most importantly the 1961 plebiscite which is the focus of our study. His findings were limited just to how the plebiscite was organized in British Southern Cameroons but this work will go an extra mile in looking at the impacts.

In a biograhpy of John Ngu Foncha, one of the key political actors of the area under study, Pius Soh traces Foncha’s path to greatness from his humble birth at Nkwen, his teaching career, involvement in K.N.C politics and contributions to the two Cameroons. The author concludes that Foncha finally endorsed reunification with french cameroon because the UN refused to grant a third option during the plebiscite<sup>42</sup>. The work helps us to know that the UN stood as a storming block as concerns the independence of Southern Cameroons as an entity on its own.

Johnson examines the difference between the various regions and ethnic groups in the two Cameroons, the common features and ethnic relations between these communities and the process of political integration that led to the birth of the Federal Republic of Cameroon. The study identifies the key actors who worked for the unity of the fragmented society in the two territories<sup>43</sup>. The author concludes that the political destiny of the Southern Cameroons was determined by the people’s deep-seated antipathy towards certain Nigerian people, a general attachment to British ways and a feeling of community with certain French people.

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<sup>41</sup> V. B Amazee, *The Igbo Factor in the Politics of the Southern Cameroon 1916-1961*, Yaoundé, Presse Univesitaire de Yaoundé, 2000.

<sup>42</sup> P. B. Soh, *Dr Jonn Ngu Foncha: The Cameroonian Statesman (A Biography)*, Bamenda Center for Social Science Research, 1999.

<sup>43</sup> W. R. Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation: Political Integration in a Fragmentory Society*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2001,

The work has not mentioned how Southern Cameroons Clamoured to gain independence basin git argument on the available resources.

Niba examines the various tendencies involved in the nationalism of the British Southern Cameroons. He presents the history of the partition of Cameroon in 1916, the impact of colonial rule, the British neglect of southern Cameroons and the evolution of constitutional changes in the territory. He also presents the role of the United Nations during their visiting mission from 1946 to 1959 under the trusteeship system leading to independence<sup>44</sup>. It is thanks to the work that we uncover why southern Cameroonians were eager to detach themselves from Nigerian politics.

Dze-Ngwa makes an interesting appraisal of the post reunification era with emphasizes on national integration<sup>45</sup>. The work has traced the political context before reunification passes through the plebiscite. It provides us with relevant material in understanding the role of the plebiscite in the history of Southern Cameroons. The work further attracts our attention as it traces the long journey of self-determination in the territory. It evokes the nationalists struggle in the territory. The work however does not bring out the resources British Southern Cameroons depended on to gain independence as an entity on its own.

Fonkeng presents the relationship between Southern Cameroon and Nigeria. He argues that the absence of efficient means of transport and communication network between Nigeria and southern Cameroon did not hinder Nigerians and Cameroonians from moving into one another's territory. He also examines the plebiscite questions in the British southern Cameroons and the trusteeship system in the territory. He presents how the United Nations influence the relation between southern Cameroon and Nigeria most especially during their visiting missions in the territory and also fixing a date for their independence without giving them room for the third option<sup>46</sup>. With this work, we gathered that the UN was contributed to the economic issue in southern Cameroons.

Takwa examines Cameroon prelude to the immediate post-independence agricultural policy. He presents the evolution of agriculture in Cameroon during the years of colonialism.

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<sup>44</sup> M. L. Niba, "Nationalism in the Southern Cameroons, 1939 to 1959", Ph/D Thesis in History, Univeesity of Yaoundé I, 1979.

<sup>45</sup> W. Dze-Ngwa, "National Unity and National Integration in Cameroon 1961-2000: Dreams and Realities", Ph.D Thesis, Department of History, University of Yaounde I, 2006.

<sup>46</sup> P. Fonkeng, "*United Nations Influence on Cameroon-Nigeria Relations 1946-2006, A Historical Investigation*", PhD Thesis in History, University of Yaoundé 1, 2015.



A brief history of agriculture during the colonial period 1884-1960 to First World War and second world war till independence of the territories<sup>47</sup>. The work informs us that southern Cameroon had the potentials of constituting an entity on its own. Apo on his part examines the economic potentials of Southern Cameroons. He outlines that Southern Cameroons was endowed with great economic potentials; fertile soil good for agriculture. This was especially around the food of mount Fako<sup>48</sup>. This further widens our minds is asking why southern Cameroon was denied independence on its own.

Nfi focuses on the involvement of settler's and occasional strangers in the politics of British Southern Cameroons. He exposes their contributions to the birth of the idea and process of reunification of the two Cameroons<sup>49</sup>. The work opines that French Cameroonians initiated and propagated this idea. They sponsored the fata split amongst the Southern Cameroon political elites in 1955 during the struggle to shift the issue of reunification from the periphery to the very heart of Southern Cameroons politics. The work reveals how Southern Cameroons gained independence by reunifying with French Cameroon. It educates us on the factors that hindered the independence of Southern Cameroons as an entity on its own.

Monoji examines British Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroun as entities with two distinctive inherited colonial cultures and levels of economic development making a real union complex<sup>50</sup>. He holds that this intricacy found conciliation in the adoption of a two-state federation styled the Federal Republic of Cameroon. He makes a diagnostic appraisal of President Ahidjo's economic justification for dismantling the Cameroon federation. He argues that the challenges faced by the state of West Cameroon developed from the absence of a clear-cut federal economic to orientate specific and complementary for the two states. It further reveals that although the harmonisation of the economies of the two states was aligned by the central vision of furthering national integration, its implementation was fraught with certain operational prejudices. The study teaches us in that it provides facts to prove that the argument on the inability to balance their budget was inconsistent with the economic and financial prospect of the territory.

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<sup>47</sup>Z. S. Takwa, "Agriculture and National Development Planning in Cameroon 1960-1990", PhD Thesis in History, University of Yaoundé I, 2014.

<sup>48</sup>A. S. Apo, "The Vicissitudes of the Kumba-Mamfe Highway Construction: A Historical Study, 1922-1961", Masters Dissertation in History, University of Yaoundé I, 2017.

<sup>49</sup>J. L. Nfi, "French Cameroonians in the Decolonisation Politics of the Southern Cameroons, 1945-1965", Ph. D Thesis, Department of History, University of Yaounde I, 2011.

<sup>50</sup>V. E. Monoji, "Abrogation of the Cameroon Federation: Economic Bases and Ramifications in Anglophone Cameroon, 1961-1996", PhD Thesis, Department of History and Archaeology, University of Bamenda, 2022.

Mformi critically examines the consequences of the United Nations plebiscite on Cameroon. She evaluates the plebiscite which was a mechanism of granting independence to some countries including British Southern Cameroons.<sup>51</sup> She reveals that some British Southern Cameroonians were not satisfied given that the UN did not grant the third option they stood for. She further exposes the fact that the idea of the two questions was masterminded by the British as they called on the UN not to support a third option. This was because they wanted the votes in favour of Nigeria. This is significant to ours because it educates us on the role the British and UN played as concern the decolonisation of British Southern Cameroon.

With all this literature reviewed, we realized that scholars have examined several aspects of politics in the Southern Cameroons such as the impact of the British neglect of the territory, the Igbo or Nigeria factor in the reunification struggle, the role of chiefs, political leaders like Endeley, Foncha, PM Kale and NN Mbile, the UN and political parties in the decolonization process in 1961 UN organized plebiscite and so far. There is no scientific, complete and critically update investigation on the economic potential of British Southern Cameroons before independence. Our bone of contention in this dissertation is to bring out the economic potentials of British Southern Cameroons before independence and establish whether it was economically or not able.

### **Statement of problem**

Britain considered the German annexation of Cameroon as a *coup d'état* because she was interested in the territory and Germany annexed acquired it by means of intrigues. It is important to mention that German economic activities in the territory were highly concerned with plantation agriculture and her trade with the indigenes was based on trust system<sup>52</sup>. After the defeat of the Germans during First World War, the territory was partitioned between Britain and France after the failure of a joint administration. This partition was confirmed in 1919 by the Milner Simon agreement<sup>53</sup>.

In 1922, the territory became a mandated territory of the League of Nations. Principles governing British and French mandates were: Administer on behalf of the League, by respecting rules and regulations spelled out in the covenant (Article 22): "Britain and

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<sup>51</sup> B. M. Mformi, "Impact of the United Nations Plebiscite on Cameroon, 1961-1996", Masters Dissertation in History, University of Yaoundé I, 2020.

<sup>52</sup> S. T. Enoma, "Trade in Southern Cameroons Under British Administration 1961-1945", Masters Dissertation in History, University of Yaounde I, p. 8.

<sup>53</sup>T. V. Le Vine, *The Cameroon from Mandate to Independence*, California, University of California, 1964, p.19

France have to administer Cameroon towards self-government and subsequent independence”; Send in annual reports to the mandates commission showing how their administrative and socio-economic structures evolved and Maintain an open door policy in the domains of customs and missions. France administered her owned portion of Cameroon on its own while Britain attached hers to Nigeria. British Southern Cameroons was attached to Eastern Nigeria while British Northern Cameroons was attached to Northern Nigeria<sup>54</sup>.

In 1924, Britain auctioned almost all the German plantations in the territory to their original owners<sup>55</sup>. This suggests that during the mandate period much of the economy was in the hands of the Germans. In 1939, the Second World War broke out and lasted until 1945<sup>56</sup>. One of its major consequences was that the League of Nations was replaced by the United Nation Organization which was against colonization. British Southern Cameroons’ economic activities during the trusteeship period were under the Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC), to prepare it towards self-determination<sup>57</sup>.

The independence of the British Southern Cameroons in 1961 by joining the Republic of Cameroon was an issue of controversy since the different stake holders were not unanimous. They had different points of views. For example, Dr Endeley, the former Prime Minister of the territory stood for independence by joining the Federal Republic of Nigeria while Foncha stood for independence by reunifying with the Republic of Cameroon. P. M Kale and some *Fons* stood for outright independence<sup>58</sup>. The third option was not considered because it was thought that British Southern Cameroons was not economically viable to stand on its own. This issue urged us to pose this central question: what triggered the decolonisation of British Southern Cameroons? Other subsidiary questions that guided our work were:

1. What was the economic situation of British Southern Cameroons before 1945 and during the trusteeship period?
2. How did British Southern Cameroons decolonize herself?
3. What role did the trusteeship council play and what was the impact of the decolonization of British Southern Cameroons?

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<sup>54</sup> Chem-Langhee, *The Paradoxes of Self-determination*, p.117.

<sup>55</sup> N. K. Takor, « The Bamenda Grassland in Long Distance Trade c.1850-1961: Evolutionary Dynamics, Socio-Economic and Political Transmutations », Ph. D Thesis in History, University of Yaounde I, 2011, p. 91.

<sup>56</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 249.

<sup>57</sup> Abwa, *Cameroon Hstoire d'un Nationalisme*, p. 57.

<sup>58</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p. 156.

## **Objectives of Study**

The objective of the study is to examine, analyse and draw valuable conclusions on the economic issue of British Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship period from 1946-1961. It should be noted that each chapter has a specific objective that will contribute to the realization of the general objective. According to chapters, the specific objectives intends to:

1. Present the economic situation of British Southern Cameroons during the mandate and trusteeship periods.
2. Demonstrates the decolonisation process of British Southern Cameroons
3. Establish the impact of the decolonisation process on the territory.

## **Sources of Data and Methodology**

In our research reflection, we uncovered the interesting history of British Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship period. We also tried to bring out the economic potentials of the territory, demonstrates and evaluates its decolonisation process during the trusteeship period. After consultation with intellectuals (researchers, lecturers and students), we were able to acquire some directives on some major documentation centres. Two methods were used to collect data: the cumulative bibliographical study and the systematic research methods. While the first consisted of searching for most recent articles and books concerning our research question, the second consisted of visiting documentation centers, making fastidious details on books and files concerning our research question. In this connection, both secondary and primary sources were exploited.

In relation to secondary sources, we consulted both published and unpublished materials which handled aspects directly linked or associated to the study. Published sources included: books and articles in journals, while unpublished sources included: Thesis, Dissertations and Essays. These sources were consulted in documentation centers like the Central Library of the University of Yaoundé I and the libraries of the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Science, History Department, University of Yaounde I, Advanced Teachers Training College, Yaounde, Ministry of Scientific Research, University of Buea, and that of History-Geography-Archaeology, of the University of Yaounde. The reading of abundant literature on the subject permitted us to have an appraisal of what has been done by other researchers, their different arguments and approaches used in analyzing topics related to British Southern Cameroons.

Use was equally made of the National Archives in Buea (NAB), Regional Archives Bamenda (RAB) and the Archives of the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation were consulted to have first-hand information. Special emphases were laid on the collection of oral data through interviews. This was carried out with people who had knowledge of the events by means of participation or learning. Question guides acted as road maps for our interviews. Some were handed to literate informants who were either on retirement or less occupied. Group discussions were indispensable in information acquisition, in that they provided consensus opinion on controversial issues. And to better ensure the authenticity of information got from oral information, to that acquired from published and unpublished sources, efforts were made to reconcile both sources of information at all levels.

The internet was an indispensable asset, exploited for the study. After having a conceptual knowledge of our topic from secondary sources, this enabled us to start with the collection of primary data including oral interviews. The methodology of this study followed the historical techniques of data collection from various complementary sources, validity checks, interpretation and analysis. As a writing technique, we adopted both the thematic and chronological approaches. Due to variance in sources, we were guided by objectivity and scrutiny to best ensure historical credibility.

### **Problems Encountered**

It is important for us to present the difficulties we came across during the research and development phases of the dissertation. The first problem we encountered was getting access to some earmarked secondary sources in some documentation centers. This case was typical with the Central Library of the University of Yaounde I, where earmarked documents were found on index cards, but not on book shelves. To compromise secondary data therefore, we used some documentation centres out of Yaounde which were relevant to the study notably in Buea and Bamenda.

Another problem was conducting oral interviews. Considering the implication of oral information, we faced difficulties meeting people who participated during the British era in Cameroon even when fortunate to meet some, there was a general reluctance and suspicion on their part, when it came to providing information on certain issues. They preferred discussing general issues. We thus did all to convince them to give us the needed information. Another of the difficulties faced during this exercise was the on-going crisis in the two Anglophones regions. It was not too easy to go down on the field especially with the

issues of ghost town. Despite the numerous problems encountered, no effort was spared in enabling the study to conclusion.

### **Organisation of Work**

The work is divided into four chapters including a general introduction and conclusion. Each chapter starts with a brief introduction and ends with a brief conclusion. This maintains an inner logic, giving room for smooth transitions to subsequent chapters. The general introduction contextualizes the study. It presents a substantial literature and exposes the research problem. Chapter one examines the geographical setting and background of Southern Cameroons. Chapter two shall examine the economic structures during the trusteeship period. The terms of the trusteeship and the Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC), it further brings out the economic potentials of British Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship period. Chapter three dwells on the economic decolonization process and chapter four analyses the failure of trusteeship and its impact.

## CHAPTER ONE

### GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

#### Introduction

Before 1884 there was no Cameroon all we had were States, Kingdoms, Tribes, Clans and Ethnic groups. It is not certain that these groups constituted a territory, but there was a way of life prior to our period of study. Southern Cameroons before colonization had a primitive economy. This lies on the fact that the different economic sectors had no much improvement. There was lesser technology and economy backwardness. The primitive economy was focused on labour, road construction (community labour), subsistence agriculture and exchange. Therefore, this section will evaluate the level of economic underdevelopment before 1884 and the mechanisms put in place to improve it.

#### I. Geographical Setting:

##### A. Location and Soils

Former Southern Cameroons was situated in the Gulf of Guinea of West Africa. It is found within Longitude 8° and 12° E and Latitude 5° and 10° N. It has a surface area of about 43000sqkm<sup>59</sup>, with an estimated population of 4 million making it more populous than some nations that are members of the UN organization. The territory lies entirely within the tropics and is blessed with heavy rainfall, volcanic soil and mineral resources.

Soil which is the thin layer of material covering the earth surface and from the weathering of rock is made up of mineral particles: organic materials, water and living organism. Soils in the area under review were mostly volcanic. There was the black strong soil similar to that of Tombel and Mbanga, with volcanic sand, signs of recent eruptions<sup>60</sup>. In some parts of the area, soils were fertile due to the abundant rainfall and sunshine which enhanced the breakdown of soils nutrients. The deposition of debris by runoffs also increases the fertility of the soil. It should be highlighted that the soil type and fertility varied in the area. The topography and other physical elements conditioned these. The soils are classified into 4 types: volcanic, feralitic, alluvial and hydromorphic soils. The volcanic soils favoured the establishment of plantation agriculture.

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<sup>59</sup> B. E. Aro, *Element of Physical and Geography in Cameroon*, Kumba, Housse Print press, 2021, p. 7.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

## B. Relief

The relief of Southern Cameroons was characterized by lowlands and highlands. This region is influenced by high rainfall especially areas around the volcanic mountains (13 350 feet) which has a high rainfall that dominated the Southern Cameroons which was situated within the equatorial zone<sup>61</sup>. During the raining season, that is May to September, its annual figure attained 6000mm per annual. Within this period in this region, rain usually falls for about three days nonstop with little or no sunshine. The region also experienced high atmospheric humidity due to South East trade winds that blow over the Atlantic and join the Southwest monsoon winds blowing over the Gulf of Guinea. It therefore brought much moisture than precipitated heavy rainfall<sup>62</sup>.

Moreover, the Region also experienced topographic rainfall on the South Western slopes during the rainy season periods. The soil absorbs vast quantity of water from the rivers coming from the South. Also, from April to May the area is full with water. On the other hand, during the dry season water sink into the sub soil. The soil is very dry leaving cracks in every direction. The period during the dry season (December to May), rainfall is low and most often conventional. The temperatures are very high in some areas of the Region and reached between 30 °C to 32° C. The mean annual temperature is generally 25°C.

## C. Vegetation and Climate

Southern Cameroons was blessed with Flora and Fauna. The coastal lowlands were characterised with high rainfall with a dense Equatorial Forest with luxuriant species of trees and these areas was sparsely populated. The forest was usually cut down to make room for farms and habitation. The dense Equatorial Forest presents a canopy of three different layers, the first is above 35m, the second range from 20-35m and the third between 15-20m. Also, the species of trees in this forest included Iroko, Mahogany, Red Ironwood, Ebony and White Wood<sup>63</sup>. Oil palms just like plantation trees like rubber, cocoa and coffee cover the forest. A huge forest reserve exists at Kembong, Mbo and Takamanda.

Climate is often considered as the physical factor that determines the activities of people in a specific area. It enables the practice of activities that are beneficial to their welfare. British Southern Cameroons is part of the savannah regional climate. Thus, the equatorial climate type with two major seasons characterizes this area: the dry season lasting

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<sup>61</sup> Aro, *Element of Physical Geography*, p. 8.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Thompson Enow Ebi, 70 Years, Farmer, Limbe, September 29<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>63</sup> NAB, Georges, AF 17/ce07, N°128/174, 1928, p.17.



from November to March and rainy season from April to October. During the dry season, there is more insulation and evaporation. The mornings are usually tremendously cold while the evenings are hot and dry. Rainfall here can be associated with local thunderstorms, which is sporadic and widely experienced both during the middle and end of the season. The maximum annual rainfall shows 20,000-10,000mm<sup>64</sup>. The temperature is generally high with a mean annual temperature of 32°C recorded in April and low temperatures can be as low as 10°C experienced in December and January, but the mean minimum annual temperature is 22°C<sup>65</sup>. It should be noted that during the rainy season, days of sunshine are reduced. This encouraged the settlement of Europeans power and the establishment of trading companies as exchange could be done.

## II. Human Background: Early History (Pre-colonial Cameroon)

Before the European traders, missionaries, explorers and colonizers came to Cameroon, the territory and its people existed. Note should be taken that a number of things did not exist in the territory such as a defined demarcated boundary separating Cameroon from her neighbours, the name of the country was not known as Cameroon. The name Cameroon is a European creature and there was no government governing the national territory, but there were ethnic groups or communities. Some of these ethnic communities had already established their civilization while others were still to develop theirs. This was evident by their political and socio-economic organization.

In the political domain, systems differed as they existed two types: the centralized or state and the decentralized or stateless society. Power in the centralized system was placed at the center and very often in the hands of one person. He exercised divine power. Succession to the throne was by royal descent. Examples of state societies include the Bamoum, Kom, Nso, Fulbe among others. The supreme leader was called either the *Fon*, an *Ardor* or Sultan. In the decentralized society, power was in the hands of the officials of the clans, associations, secret societies, village councils etc. Example of this group included Bakossi, Douala, Ewondo and Bakwer.

As concerns the social field, ethnic groups in Cameroon were well organized socially; men, women and children lived in huts built according to the traditions of the group. Men exercised power while women took care of household. Polygamous marriages were very common than monogamous ones. They had different ancestral beliefs, worships, cultural

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<sup>64</sup> T. Tsala, R. Fomenky and M. Gwafoebe, *School Atlas for Cameroon*, Macmillian, London, 1985, p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

display, annual celebration and death celebrations. There was no formal education. Children were taught informally by their parents on every aspects of life. Herbs were used to cure illnesses like dysentery, small pox, malaria etc. Religion and morality were an integral part of the daily life of the people. The various communities believed in the existence of a supreme God who is the creator of life and universe though gods also existed. They had the belief of life after death. Spiritual word equally existed in their system. Disintegration set in within the ethnic groups as Islam and Christianity was introduced to them by the beginning of the 19century.

With reference to economic life, agriculture was the main economic activity of the people of ancient Cameroon. Food crop production was mainly the responsibility of women. They reared animals such as pigs, goats, fowls among others. Pottery was another aspect of life. They made pots with the use of clay. Trade was carried out by the means of exchange barter. Markets were placed at the center. This was to enable people attend it easily. People bought and sold their articles. Hunting and fishing as not left out especially in the forest zone.

#### **A. Economic Development: Pre-colonial (Trans-Atlantic Trade)**

This is one of the major factors that contributed to the underdeveloped of Africa and Cameroon in particular. During inter-tribal wars, the defeated tribes were subjugated as slaves. The phenomenon of slave trade reached it pick when Christopher Colombo discovered America in 1492<sup>66</sup>. The establishment of plantations in America necessitated the need for labour forced. Indians that were working in these plantations were weak. Europeans powers in the quest for labour for their plantation turn to Africa to look for labour which was cheap and Cameroon in particular<sup>67</sup>. This aspect intensified slave trade.

Trade across the Atlantic Ocean began in the 15<sup>th</sup> century following the Portuguese and Dutch exploration of the West African coast. The principal exports were slaves, gold, ivory, timber, dyed, wood, gum, bee wax, leather, spices. From Europe, the imports were alcoholic drinks, guns and gun powder, cotton and iron goods<sup>68</sup>. Between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century an average of 13000 (thirteen thousand) slaves were exported annually from the West

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<sup>66</sup> John and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 4.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with Bernice Bessem Ayuk.

<sup>68</sup> E. K. Chu, "The Menchum Community in the Cameroon-Nigeria Trans-Border Trade: A Historical Study, 1885-2010", Ph.D Thesis in History, University of Yaounde I, 2019, p.4.

African coast. The number increased to 27500 in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, 70000 in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and 135000 in the 1830s<sup>69</sup>.

The slaves were obtained from the Cameroon Coast across the coasts of Lagos (Nigeria) and Ghana. In Cameroon, the people of Bimbia and Douala acted as middlemen between the people of hinterland and the Europeans. The hinterland middlemen were the Banyangi, Bangwa, Bali, and Bamum among others. The effect of this was that Southern Cameroonians who were powerful, skilful and talented were sold into slavery thereby handicapping Southern Cameroons. If these people were not forcefully taken out of our area of study, they would have mounted pressure on world governing body to grant independence to southern Cameroon as an entity on its own.

### **B. German Kameun**

The Portuguese were the first European power to come to Cameroon. Fernando Po was the first to arrive Cameroon in 1472<sup>70</sup>. Portuguese sailors saw plenty of prawns around the River Wouri estuary (river's mouth) and named it *Rio dos Cameroes*, meaning river of prawns. It was from this name that the name Cameroon was eventually derived. The Portuguese established contacts with the indigenes in the coast because they were so interested in trading activities along the coast.

The Portuguese were replaced by the Dutch who established trading stations in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Dutch were later replaced by the British in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They were also involved in trading activities especially at the Bight of Biafia<sup>71</sup>. By 1870, the British already had two trading firms: John Holt in Victoria and Ambas Bay in Douala. The British spread the word of God<sup>72</sup>. They created a court of equity in Douala in 1856 and the court of justice in Victoria in 1858.

The next European country after Britain was Germany. Her traders visited the coast of Cameroon from 1849 through the Carl Woermann firm. The Germans named the territory Kamerun. By 1875, they had trading firms such as Jantzen and Thormahlen and Carl Woermann firms which competed with British firms. The French were the last to come to Cameroon. They were against slave trade just like the British and encouraged legitimate trade (trade in commodities). They concentrated more in the southern part of the country especially

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<sup>69</sup> V. G Fanso, Trade and Supremacy on the Coast 1887-1897, in Z. M. Njeuma (ed), *Introduction to History of Cameroon in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, London, Macmillan, 1989, p. 20.

<sup>70</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.113.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

in Big Batanga, Campo and Malimba. They imposed taxes on non-French goods in their areas of influence<sup>73</sup>.

#### a. German Economy: Establishment of Trading Companies

The British created trading companies as R. W. King, the Amba Bay trading company, the John Holt company Rider Son and Andrew firm among others. These companies promoted British trade and imperialistic tendencies. The Germans also established companies like the Woermann and the Thomahlen firms; they also put in place large business in Cameroon territory in 1868<sup>74</sup>. The German monopolize trade by giving out bribes called 'dash' and credit facilities to the local chiefs. By 1884, the two German firms were exporting several tons of palm oil and palm kernels. They also had the monopoly of the ivory trade, exporting about 23000kg each year<sup>75</sup>. By 1883-84 the statistics for trading activities of Germany and Britain at the Cameroon Coast were comparative and competitive can be seen on tables 2 and 3

**Table 1: Incoming Ships to German Cameroon**

Year	Total	German	English
1879	23	5	18
1880	17	6	11
1881	25	7	18
1882	31	13	18
1883	35	15	18
1884	54	27	27

Source: Tazifor and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 23.

**Table 2: Volume of Trade between Germany and Britain**

Countries	1883		1884	
	Ships	Tonnage	Ships	Tonnage
a) German Steamers	15	20.085	27	27.791
b) English Steamers	15	20.063	27	29.450
c) German Steamships	2	726	1	16.000
d) English steamships	6	2.052	7	2.005

Source: Tazifor and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 23.

<sup>73</sup> Abwa, *Cameroon Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p. 57.

<sup>74</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary*, p. 21.

<sup>75</sup> John and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 23

From the above statistics on tables 2 and 3, one realizes that between 1879 and 1884 British trade maintained a steady balance while that of Germany was increasing from year to year. The increase was very substantial from 1882. A British newspaper published in 1884 stated that the two German firms on the Coast exporting about 200 tons of palm kernels respectively, monthly while British firms on the same area exported less palm oil and almost no palm kernel. Also, the Germans had the sole monopoly of the ivory trade exporting about 50, 000 Ibos per year<sup>76</sup>.

### **i. Industrial Revolution**

This became a prime mover of a trend of events in Africa and shaped the destiny of African Countries<sup>77</sup>. Industrial revolution was a period where work done by hand was now done by machines. European countries especially Britain decided to put an end to slavery and slave trade and introduce plantation agriculture in Cameroon. This was because slave trade was not more profitable to them whereas the labour force could stay in Africa and worked in plantations. Industrial revolution was largely responsible for the abolition of slave trade and the introduction of legitimate trade; the buying and selling of goods and services. Reaching its apex, competition and rivalry among European trading companies for the control of resources to feed their industries became the order of the day. These rivalries cumulated in the colonization and partition of Africa<sup>78</sup>.

By the mid-19th century, most European countries had become industrialized and the quest for territories to satisfy their own industries high. The philosophy of new imperialism came up; this concept described the political and economic philosophy pursued by the industrialized European nations after the abolition of slave trade. Their main objective was to control the economy of Africa and other part of the world<sup>79</sup>. This affected Southern Cameroons as the British exploited the territory mainly for their benefit. Southern Cameroons' economy was therefore in the hand's others.

### **ii. The Berlin West African Conference 1884-85**

Trade rivalries in among European powers in Africa precipitated the holding of the Berlin Colonial Conference in November 1884. This conference was aimed at partitioning Africa and settling disputes between the colonial powers. European powers assembled at a conference to discuss problems relating to the affairs of the African Continent in Berlin. The

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<sup>10</sup> John and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 23.

<sup>77</sup> B. Barkindo and als, *Africa and the Wider World Africa Since the Scramble*, Longman Nigeria, 1989, p. 87.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8.

<sup>79</sup> Interview with Thomson Enow Ebi

European powers that participated in the conference were Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain. Turkey and United States of America participated as observers<sup>80</sup>. The main objective of the Berlin Colonial Conference was to avoid any confrontation between European powers in Africa. The resolution of the conference through the Berlin act made it clear that European powers in the course for acquiring areas in Africa should avoid confrontation among themselves as stipulated by some of its articles.

The effect of this was the intensification of the scramble for British Southern Cameroons was mainly for economic reason<sup>81</sup>. European countries needed a place to sell their surplus goods, search for raw materials for their home industries and to an extent to settle their excess population. The scramble for Cameroon began around 1880s in the rivalry over trading rights amongst the European Nations at the coast of Cameroon. The word scramble has to do with hasty attempt to annex Cameroon. Basing on the work of the explorers, traders and missionaries, European powers calculated the benefits that accrued from the territories especially southern Cameroons<sup>82</sup>.

The different European companies felt that they needed such protection in order to gain access to the source and supply of raw materials which they needed for their industries. The countries involved here were Britain, France, Germany and Spain<sup>83</sup>. This was at the disadvantage of Southern Cameroons because the British exploited their potentials thereby weakening their economy.

After the German unification in 1870, its chancellor, Otto Von Bismarck decided to have a place under the “sun” that is acquiring territories in Africa. His decision was also influenced by German business men whose firms were operating on the Cameroon coast. The companies concerned were the Woermann, the Jantzen and Thormahlen companies. These two companies actually influenced the annexation of Cameroon<sup>84</sup>. The Germans acquired the right to administer Cameroon after the Germano-Duala treaty signed with the traditional rulers King Bell and Akwa. The Duala treaty of July 1884 gave Germany the right to administered Kamerun and Kamerun was considered as a German protectorate. During the thirty-two years of Cameroon protectorate, the Germans laid the foundation of colonial

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<sup>80</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.157.

<sup>81</sup> Barkindo, *Africa and the Wider World*, p.11.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Bernice Bessem Ayuk...

<sup>83</sup> Barkindo, *Africa and the Wider World*, p.12.

<sup>84</sup> John and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 53.

(modern) administration and established the bases of modern economic educational, judicial and fiscal developments.

During the German administration of Cameroon, the economy was in the hands of German commercial firms of Hamburg which wanted to establish a commercial colony *Handelskolonie* in Cameroon. The economic policy of the *Handelskolonie* was determined essentially by the economic interests of the German market. Before the German annexation of Cameroon, Germans had some important firms along the coast. These were the *Jantzen* and *Thomahlen*, many German firms and plantation saw light after the German annexation of 1884. In order to facilitate exploration of Cameroon, the Germans instituted the colonial *wirtschaftliches* committee, the colonial economic committee in 1898<sup>85</sup>.

The Colonial Economic Committee (C.E.C) was a child of the committee for the importation of products from German colonies which was founded in 1897 concerning plantations by 1913 there were over fifty-eight established one and the most influential promoters of the plantation industry was a Hamburg firm which started the development in West Africa<sup>86</sup>. Also in order to encourage internal trade, two large concession companies were formed in 1898/1899. They were the South Cameroon Company and the North West Cameroon Company (Gesellschaft Sud-Kamerun and Gesellschaft North-West Kamerun). The capitals were Yaounde and Fomaban respectively.

### **iii. Development of plantations**

The Germans in Cameroon laid emphasis on the development of plantation agriculture, communication, networks transportation and trade. Before the official taking of Cameroon that is the Germano-Duala treaty of 1884, the agent of *Woermann* Company trading on the Cameroon Coast had taken note of the fertile lands, the volcanic site around the slope of the Cameroon Mountain and discussed the possibility of establishing plantations<sup>87</sup>. The Germans annexation of Cameroon in 1884 gave them an impetus to establish plantation agriculture. After 1897, *Zintgraff* with the aid of *Wohlmann* created the *Westafrikanische pflanzungsgesellschaft* Victoria, the West Africa plantation company Victoria (W.A.P.V) and this plantation had a working capital of 2.5 million marks.

In 1896, another plantation company known as the *Bibundi* Company was formed and began work with a capital of 2.1 million marks. By 1902 to 1913, over 12 plantation

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<sup>85</sup> Interview with Bernice Bessem Ayuk...

<sup>86</sup> Ngoh, *History of Cameroon Since 1800*, p.84.

<sup>87</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary*, p. 47.

companies were formed and altogether make 58 German plantations in Cameroon with 195 European employees and 17827 African workers<sup>88</sup>. The vast majority of the plantations were situated in the present-day Fako and Meme division and in the region of the Mungo. Some plantations were established South of Duala country at Ngulemekong east of Kribi and at Sangmelima. In 1905 cocoa cultivation was established in Ebolowa and Yaounde and extended in the interior. These plantations specialized in the production of oil palm product cocoa and banana which was introduced in 1907. In 1912 banana plantation covered 2000 hectares<sup>89</sup>.

The Berlin West African Plantation Company which was founded in 1897 with its headquarters at Bibundi. The company grew cocoa, rubber and oil palms. Other plantations included the Idenau Plantation which grew cocoa and rubber and oil palms<sup>90</sup>. The Debundscha Plantation founded in 1905 grew cocoa and rubber. The Hilfer Plantation was also involved in the growing of cocoa, rubber and oil palms. Though the Bai rubber and cocoa Estate Ltd was in English Company, it was locally managed by German and Austrian employees. Like many other plantations it grew cocoa and rubber<sup>91</sup>.

The Germans in Cameroon also laid more emphasis on agriculture, forestry and botanic garden<sup>92</sup>. The garden was found in Victoria and it was used for the experimentation of hundreds of various tropical plants in effort to discover which one had the values that allow exploitation. Apart of the Victoria botanic garden, there were between 20-40 similar gardens attached to military post and administrative stations in different part of the territory<sup>93</sup>. Experiments were also carried on by experts in the cross breeding of local cattle with those imposed from Europe. When experiments were successful, seeds for sale to planters and to Cameroonian farmers were produced<sup>94</sup>.

#### **iv. Labour**

The German created more than 50(fifty) plantations in Cameroon. These plantations needed a labour force to work within it. The coastal areas have fertile soil which were suitable for plantation agriculture whereas, the Bamenda grass field presented no major

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<sup>88</sup> N. N. Paul, *The German Presence in the Western Grass field 1891-1913*, A German Colonial Account, Leiden: ASC Publications, 1989. p. 20.

<sup>89</sup> Ngoh, *History of Cameroon since 1800*, p. 84.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p.85.

<sup>92</sup> NAB, AF19, File, 27, N°117/148, D. C, Torey, Banyang Assessment Report on the Ossirdirge Division'', 1930, p.12.

<sup>93</sup> Takor, "The Bamenda Grassland in Long Distance Trade c.1850-1961", 92.

<sup>94</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 18.



economic attraction to European traders and planters but served as a source of manpower. The German therefore established a military station in Bamenda, this military station was intended to ensure a steady supply of labour force in German Plantation and Government services due to an expansion of the plantation system<sup>95</sup>. There was a growing need for colonial bureaucracy and the construction of railway for commercial and military purposes. Due to inadequate labour force, labour force became the bottom line of German Colonial Policy. According to one conservative estimate, 150 000 Cameroonians were conscripted to work for the German government in 1914<sup>96</sup>.

Also, the Germans “imported” workers from the Grass fields, as people in the vicinity of the plantations showed little inclination to work for them. The Germans administration rewarded the grass field’s rulers because the rulers recruited workers to work in German Plantations. Labourers were often forcefully recruited by their chiefs, as those which did not meet Government demands for labour were beaten and chained<sup>97</sup>. The system of forced labour, was introduced with a compulsory service ranging from as method of 6 to 18 months gave rise to much resentment, particularly as method recruitment were often inhumane, wages low, working condition abominable and the death rate among plantation and railway workers were very high. Much of the resistance towards German rule focused on its labour policies. Apart from existing basic labour force in the territory, there was need for increased skilled labour to help meet Germans’ needs<sup>98</sup>. In the nutshell, the Germans excised forced labour on natives in order to achieve their economic aspiration.

## **v. Experimentation**

In other to meet their economic interests, the Germans were urged to put an accent on research. In this line, efforts were directed in developing agriculture, forestry and establishing Botanic Garden. The Victoria Botanical Garden in 1892 was introduced by the First German Governor, Von Sodden<sup>99</sup>. The Garden was founded and placed under Doctor Preuss for experimentation with hundreds of various tropical plants in an effort to discover which had value for exploitation. Apart from the Victoria Botanical Garden, 20 to 40 similar Gardens were put in place and other smaller ones were attached to military posts and administrative stations in different part of the territory. These gardens did important research, findings and

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<sup>95</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 18.

<sup>96</sup> NAB, AF 17/ce 07/N°128/174, 1928, Georges EHF, ‘Administrative division in Southern Cameroons’, 1930, p. 12.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>98</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 10.

<sup>99</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A History of Cameroon*, p. 14.

publish useful information on tropical plants and crops. This greatly improved on the development of plants<sup>100</sup>.

Also, other experiments were carried out by experts in the cross breeding of local and imported cattle. When these experiments were successful, seeds and cuttings for sale or distribution were supplied to planters and farmers in various localities. As early as 1903, some chiefs and indigenous planters especially among groups collabourating with the Germans like Ewondos, Bali and Bamums were encouraged to plant their own crops (palms, cocoa, rubber, coffee and others) were planted for the interest of German traders<sup>101</sup>. The German also initiated scientific researched in the territory with the establishment of research and experimentation centres like the Victoria Botanic Garden in 1892 and a host of others. It was desire to acquire high yielding plant species that contributed to the creation of these researched units. The masses were educated on the proper exploitation of the colony's resources and protection of both funa and flora which later benefited the territory after independence<sup>102</sup>.

#### **vi. Import and Export Goods and Colonial Monetary System**

These products were especially alcohol, guns, and cloths. Alcohols were destructive and valueless. These imported destructive and valueless products were profitable to the Germans business interest. In 1885, Adolf Woermann stated this point clear; he said that if the Germans were to feel very much for the Negro, then they will prohibit the exportation of alcohol to Africa<sup>103</sup>. He however, said that this would be prejudicial to an important sector of German external trade. He went further to say that it was through the exportation of alcohol that firms were able to maintain a navigation line to Africa which was advantageous to the German industry<sup>104</sup>.

From Cameroon, the Germans exported agricultural products. These products included palm oil, palm kernels, rubber, ivory, timber and cocoa. Cameroon imported cloth, liquor, arms, gun powder, watches, pipes, umbrellas and rice<sup>105</sup>. Other imports included materials for the construction of roads and railways, steels, iron, machinery, food and medical supplies. These imports replaced the destructive product which had initially dominated

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<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> Ako, History Dictionary, p. 12.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Njeuma, *Introduction to the History*, p. 14.

<sup>104</sup> Fanso *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.86.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

Cameroon imports. In 1902 for instance, the exports from Cameroon of palm oil to Germany stood at 1,052,926 German marks; the export of palm kernels stood at 2,267,321 marks; rubber was valued at 1,418,870 an ivory stood at 658,422 marks. In the same year, German imports to Cameroon of cloth, alcohol and salt for example stood at 3,476,997; 1,099,336 and 541,823 marks respectively<sup>106</sup>.

Generally, Germany was Cameroon's main trading partner. Between 1903 and 1902, Germany imported from Cameroon not less than 60 percent of Cameroon's exportable products and Cameroon imported not less than 80 percent of her needs from Germany in the same<sup>107</sup>. The colonial economy was characterized by a monopolistic marketing system. The Colonial Country had European Companies that controlled a particular sector of the economy such as Mining or the trade of particular goods. The European powers were always in a position to influence the price of major commercial activities centered on what European needed to buy or sell. The major company derived their monopoly from the old charters granted them by their respective home Government during the era of company rule.

The Germans in Cameroon encouraged trade by opening trading post all over the territory<sup>108</sup>. They bought palm oil, rubber, kola nuts and ivory in the interior. More so, in 1898-1899 Governor Puttkamer created the *Gesellschaft* Sud Kamerun and Nord Kamerun respectively. They established a German monopoly in rubber and ivory trade, between 1903-1912 German imported 60 percent of Cameroon export products and Cameroon imported about 80 percent of her need from Germany. She imported goods such as cloth, liquor, arms, rice, machines and medical supplies. In the nutshell, the marketing system during the Colonial period was characterized by a monopolistic marketing system<sup>109</sup>.

Before the advent of colonialism, Africa in general and Cameroon in particular used the Barter system of trade. During the colonial era, goods traded between Africans and Europeans were paid in cowries shells, manilas, iron bars, bottles of gin and yard of cloths. When the volume increased in the introduction and intensification of production of cash crops, this system of payment became inappropriate and the introduction of the currency became a necessity.

The currency of the Metropolitan country was introduced in each colony. British pound sterling was adopted in British African colonies for exchange rate. Germans on the

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<sup>106</sup> Ngoh, *History of Cameroon Since 1800*, p. 183.

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

<sup>108</sup> Barkindo et al, *Africa and the Wider World*, p.66.

<sup>109</sup> John and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 70.

other hand introduced the German mark in her colonies. The effect was that the wealth of a colony was determined almost entirely by its earning from export. Whatever a colony earned by its export sales was paid into its account in Britain. For this purpose, the West African Currency Board was established in 1912 and the East African Currency Board in 1919<sup>110</sup>.

### **vii. German Finances in Kamerun**

German administration in Cameroon was financed from taxes, licenses, custom duties, earnings of the Douala-Bonaberi ferry, court fees, sales and leases of Crown lands, Imperial Grant-in-aid for the *Schutztruppe* and from the interest on the unexpended balance of the railway construction loan. The main source of revenue for the German colonial authorities in Cameroon other than custom was the native poll tax. If administrative officers discovered that the rate of 10 marks was too high in some areas, it was reduced to 6 marks<sup>111</sup>. Although the payment was usually made in cash, an adult was allowed to work for a given number of days in lieu of cash payment. The rate changed according to districts. In the Garoua districts during 1913 to 1914, for instance, the rate was 1 1/2 marks per man, 1 mark per woman. One mark was also paid per head of cattle and 10 Pfennig for each sheep and goat. Also, any Cameroonian who traded out of his village paid the amount of 25 marks and in 1912 it amounted to 510,000 marks (£25,500)<sup>112</sup>.

### **viii. Infrastructural Developments**

The 32 years of Germans in Cameroon was witnessed with infrastructural development. From the very beginning, German occupation was the construction of roads to evacuate their goods from the interior. By 1900, roads of the permanent character were constructed from the coast to the hinterland<sup>113</sup>. In the course of road, many bridges over difficult terrain were constructed. The very first motor car in Cameroon was used in 1905. In 1913, the first long journey by automobile occurred between Kribi and Yaounde, a distance of over 280km, in 11 hours.

Also, the Germans laid emphasis on railway construction. The first railway line, the northern railway, Nordbahn, was controlled by the Kamerun-Eisenbahn Gesellschaft and was constructed by Leze and company. It ran from Bonaberi to Nkongsamba and it covered a distance 160km. In 1911 to 1912, the gross traffic receipt was 618,323 marks and in 1913 it

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<sup>110</sup> Barkindo et al, *Africa and the Wider World*, p.67.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.69.

<sup>112</sup> Ngoh, *1884-1985 A Hundred Years of History*, p. 75.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

was 951,911 marks. Another railway line was constructed from Douala to Widimenge on the Nyong River, on the way to Yaounde. In the nutshell, the Germans laid more emphasis on the construction of roads and railways to transport goods from the hinterland to the coast. By 1913, over 150km of railway that is from Douala to Widimenge were completed<sup>114</sup>.

Construction of railways was one of the most important features of Colonial Economy, since most African rivers were not navigable all-season. The railway had to be relied upon for the transportation of produce to the sea ports. The railway ran from coast inland to the cash crop producing centers. However, the railway also had an important political function. It facilitated quick movement to troubled areas during a period of pacification. Transport and communication were of great necessity from the very beginning of the German occupation. In Victoria, a narrow-gauge railway was built by the Victoria plantation Company in 1901. In 1904, the actual survey of the major railway route from Bonaberi to Nkongsamba started and the construction of 160km railway line began on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 1911. On the other hand, the Germans neglected the northern part of the territory and the grassland areas. These parts had no economic development<sup>115</sup>.

## **B. The British Mandate**

The area known as the two Anglophone Regions of Cameroon was known before 1961 as the Southern Cameroons. The First World War fought in Cameroon that resulted in the defeat of Germany in 1916 brought about the partition of the territory after the failure of a joined military administration (Condominium) between Britain and France. The German Protectorate was partitioned between France and Britain, France took 4/5 and Britain took 1/5 of the territory. This partition was confirmed in 1919 by the Milner Simon agreement<sup>116</sup>. Britain further partitioned her sphere of the German Cameroon into two parts (North and Southern Cameroons). Northern Cameroon was administered as part of Northern Nigeria while Southern Cameroon was administered as part of Eastern Region of Nigeria. In the 1920s, that is during the mandate period the Southern Cameroons later became known as the Cameroon Province<sup>117</sup>.

The Cameroon Province consisted of that portion of former German Kamerun, which under Article 22 part one of the treaty of Versailles with Germany the principal allied and associated powers agreed should be administered under mandate by his Britannic majesty.

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<sup>114</sup> Ngoh, *History of Cameroon Since 1800*, Limbe p. 85.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>116</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.234.

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

Also, the section of British Southern Cameroons that was administered as one of the provinces of the Eastern Region of Nigeria was situated on the Coast between the Cross River on the West and the Mungo River on the East (Southern Cameroons). The other part under French administration was on the East and Nigeria was on the West. In 1938, Southern Cameroons had a total surface area of 16,581 square miles and a population of 445,735 people<sup>118</sup>.

The British colonial administration began on the 1st April 1916, they introduced the policy of indirect rule in Southern Cameroons, which was also a system they had implemented in Nigeria. The reason behind this system was that Britain had inadequate trained personnel to administer the territories and the policy of indirect rule was their best option<sup>119</sup>. Also, because they had decided to administer Southern Cameroons as one of the provinces of Eastern Regions of Nigeria. The policy of indirect rule was proclaimed in Cameroon in 1921 and became operational in 1922, the British Resident who resided in Buea administered Southern Cameroons<sup>120</sup>. The Southern Cameroons seat of Government was in Lagos. It was only in 1949 that the seat was transferred to Buea. The resident in Southern Cameroons was responsible to the Government in Nigeria<sup>121</sup>.

The British in the administration of Southern Cameroons applied an open economic system. The British authority ensured that, the expatriate interest was dominant in all the sectors of the economy especially<sup>122</sup>. This was in the hands of the British firms like the Amba bay trading company and the John Holt firm. In the open economy system, every business individual invested in any economy and social sector he saw profitable for him/her without strict government control. Their firms also dominated the production and sales of particular commodities of interest to the owners of the firms<sup>123</sup>. Though the native authority was allowed to carry out developmental projects, it did not have enough money to level up with the socio-economic activities of the expatriates. The firms' main preoccupation was to assist in the flow of the primary products to Europe from the plantations and the forest<sup>124</sup>.

In the planned economy, there were few restrictions like tariffs on the volume of import from British expatriates. Another characteristic of the open economy is that the

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<sup>118</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.62.

<sup>119</sup> Takor, "The Bamenda Grassland in Long Distance Trade c.1850-1961", 92.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p.236.

<sup>122</sup> Amaze, *The Economic History of Southern Cameroons*, Bambili, 1998, p. 13.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15.

metropolitan did all to minimize its fiscal obligations. The mother country also expected her colony to balance her budget without great external assistance. It was based on these concepts that the British decided to administer British Cameroons as part of Nigeria. The British authority looked at British Southern Cameroons as an economic burden<sup>125</sup>.

The British currency, the sterling pound was also used in British Southern Cameroons. The banking facilities were fashioned in British style and also financed the activities of the expatriate firms. Therefore, the operation of the expatriate open economic System assisted the British government in the development of her trading activities in Cameroon. It did not involve the monetary interest on the colony's trading partners. It was in such circumstances that Britain did not give the Southern Cameroons the golden key of the bank of England. The situation created a growth rate that was determined by two major variables. These were the size of the export proceeds and the income elasticity of the demand for the imports.

Just like the other parts of West Africa, Southern Cameroons was also subjected to the world prices as given by the changes in the world market. The raw materials of Southern Cameroons like cocoa, coffee, ivory and palm product constituted the main sources of income of the natives which was spent on the European manufactured consumer goods. The prices of these goods were generally higher as dictated by the expatriates. Thus, both the prices of import and export were dictated by the British<sup>126</sup>. Therefore, the economy of Southern Cameroons was basically to serve the British economic interest.

For administrative convenience, British Southern Cameroon was administered as part of Nigeria. The reason British administered Southern Cameroons as part of Nigeria was because she was not populated and the nature of the territory did not encouraged Britain. The Northern part of Southern Cameroons was separated from the Southern part making the administration difficult as a unique territory, which was without any Political and Tribal homogeneity. British Further divided Southern Cameroons into four Administrative Divisions that is Victoria, Kumba, Mamfe and Bamenda Divisions. Each Divisonal Officers (DO) was assisted by an assistant divisional Officer (ADO) who reported to the Resident in Buea who administered the Divisions<sup>127</sup>. Table one below shows the various Divisions, their surface area and population density in 1939 (see the table below).

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<sup>125</sup> Interview with Fanso, 82 Years, Professor Emeritus of History, Yaounde, 27<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

<sup>126</sup> *Idem*.

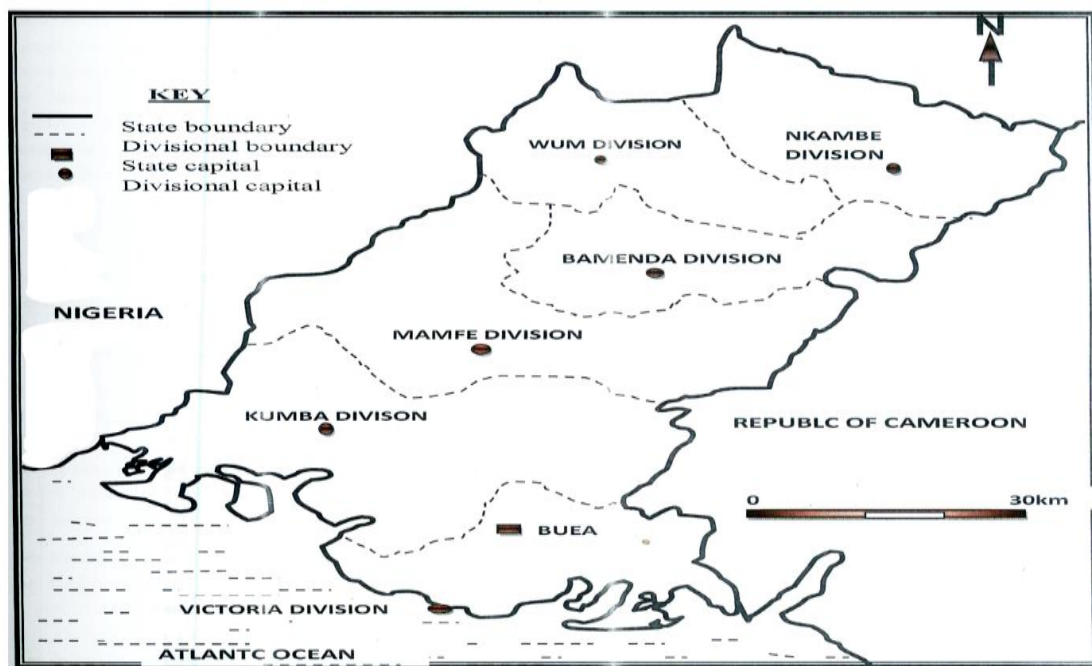
<sup>127</sup> F. E. Ngende, *Geography of West Cameroon*, Limbe, Basel mission Printing Pres, 1966, p. 4.

**Table 3: Administration Divisions of British Southern Cameroons**

Divisions	Area in square Miles	Density per Square miles	Adult male	Adult female	Children	Total population
Victoria	1.166	33.4	19.738	10.651	8,666	39.055
Kumba	4.166	16.9	21.466	23.687	25.251	70.404
Mamfe	4.321	1.6	22.027	24.736	22.738	69.348
Bamenda	16.932	32.8	63.724	75.10 1	104.061	227581
Total	16.581	24.5	126.955	134.175	160.716	421846

Source: Apo, "The Vissicitudes of the Kumba-Mamfe", p. 24

From the table above one can realize that from 1939 the territory had a total population of about 421,846 inhabitants and the children constituted the highest population range of 38 percent follow by the adult female with the range of 32 percent and the adult male constituted 30 percent. Based on the statistics from the table, Bamenda had the highest total population range follow by Kumba, Mamfe and Vitoria. Bamenda also dominated in square miles with the figure of 16.932 and the next was Mamfe with 43.21, followed by Kumba with 4.166, then Victoria with the figure of 1.166. Density persquare miles were dominated by Victoria with figure of 33.4 next by Bamenda with figure of 32.8, follow by Kumba with the figure of 16.9, then Mamfe with the figure of 1.6. From the analysis above, one can deduce that one reason why British administered Southern Cameroons as part of Nigeria province was due to her population. From the statistics above, geographically the four districts of former British Southern Cameroons were presented as follows seen in Map 2.

**Map 1: Former British Southern Cameroons**

Source: Ako, *Historical dictionary of*, p. 17.



The mandate period initially started in 1922. Before then, the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, condemned Germany for causing the war, Article 119 of the Versailles treaty called on Germany to renounce her overseas territories to the allied Associated Powers: Britain and France. The Milner-Simon agreement of July 1919 confirmed their respective boundaries. The League of Nations was formed in 1919 during the Paris Peace Conference with the objective of maintaining world peace. In 1922 through articles 22 and 23, the league accepted and confirmed these sovereignties. The territories were now known as mandated territories of the League of Nations. Also, Article 22 created the permanent mandates Commission to take care of German territories and this commission was a special body put in place to supervise the work of mandated powers<sup>128</sup>.

### **C. Economics Development (Economic Structures)**

Britain took 90 percent of the German plantations and recruited labour, paid workers and managed the property until 1924 when she auctioned the plantations to the former German Owners. During the mandate period, Britain raised funds through direct taxation. Taxes were paid in each native Authority Treasury of each district. Other sources of revenue were court fine, fees and payment of various licenses. Also, during this period, the body in charge of tax collections, labour recruitment was the Native Authorities (NA). It was also in charge of elementary education and health of the people.

As already mentioned, Germany was defeated in the First World War and sent out of the territory. The allied powers: British and France tried a joint administration known as the condominium but they did not succeed. The territory was partitioned in 1916 and Britain administered her own portion as an integral part of Nigeria under the supervision of the League of Nations (permanent mandates commission)<sup>129</sup>. Britain further divided her portion into two: British Southern Cameroons and British Northern Cameroons. One of the major concerns of the British upon assuming control of their portion of Cameroon in 1916 was to re-establish the economy of the territory which collapsed as a result of the war and the expulsion of German raw material exporters, planters and traders<sup>130</sup>.

The Anglo-French partition of 1916 had left about ninety percent of the total plantation in the hands of Britain, they appointed an agricultural expert to supervise the plantations, medical officers and civil police were also appointed to control the sanitation of

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<sup>128</sup> Tazi and Tabi, *Cameroon History*, p. 89.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> T. J. Tajouche, *Cameroon Since 1800, An Advanced Level Approach*, Agwecam printers, 2009. P.30

the estates and the health of the employees and for police duties on the estates. The major problem facing the inherited plantations and the other properties of the enemy nationals was to maintain their pre-war productive capacity. In order to acquire labour, the administrative officers in the Bamenda grass fields were instructed to go on a recruitment tour of the division and to urge the chiefs to supply workers for the plantations. The administration imported labour from Nigeria.

From 1921 British efforts to turn over the plantations into the hands of private British enterprise failed. In 1923, the estates were put up for sale in London, but almost all of them failed to find buyers. In 1924, the second auction was organized in London Germans repurchased almost all the plantations, the buyers being original owners of the estates. Within two years of the return of German planters to the Cameroons Province, the plantations were in full production. Further acreage was brought into cultivation and employment rose from 11 000 in 1924 to 13 500 in 1928, 15 500 in 1935, and 25 000 in 1938. The number of German planters in the province in the 1930s was between 200 and 250, and they were almost virtually in control of the economic life of the territory. In the nutshell during the mandate period, the major economic activity was in the hands on the Germans and the minor in the hands of native authorities. British neglected her own part of Cameroon. They came back after the Second World War<sup>131</sup>.

## **Conclusion**

The chapter examined the economic background of British Southern Cameroons taking into consideration the pre-colonial economy of the indigenes and the German economy in Cameroon, not leaving out the British economy during the mandate periods. It has exposed that during the pre-colonial period the economy was primitive. The native during this period practiced subsistence farming; cultivating crops for the family. They also did hunting and fishing respecting the climatic seasons. The pre-colonial economy was relatively a close one with very little exterior influence. Cultivation was geared towards subsistence and exchange through the barter system for other basic necessities. The mandate period witnessed a slow rate in the development of plantations given the British neglect of the territory; auctioned all the plantations that she inherited following the partition. However, Germany repurchased their plantations in 1924 and the economy regained its stance.

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<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, p.85.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURES

#### Introduction

The destiny of British Southern Cameroons was marked by several aspects and the economy was an indispensable one. Despite several moves toward the growth and expansion of the territory, the faith of Southern Cameroons was determined by world organs<sup>132</sup>. After the inter-wars period, the economic potentials of the territory were still questionable though self-sufficiency was in the minds of the people. This was because their colonial caretakers never deemed the territory viable for economic supremacy<sup>133</sup>. Therefore, backwardness was evident within that period in the land. The terms of the mandate were clearly defined but violated by the administering party. The land was rich and economically viable as some historians present in their various researched works. Our born of contention in this chapter is to examine the economic potentials of Southern Cameroons before and during the trusteeship period in British Southern Cameroons.

#### I. The Trusteeship Council (Preliminaries/Functions)

The United Nations (UN) which replaced the League of Nations after the Second World War laid emphasis in the process of independence of the various territories that were involved. It had many organs such as the General assembly, the Security Council, the economic and social council, the trusteeship council, the International Court of Justice and the UN Secretariat. All these organs were established in 1945 and were in charge of particular functions assigned to them. The Trusteeship Council had as function to supervise the various activities of the administering powers in the trust territory by not only demanding annual reports but by receiving petitions from the inhabitants of the territory and also sending out visiting missions to check the various activities of the mandatory powers<sup>134</sup>. The Trusteeship Council also received petitions from the Natives authorities of the trust territories on matters that interested them. In some cases, reports were sent directly while others were sent through visiting missions. For example, in 1955 the UPC (Union de Population du Cameroun) sent over ten petitions to the UN.

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<sup>132</sup> Amazee, ‘‘The Myth of Dr E.M.L Endeley’s Pride’’, in Chem-Langhee (ed), *Southern Cameroons Traditional Authorities and Nationalist Movement 1953-1961*, *Epasa Moto: A Bilingual Journal of Arts, Letters and the Huimanties*, Vol. 2, n°1, Maarch 2004, p. 17.

<sup>133</sup> Ateba, *Cameroun Mémoire*, p.44.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

### **A. Trusteeship Activities in Cameroon**

The UN sent visiting missions to get on the spot information on the work of the administering authorities that is to know their day-to-day activities. Such visits lasted one month. These missions presented reports of their findings: observations, conclusions and recommendations as was the case in 1949, 1952, 1955 and 1958 in the territory<sup>135</sup>. Another way of supervision was to allow leaders of leading political parties of the trusteeship territories to attend and address sessions of the UN General Assembly on behalf of their people. For example, Reuben Um Nyobe, Duala Manga Bell, Roland Felix Moumie and Charles Okala in French Cameroon and Dr E.M.L Endeley and J.N Foncha in British Cameroons addressed the Assembly on issues related to independence of their respective territories<sup>136</sup>.

Most of the addresses were based on the harsh policies of the mandatory powers. In this line, the mandatory powers were not happy with some revelations of the nationals' leaders. The United Nations also conducted plebiscites to determine the future of the British Southern Cameroons territories. These plebiscites were however conducted by the administering authorities while the UN only plays the role of observers or supervisors<sup>137</sup>.

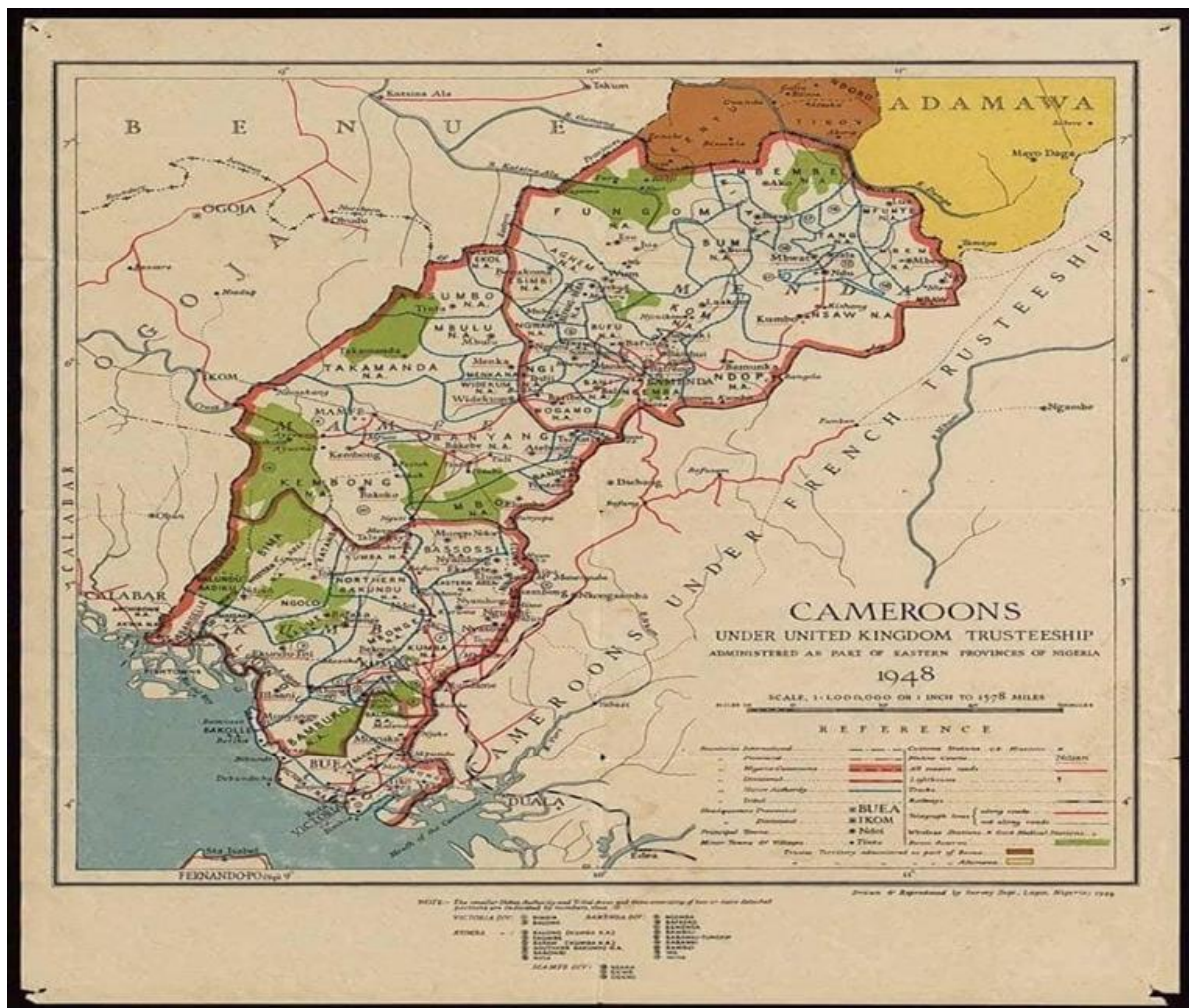
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<sup>135</sup>John and als, *Cameroon History*, p. 101.

<sup>136</sup> Interview with Elvis Ebune Mola, 69 Years, Retired CDC Worker, Buea, 09/27/2020.

<sup>137</sup>John and als, *Cameroon History*, p. 101.

**Map 2: Southern Cameroons under the Trusteeship System**



Source: William Mungi, *100 Plus Years Cartographical of history of Southern Cameroons*, 2020, p. 28.

## II. Economic Development Structures

Before the annexation of Cameroon in 1884, the colonial powers had started developing the area by establishing trading companies like John Holt company (*Liverpool Limited*) which influenced business enterprise in the West Coast of Africa. John Holt established its branch in Cameroon on the 6th April 1869<sup>138</sup>. It was on this day that the first ship called *Schonner Maria* arrived Fernando Po from Liverpool under the commander of his brother Jonathan<sup>139</sup>. John Holt later opened a factory at Bimbria. The *John Holt Company* influenced trade in Victoria by handling a wide range of goods which were distributed to the wholesalers who channelled to the retailers selling the articles<sup>140</sup>.

<sup>138</sup> Ngho, *Cameroon 1884-1985, A Hundred Years of History*, 26.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p.48-52.

<sup>140</sup> C. Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon 1858-1958*, Limbe, Victoria Centenary Commission, 2005, p. 42.

The Amba bay trading company and other companies were put under one canopy known as the United African Company (UAC). All these trading companies were put in place to develop their economy. On 24th February, 1892 W. D Woodin registered with a capital of £50 000 which later doubled. The Amba bay trading company limited registered on 24th November, 1888 with a capital of £10 000 which later increased to £60 000. This act encouraged other companies like the Bai Rubber and Cocoa Estates Limited, the African Mohogany Association Limited<sup>141</sup>.

Despite the fact that the late 19th century was a hard moment for many trading companies in the West Coast, they continued to struggle by forming and reforming partnerships so as to gain trading positions<sup>142</sup>. More so, the greatest company among all these companies was the Niger Company. In 1882, this companies changed the name from United Africa Company (UAC) to National Africa Company (NAC) with a capital of £1 000 000. The activities of this trading company influenced the history of Nigeria and Southern Cameroons in particular<sup>143</sup>.

In 1920, this powerful company was governed by Lever Brothers with the sum of £8 000 000 and nine years later, it absorbed the African and Eastern Trading Company and became the legitimate successor of the Woodin and the Amba Bay Company. All these companies were put in place for the benefit of the owners with the aim to exploit the potentials of Africa and Southern Cameroons in particular. These companies-controlled branches throughout Southern Cameroons<sup>144</sup>.

#### **A. Cooperative Movements and: The Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC)**

CDC was put in place in 1947 after the Second World War to revamp and reconstruct the economy of Southern Cameroons. It was not an easy task because the economy had been in the hands of the Germans. After the partition of Cameroon in 1916, and with the advent of mandate period, British took one fifth of the territory and administered it as part of Nigeria. It should be mentioned that the British were unable to manage the plantations they took over from Germany and had to put them on sale. It was from here that Germany bought all the plantations during the auctions sales of 1924<sup>145</sup>.

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<sup>141</sup> Interview with Sampson Elive Inoni, 74 years, Retired Worker CDC, Limbe, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>142</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon*, p. 42

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* p. 43

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid* p. 44

<sup>145</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 75.

**Table 4: German Plantations in British Cameroons 1938**

Name of Plantation	Owner	Total Acre-age	Acre-age in use	Capitalization in reichmarks
Westafrikanische pflanzungsverein (WAPV) Bota	West Africa Plantation. Co Victoria & Berlin	18.790	6.580	No info.
WAPV, Ngeme and Sachsenhof Sections	Same	No info.	No info.	No info.
WAPV, Molyko, incl. Malende	Same	5.687	3.602	3.700.00
WAPV, Prinz Alfred Missellele	Same	6.042	4.692	No info.
WAPV, Bimba and Mabeta	Same	11.083	3.018	No info
African Fruit Co. Likomba	African fruit Co. Hamburg Likomba Kamerun	15.672	5.945	1.024.000
Moliwe	Moliwe Plantation Co, Berlin	34.000	7.636	1.000.000
Holtforth Plantation Company	D. Holtforth	1.617	1.617	No info
Donbe	Rein and Wessel	603	600	No info
Bibundi and Allied Plantation	Bidundi A. G.	31.000	5.994	458.000
Debundscha	Debundscha pflanzung Berlin	4.329	1.137	220.000
Deschelhausen Plantage	William Scipio Mannheim	4.490	1.137	No info
Isobi Plantation	Bibundi A. G. Lease to K. Proving	1.000	544	458.000
Kamerun Eisenbahn Gesellschaft (KEG) Tombel	KEG, Berlin	17.500	2.500	1.380.000

**Source:** Ngoh, *Cameroons 1884-1985 A Hundred Years of History: Constitutional Developments in the Southern Cameroons, 1914-1916: From Trusteeship to Independence*. Yaounde: CEPER 1990, p. 179.

The table 4 above presents some German plantations during the mandate period. German bought-back all her plantations during the auctions sells in 1924 and controlled all economic activities in the territory during this period. In the nutshell all the profits went to German profit.

The defeat of Germany in the Second World War resulted in the placing of her plantations under C.D.C<sup>146</sup>. The C.D.C was required to develop any land put under the control of the Government. The Cooperation was supposed to buy and sell livestock and any

<sup>146</sup> Interview with Sandrine Ngoh Ebi, 68 Years, House wife, Limbe, October 17<sup>th</sup> 2020.

other produce, operate wharves, marine craft and railways. It carried out research work on import and export trade. Above all, the C.D.C provided good religious and educational training that is, it was responsible for the general welfare of its employees. In this vein, the profit it made through the payment of income tax was used in financing specific developmental projects in the Southern Cameroons<sup>147</sup>.

The profit of the C.D.C in 1949 resulting from custom duties and taxes enabled the Southern Cameroons' government to reduce its financial deficit from about 250 000 pounds to over 50 000 pounds<sup>148</sup>. More so, recommendations of some committee representing Native Authorities (NA), Government voluntary Agencies and the Cooperation itself demanded that some of the profit made by the C.D.C should be expanded on specific projects in each of the administrative divisions<sup>149</sup>. By 1954, this money constituted a significant portion of the revenue in the territory. The C.D.C also made significant contributions to the social development of other parts of the territory. For example, by 1957 the Cooperation had opened 10 hospitals and 47 aid posts, providing health facilities to approximately 45, 740 of both European and African workers<sup>150</sup>.

Despite the fact that some of its financial resources were spent on specific projects in different parts of the territory, the cooperation granted scholarships for Secondary and Higher Education<sup>151</sup>. There were also schemes for pension, provident fund and retirement benefits for workers. By 1957, these benefits amount was 16, 777 pounds. The provident fund had a total membership of 1, 056 and a market value of its investment amount of 322, 917 pounds. The cooperation did investment and expanded its activities. This led to an increase in labour force, which rose from its pre-war level of less than 8000 to 23 129<sup>152</sup>.

In 1957, this figure witnessed a fall to 17 094 but by 1961, the Cooperation remained the largest single employer of labour force in the Southern Cameroons and the largest banana producing unit in the British Commonwealth<sup>153</sup>. By 1959, out of the total labour force of 37 828 in Southern Cameroons, the C.D.C employed 17 140 while the Government employed 5 994 and the native administration 4 152 and other establishment 10 272, it was certain that

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<sup>147</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 75.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> Interview with Sandrine Ngoh Ebi, 68 years, House wife, Limbe, October 17<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>150</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>151</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p.77.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>153</sup> Interview with Elvis Ebune Mola.



the C.D.C employed a greater share of the population than any other sector<sup>154</sup>. This therefore proves that the territory had potentials to sustain its economy.

The Bakweri Union Farmers was created on 18th December 1951 and contributed to the growth of the industry. The Union had its first meeting with the assistant registrar of cooperative societies putting forward the request that it should be registered as a cooperative society with the main objective of marketing bananas. The participants of this meeting were Dr E. M. L. Endeley, P. M. Kale, Messrs Ngando and Naptheal Ligbea, who were still leading members of the movement<sup>155</sup>.

Also, in 1952 a delegation from the Bakweri Union Farmers' Cooperative was received by the commissioner who promised to support and advise them on the formation of cooperative society. On 12th June, 1952, the Union registered as a cooperative society with seventy-three members. Chief Molombe Ngomba of Bonduma was the President and Mr M. L. Eliva was the secretary<sup>156</sup>. On 30th August, an agreement was signed with CDC and on 5th September, the first shipment of 898 stems was made. An active part was taken by the District Officer of Victoria<sup>157</sup>. The birth of this organisation greatly improved the economic situation of the division. Becoming the apex banana-exporting cooperative, its operations were expanded throughout the accessible areas of Kumba Division. Also, in July 1958, 2 375 000 stems of bananas were shipped representing cash payment of over £ 1 000 000 to farmers of which some £750 000 was enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Victoria Division<sup>158</sup>.

More so, on 31 March, 1958, the Bakweri Union had 14 society groups in the division with 2080 members including thirty-five women. The Union itself had accumulated capital assets of over £100 000 for the provision of marketing facilities of which half was invested in transport services. Through this connection, the marketing agreement concluded with Messrs Elders and fyyfes, who had an undertaken to place their advisory and technical resources at the disposal of the Union<sup>159</sup>.

With the building of twenty fruit-carrying vehicles, the committee decided to establish a separate transport organisation and pooled its resources with the Cameroon cooperative exporters limited to form the Cameroon Cooperative Engineering and Transport Union

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<sup>154</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p.79.

<sup>155</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p.79.

<sup>156</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon*, p. 54.

<sup>157</sup> Interview with Oscar Tabe Otu, 70 Years, Retired Teacher, Mamfe, 09/ 20/ 2020.

<sup>158</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon*, p. 54.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

Limited with large garages to update mechanical equipment at Dibanda. Investment project had reached £60 000 and its fleet stood at fifty vehicles, which operated throughout the territory, carrying mails from Bamenda and evacuating cocoa and coffee from all areas<sup>160</sup>.

In order to raise the standard of living of citizens in 1957, the Bakweri Cooperative Union Farmers Limited introduced a fixed deposit scheme for the improvement of housing conditions whereby two shillings in every pound of the net proceeds for bananas was deducted at the source under the schemes. After one year the serving was converted to building materials such as corrugated iron and cement, which was issued to societies from central depots as soon as the rains were over. Farmers were given personal saving books and many expressed amazement and gratitude towards<sup>161</sup>. In this line, they easily accumulated saving and by the end of July 1958 their savings stood at £65 000<sup>162</sup>.

## **B. Agriculture and Cooperative Societies**

Before the outbreak of the Second World War the plantations in Southern Cameroons were enclaves. They were self-sufficient and isolated from other sectors of the economy. Given their technology and benefit, their establishment were spread to promote peasant production of either cash or food crops. This dualism between a well-established plantation, modern technology and peasant agriculture was bridged during this period thanks to the C.D.C. In 1951, the C.D.C engaged the services of a Nigerian Cooperative officer to prepare a memorandum of the organisation of a thrift and saving among its employees<sup>163</sup>. The memorandum dealt with the possibility of starting a cooperative society among peasant farmers in the Southern Cameroons as a whole<sup>164</sup>.

Farmers were encouraged to partnership. They were taught how to combat sigatoka diseases in bananas. Under the Union, the department of agriculture was charged with the responsibility of planting and rehabilitating crops such as cocoa, rubber and coffee. Land was acquired to set up nurseries and experimental plots for these purposes<sup>165</sup>. The table below illustrates the number of cooperative societies set up in the territory from 1954-1958.

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<sup>160</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon*, p. 55.

<sup>161</sup> Interview with Sandrine Ngoh Ebi.

<sup>162</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon*, p. 57.

<sup>163</sup> Interview with Sandrine Ngoh Ebi.

<sup>164</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 79.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid* p. 79.

**Table 5: The Development of Cooperative Societies**

Year	Number of cooperatives Societies	Membership	Working Capital (Pounds Sterling)
1954-55	63	4,244	43,140
1955-56	85	6,474	69,739
1956-57	110	8,463	184,743
1957-58	141	11,011	253,896

Source: Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 84.

A co-operative society is a voluntary association of individual having common needs and investing efforts to jointly achieve their common economic interest. This was the case in Southern Cameroons. From the table above, one can realised that the number of cooperative societies and membership kept increasing as years were going by. For example, in 1955-1956 we had 85 societies with a membership of 6.474 and a working capital of 69.739. From 1956-1957 we had 110 societies with a membership of 8.463 and a working capital of 184.743. From the above analyses one can conclude that the members of cooperative societies and working capital increases as years were going by.

C.D.C kept encouraging the development of cooperative societies like the Thrift and Loan, the Thrift and Credit and the marketing cooperative society. The Government also encouraged weaker societies to merge and discourage stronger ones for splitting up. This idea was to reduce Government expenditures and to enable societies to enjoy large scales operations<sup>166</sup>. In nutshell, the role of the cooperating movement was primordial as the natives were encouraged to work under an umbrella and boost their efficiency. This help to change the attitude and morals of the Farmers. For example, the knowledge gotten by farmers helped them to put in place other cooperatives like the producers' cooperatives, consumer cooperatives and credit cooperative union to handle their difficulties<sup>167</sup>. The role of CDC in augmenting the economic potentials of Southern Cameroons can be seen in the following enunciations

#### **a. Banana**

Banana was also an important crop produce during the trusteeship period. In British Southern Cameroons, when timber was been cut down, banana crops were planted. Due to banana exploitation many developments were carried out in the territory. Before this period, the Germans in Cameroon did much concerning banana exploitation since the fertility of the

<sup>166</sup> Interview with Bismark Oben Taku, 70 Years, Forest Guard, Limbe, October 17th 2020.

<sup>167</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 84.

soil was good. Also, when C.D.C took over the banana plantations, the revenue from the plantation increased to an average of £1.600.000 and an average of some five million stems per year was shipped from the ports of Victoria<sup>168</sup>. Moreover, approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of this produce was from the C.D.C estates and the rest from the plantations of Messrs Elders and Fyffes. In a nutshell, banana sales stimulated the growth of trade by improving the purchasing power of the people. This process of selling increased the living standards of the natives<sup>169</sup>. See the plate two.

**Figure 1: A Partial view of the Banana plantation in Tiko**



**Source:** M.T. Njei, "Banana plantation, Cameroon", [https://www.njeitimah-ootlook.com/albums/album\\_image/2075996/1115626.htm](https://www.njeitimah-ootlook.com/albums/album_image/2075996/1115626.htm), consulted the 3rd July 2024 at 12h35min.

## **b. Rubber**

Rubber in Cameroon was discovered in 1883. Before the annexation of the territory<sup>170</sup>, Dr Preuss reported that the method used to obtain it was crude thereby destroying the trees, but measures were taken to curb the situation. By 1906, however, it was discovered that the variety of *Hevea Brasiliensis* was a much higher yielding strain<sup>171</sup>. Also, rubber trees could raise seeds. When the young trees reached a suitable girth (after six to seven years)

<sup>168</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 84.

<sup>169</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon*, p. 65

<sup>170</sup> Interview with Christabel Assou Afane, 62 Years, Worker CDC, Moyuka, 09/19 /2020.

<sup>171</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 84.

they were ready for tapping<sup>172</sup>. At this stage, a panel was opened; a cut slanting from left to right was made with a special knife. A cup was fixed on the tree to collect the latex or juice of the tree which flows each time a silver of tissue was sliced off the surface of the cut. The latex was collected in buckets and taken to a factory where it was coagulated, rolled into sheets and then cured in smoke-house<sup>173</sup>.

When C.D.C was put in place, high-yielding clones from Malasia, Indonesia and Liberia came to Southern Cameroons. A small proportion of an area gave yields equivalent to 1,100 Ib dry rubber per arce. It was expected that 4½ million Ib of dry rubber will be produced in 1958 and the annual crop will steadily increase in accordance with the corporation planned programme of planting. The yearly value of the crop today is £400,000. The rubber activities in Southern Cameroons faced some difficulties because the climate was not ideal for rubber, as the dry season is rather too dry and the height of the rains rather too wet. In addition, there is always danger as trees being damaged by the severe wind-storms. Rubber was one of the activities carried on in Southern Cameroons as seen in plate<sup>174</sup>.

**Figure 2: Rubber exploitation in Tiko**



**Source:** Fanso's Library, 22th august 2022

### **c. Oil Palms**

The soils of British Southern Cameroons were very fertile for the production of Palm oil. When the C.D.C was formed in 1947, there were four oil palm plantations which were developed by the Germans. These plantations were at Bota, Moliwe, Ekona and Mbonge.

<sup>172</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon*, p. 69

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961*, p. 86.

Each plantation had its own mill for extraction of palm oil and palm kernels for export<sup>175</sup>. The total output was 1,320 tons of oil and 800 tons of kernels.<sup>176</sup> Also, the palms from which this bunch was harvest were mostly poor type and old, necessitating climbing to harvest them. Moreover, to improve the quantity of oil and kernels per arce and the quality of oil, the corporation rehabilitated the plantations<sup>177</sup>. The mills at Moliwe and Mbonge were dismantled and more mills were built at Idenau, Bota and Ekona. The C.D.C provided high yielding goods tenera type of palms<sup>178</sup>.

**Figure 3: Palm oil exploitation at Bota**



**Source:** "Palm oil", <https://cdc-cameroon.net/new2014/products/palm-oil.htm>, consulted the 3rd July 2024 at 12h35min.

At Bota, oil plants were established so that oil could be pumped into ships instead of being exported in drums<sup>179</sup>. To obtain quality palm seedlings of the desired fruit types, the corporation improved on its material in 1948. This action of the corporation was followed by the production of seeds from the best palms and the development of nurseries in which the resulting seedlings were grown in baskets, fertilised and irrigated so as to produce the most

<sup>175</sup> Interview with Christabel Assou Afane.

<sup>176</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 86

<sup>177</sup> Interview with Christabel Assou Afane.

<sup>178</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon*, p. 71.

<sup>179</sup> Interview with Christabel Assou Afane.

rapid growth<sup>180</sup>. In addition, by 1955 the corporation plantation produced 3,350 tons of oil and 1,580 tons of palm kernel<sup>181</sup>. The programme ultimately resulted in a production of 16,000 tons of oil 3,000 of kernels, with an average of one ton per arce. In 1957, the revenue from palm products was £239,334. Plate three captures this scenario

#### **d. Cocoa**

One of the reasons of the scramble for Cameroon was the search for fertile soils along the slope of Mount Cameroon. It was even reported by Dr Preuss in 1897 that the slopes of Mount Cameroon were excellent for cocoa production and many other experiments were carried out to perfect methods of fermentation of cocoa beans and deal with diseases. Cocoa came from Central America; it was brought into West Africa through Sao Tome and Fernando Po<sup>182</sup>.

Cocoa was first planted by the Germans at Bimbia. Between 1886 and 1900 it came from Fernando Po. Between 1900 and 1905, a number of cocoa types came from Central America and Trinidad thereby leading to the establishment of the Botanic Garden<sup>183</sup>. By 1920 cocoa plantation had reached 3,400 tons. That same year Southern Cameroonian farmers became interested in cocoa crop production and planting started on a moderate scale<sup>184</sup>. Also, during the 1930s, the fluctuation of the price cocoa led to a fall but favoured the growth of bananas, oil palm and rubber. Cocoa was grown in a hybrid *trinitatrio* type which had varried sizes of pods and colour. With the assistance of agricultural department, progressive farmers learned how to control Black Pod diseases by spraying copper, thereby greatly increasing production<sup>185</sup>. See the plat 4 below.

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<sup>180</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>181</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>182</sup> Interview with Prosper Menye Tague

<sup>183</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>184</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>185</sup> *Idem.*

**Figure 3: Cocoa harvesting in Tombel**



Source: Photos taken by Author, Tombel, 10/15/2020.

#### e. Tea

India and China were the sources of tea. By 1928, German planters introduced tea, probably from India and established some seventy arces at tole near Buea<sup>186</sup>. Also, C.D.C invited specialists to report on this tea and on the possibilities for development. The reports were so satisfactory that the corporation embarked on its development of approximately 750 arces, which at full maturity could produce about 375 tons per annual<sup>187</sup>. By 1957, a factory was constructed and tole tea was now on local market. Although the tea was not blended, it was of good quality compared to the imported one<sup>188</sup>. Out of the Seventy arces planted by the Germans, twenty arces were left as seed bearers and this area provided seeds for the corporation's new plantations, and for other plantation companies who were developing this

<sup>186</sup> Interview with Martin Abeng Ayissi, 59 Years, Worker Governor Office Buea, Limbe, October 20<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>187</sup> C. Chacon, Victoria Southern Cameroon, p. 74.

<sup>188</sup> Interview with Christabel Assou Afane.



new crop in the Southern Cameroon<sup>189</sup>. The crops cultivated at full scale in British southern Cameroons can be seen in plate five and illustrated in table six below.

**Figure 4: Tea harvesting in Tole**



Source: UmiTea Sets, "Tea in Cameroon", <https://www.umiteasets.com/blogs/umi-tea-sets-blog/tea-in-cameroon>, consult 12/07/2024, at 10AM.

**Table 6: Agricultural Produce from Southern Cameroons, 1955-1961 (In Metric Tons)**

Exports	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961
Timber	1,373	5,652	38,633	81,956	129,191	133,713	116,156
Bananas	68,063	59,722	79,107	85,770	68,385	85,372	88,648
Cocoa	3,902	6,407	5,025	5,084	6,019	7,198	9,007
Palm Kernels	4,593	4,192	5,520	4,860	5,432	5,604	5,857
Palm Oil	5,139	6,174	5,982	6,334	6,923	7,434	10,129
Rubber	1,700	1,671	1,774	2,496	2,528	2,916	4,158
Coffee	1,057	855	1,892	2,196	3,409	3,604	4,337
Tea	-	-	-	-	24	34	80
Pepper	7	22	19	28	33	18	47

Source: Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 85.

From the table there is a strong possibility that a great deal would have been realized in the development of agriculture by 1961. It should remember that African participation in the production of export crops in the Southern Cameroons was comparatively belated approximately a century after Nigeria and the gold Coast (Ghana). This was one of man

<sup>189</sup> *Idem.*

reasons why, by some estimates, less than half of the agriculture potentials of the Southern Cameroons was under cultivation by 1961.

### **C. Banking and Marketing Boards**

The economic development of the territory could not be complete without mentioning the various banks and ships that operated in Southern Cameroon Marketing. The board coordinated the shipping and eventually sold the produce through the Port of Victoria and Tiko. As concerns the banking system, the first to be established in British Southern Cameroon was the Barclays Bank D. C. O. This bank was established in Victoria in 1919 after the First World War<sup>190</sup>. It was first known as the Colonial Bank with an office in Nigeria in 1917. In 1925, the Colonial Bank merged with the Anglo Egyptian Bank and the National Bank of South Africa to form the Barclays Bank<sup>191</sup>. The bank moved into a new building in 1928 and acted as an agent for West African Currency Board within the Cameroons. To develop the economy of the British Southern Cameroons, branches were established in Tiko and Buea. Banking at first was confined to Government and the main trading companies and plantations. There is now an increased use of banks by local traders.<sup>192</sup>.

#### **a) Marketing Board: Origin of the Southern Cameroons Marketing Board**

The great depression of the 1930s affected the economy of the world and which had to be restructured<sup>193</sup>. In this line, the Nowell commissions of 1938 recommended the establishment of a collective marketing system but little was done to realize the progress of this initiative. The great depression of 1929 affected Britain in general and her colonies in particular. However, in order to ensure a regular supply of raw materials during the Second World War, marketing boards were established in British West Africa including southern Cameroons. By 1940, the West African Cocoa Board came into existence followed by the West African Board in 1947<sup>194</sup>. However, private firms continued to buy produce that were sold by officials. The marketing board was out to stabilise prices, but experience of the past years proved that the Government could not achieve stabilisation of seasonal prices in West

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<sup>190</sup> Takor, "The Bamenda Grassland in Long Distance Trade c.1850-1961", p. 203.

<sup>191</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroons*, p. 56.

<sup>192</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961*, p. 90.

<sup>193</sup> G. F. Kum, "Wum Area Development Authority (WADA) 1965-1994: Implantation, Economic and Social Conversions in Menchum Division", Ph.D Thesis in History, University of Yaounde I, 2014, p.259.

<sup>194</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961*, p. 90.

African produce. Therefore, a statutory marketing organization known as commodity marketing boards was therefore setup for each of the major export crops<sup>195</sup>.

Cocoa, cotton, groundnut and palm oil Marketing Boards were put in place in 1947. Each board had the responsibility to set the price of the commodity below the actual or world price during period of prosperity and to accumulate the different reserves. These reserves were to support produce price to farmers when world price fell. The reserve source was also used to develop respective areas of production or areas producing each crop and for scientific research in agriculture. In order to realize these objectives, 70% of the reserves were devoted to price stabilization, 7.5% on scientific research and 22.5% on the development of producing areas<sup>196</sup>.

Moreover, constitutional changes in Nigeria emphasized on regionalism. In this line, Regional Boards were put in place in various localities. These boards were monopolistic because they had absolute control over the purchase of major export crops<sup>197</sup>. The board continued to fixed prices below world level and so continued to accumulate more reserves. This money was used for diverse purposes beyond the original objectives of the boards. In order to do so, each region established a Regional Production Development Board. The Eastern Regional Production Development Board (E. R. P. D. B) derived its initial capital from the Nigerian Oil Palm Produce Marketing Board while subsequent grant also came from other Marketing Board<sup>198</sup>.

Between 1949 and 1955, the ERPDB spent 5,465,200 of the reserve funds of the marketing board for not-less than 10 different development projects on Agriculture, Industrial, Commercial. This included the building of community roads, a boatyard, opening of cashew nut Industry and cocoa and coffee estates. The operation of the Board had also been broadened to grant loans to individuals for industrial projects such as cassava graters, sawmills, woodwork, mechanical workshops, shoe repairer industries, trade and hotel business. Loans were made to Eastern Regional Library Board, the Eastern Region information service and Eastern Nigeria Sport commission<sup>199</sup>.

By 1955, the E..R.P.D.B had made grants and loans totalling 5, 465 200 for projects. Of this amount, only 216 000 went to Southern Cameroons. Many of the projects undertaken

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<sup>195</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroons*, p. 59.

<sup>196</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961*, p. 90.

<sup>197</sup> Interview with Brian Orock Tambe, 74 Years, Worker Pamol, Kumba, 10/20/2020.

<sup>198</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961*, p. 90.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid*, p. 92.

by the Board such as the construction of feeder roads and the production of the fertilisers had no impact and were therefore of no benefit to the Southern Cameroons<sup>200</sup>.

### **b. The Economic Development under the Marketing Board**

The Southern Cameroons Marketing Board was put in place on the 1st January, 1955. Before then, Southern Cameroons products; Cocoa and oil palm were marketed through the Nigerian Cocoa Marketing Board which was established in 1947 and the Nigerian oil palm produce marketing board established in 1949<sup>201</sup>. The marketing boards were regionalised following the resumed conference on the Nigerian constitution of certain recommendation made by a committee set up to examine the position of the marketing board under new constitutional arrangement<sup>202</sup>.

In this line, Southern Cameroons got its board in 1955. In order to make things easier, the various functions relating to the prescription of grades, calling forward, export, shipment and overseas sale produce on behalf of the Regional Marketing Board were put under one canopy. A central marketing Board was formed and each Regional Marketing Board had to appoint a representative, the constitutional conference agreed that reserved commodity should be distributed to the Regional Board on the bases of derivation and the Southern Cameroons marketing board received an initial allocation of £1 000 000. A further allocation of £250 000 was received and this constituted the board final share of reserves<sup>203</sup>.

Southern Cameroons Marketing Board was in charge of securing and favourable arrangements for evacuation produce to the port for shipment. The board was authorized to control and fixed the price to be paid to producers. The board stabilised the prices of produce from time to time in accordance with such policy as the Boards may determine<sup>204</sup>. The Board fixed basic producer prices for each cocoa season or palm oil produce. During this period, producers enjoyed absolute price stability, being entirely isolated against price fluctuation in the world market values. It was their policy put in place to avoid sharp changes in basic prices from one season to another. Moreover, the board was required to purchase all produce,

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<sup>200</sup> *Ibid*, p. 93.

<sup>201</sup> Takor, "The Bamenda Grassland in Long Distance Trade c.1850-1961", p. 203.

<sup>202</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon 1858-1958*, p. 60.

<sup>203</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 58.

<sup>204</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon 1858-1958*, , p. 61.

subject to its law for sale<sup>205</sup>. It made use of normal trade channels in the purchase of produce by appointing licences for commercial agents.

These licenses were imposed on buying agents. In addition, operators of plantations who produced palm oil and most of the palm kernel exported from Southern Cameroons did not perform the same function as licensed buying agents (notably, they do not purchase produce from indigenous producers) and are called licensed suppliers<sup>206</sup>.

### **c. The Southern Cameroon Development Agency (SCDA)**

Southern Cameroons production development board was replaced in 1955 by the Southern Cameroons Development Agency (SCDA) established by the Southern Cameroons Law number 11 of 1956<sup>207</sup>. The function of this agency was to give loans to private persons for projects designed to further the economy development of the territory, to direct investment of its fund in agricultural and industrial projects, the training of Southern Cameroonians and research in economic and social development<sup>208</sup>. Another body was established in 1957 and the estate agency was established in Ndu for the development of tea estates. Thanks to this agency 400 of its 5000 arces was developed in the area<sup>209</sup>.

Activities of Southern Cameroons development agency reflected those of the ERPDB, particularly because the former came out of the latter's womb. In this configuration there is no doubt that Southern Cameroons marketing board became the main source of the revenue for the agency. When the Southern Cameroons separated from the Eastern Region of Nigeria due to the Eastern Regional crisis following the issue between Eyo Ital and Azikiwe, the marketing board reserve of the territory had an amount of one million pounds and fell to 620, 837 pounds by 1957<sup>210</sup>. By 1959, the Board make an annual grant of 100,000 pounds to the agency and transferred another sum of 150,000 pounds from the reserves of its palm oil produce Division<sup>211</sup>.

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<sup>205</sup> Interview with Gwanvoma Henry N., 80 Years, Former Manager of Cameroon Bank, Buea, 22 August 2020.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>207</sup> Interview with Ghislain-Victorine Menye, 64 Years, Worker Sonara, Limbe, October 17<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>208</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 34.

<sup>209</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon 1858-1958*, p. 93

<sup>210</sup> Interview with Brian Orock Tambe.

<sup>211</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons 1922-1961*, p. 74

#### D. Forestry and Transport Sectors

Southern Cameroons was blessed with economic resources; flora and fauna. It had soils around the foot of Mount Fako good for agriculture<sup>212</sup>. This rich soil enabled the Germans to open up plantation. The Economic of Southern Cameroons survived largely on agriculture. Cash crops that were cultivated were coffee, cocoa, flour from Bakossi, Rubber and Banana from Tiko, Palm Oil from Bamenda, Salt from Ekona, the flora in this area serves for the exploitation of timber<sup>213</sup>. With respect to land resources, timber was found at the Mangrove Swamp Forest of Nigeria, further inland was the great tropical forest with its valuable obeche, Mahoganies, Iroko, Mansonia, Abura and Ilomba which was yielding a rich harvest of the first class<sup>214</sup>.

Timber was exported in a small scale for many years. The areas were cleared to make way for bananas, rubber and oil plantations and most of the plantations used timber from their own estates for building houses and factories, selling surplus abroad<sup>215</sup>. In this line, the first company to register in the locality was Guatemala plantation company whic registered the mark *Likomba* in December 1930. This was followed by the Ekona Plantations and the West African Plantation Company Victoria<sup>216</sup>.

From 1939 to 1945, timber exploitation from the division was halted and only resumed timidly in 1949 when CDC started shipping Obeche logs. After 1955, the activities operated on a big scale when the Kamerun Limited Commerce Trade with other companies fuctional. Three major companies engaged in the extraction and exported timber from Southern Cameroons<sup>217</sup>. Obeche from Victoria was the most exported species, and considered as the best in the world. Other species of timber like Mahogany and Mansonia were also needed for exploitation<sup>218</sup>. See plate six below

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<sup>212</sup> Interview with Brian Orock Tambe.

<sup>213</sup> Tazifor and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 72.

<sup>214</sup> Interview with Ghislain-Victorine Menye.

<sup>215</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>216</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon 1858-1958*, p. 63

<sup>217</sup> Interview with Sampson Elive Inoni.

<sup>218</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon 1858-1958*, p. 64

### Plate 6: Timber Exploitation in Tiko



Source: Photos taken by Author, Tiko, 09/20/2020.

As concerns the transportation system, the British built major roads from Victoria to Mamfe and part of Bamenda. The ring road was constructed to join Bamenda, Nkambe and Wum Divisions. These roads were maintained through forced labour<sup>219</sup>. The British colonial administration intended to build the Kumba-Mamfe road but this project was realised after their departure from Cameroon in 1961. The territory was also blessed with water bodies<sup>220</sup>. The Port of Tiko help in the Shipping of goods<sup>221</sup>. A new concrete wharf was constructed and

<sup>219</sup> Interview with Martin Abeng Ayissi.

<sup>220</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>221</sup> Tazifor and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p. 90.

inaugurated on the 16th September, 1954 by Endeley. This new wharf was built and managed by the Cameroon Development Cooperation. A vessel could take up to 460 feet in length and a lighter berth capable of taking vessels up to 1000tons<sup>222</sup>. The transit shed could contain 2.300 tons. Special facilities of this port included banana elevators which lift 2000 stems per hour<sup>223</sup>.

Postal services and telephone network were also created to link these towns. Trading activities were also encouraged. For example, salt left Mamfe for the grass field, French Cameroon and to Nigeria. The Nso people produced and sold Kolanuts to French Cameroon and to the northern Nigeria. The people of Ndop regions became major suppliers of farm tools like hoes and those for hunting. Trading activities were also carried between British Southern Cameroons to the European countries in exchange for European goods like gun powder, wine and cloths.

### **E. Evidence of British Social Development of Southern Cameroons**

The British authority, the Native authority and the missionaries created primary schools in British Southern Cameroons. They gave scholarships to some natives to study abroad especially in Nigeria. The British authority established a Teacher Training College in Kake-Kumba for the training of primary school teachers<sup>224</sup>. The Catholic Mill Hill Fathers also established the first secondary school called Saint Joseph College Sasse in Buea in 1939<sup>225</sup>. In 1947, when the Cameroon Development Corporation was opened, many schools were opened in the camps of Bota, Ekona and Tiko. Both the British administration and Missionaries got teachers from Britain and Nigeria to teach in these schools alongside some from Cameroon<sup>226</sup>. All these efforts reduced illiteracy in the territory. It also helped the natives to easily communicate with the British authority.

The British authority also established hospitals, health centers in the towns of Buea, Victoria, Tiko, Kumba, Mamfe, Bamenda, Nkambe and Wum<sup>227</sup>. Medical personnel and drugs were gotten from Britain. The British missionaries also established health centers in

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<sup>222</sup> Interview with Martin Abeng Ayissi.

<sup>223</sup> Chacon, *Victoria Southern Cameroon 1858-1958*, p. 57.

<sup>224</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 245.

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

<sup>226</sup> S. B. Takang, *An Illustrated History of Cameroon Since 1800*, The Book House, Yaounde, 2008, p.123.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*



places like Buea, Bali, Nyassoso, Bafut and Victoria. Diseases like malaria, filarial, Tuberculosis, dysentery were treated<sup>228</sup>. All these reduced the mortality rate and increased life expectancy in Southern Cameroons. The British authorities also opened health post in each of the camps of the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC). Each of the health post had qualified nurses and midwives.

When Britain took over the administration of British Southern Cameroons, auctions sales were made in 1922 and 1924, for German property. These sales helped the Germans to take back the management of the plantations. Plantations of crops like rubber, banana, oil palm coffee and cocoa were expanded. The plantations had a work force of about 20,000 natives and German planters<sup>229</sup>. Furthermore, in 1947, the CDC, the most important and dominant agro- industrial venture was created. This was for the exploitation of ex-German plantations and for the production of raw materials for the benefit of Cameroonians and the British<sup>230</sup>. Many plantations, which were opened provided employment micro-finances and small holders schemes to many Cameroonians.

### **Conclusion**

Chapter two examined the activities of the trusteeship councils and the economic structures of Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship period. The chapter began by presenting the functions of the trusteeship council, before outlining the economic structures in the territory. Through the analysis of the chapter, one can depict that Southern Cameroons was blessed with enormous economic potentials. The rich nature of its fertile soil, led to the creation of plantation agricultures in the territory, that later became the CDC. Moreover, the territory was blessed with land resources like timber, rubber, tea, coffee and banana, water resources like the sea found Victoria and Airport found in Tiko. The territory also had a good banking and marketing system that permitted them to make transaction. The next chapter will examine the decolonization process of the territory.

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<sup>228</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges*, p. 242.

<sup>229</sup> S. J. Epalle, *Plantation and Development in Western Cameroon*, pp. 4-6.

<sup>230</sup> Takang, *An Illustrated History of Cameroon*, p.240.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE INDEPENDENCE PROCESS

#### **Introduction**

The history of British Southern Cameroons after 1945 was characterized by a series of challenges and development. Unlike during the mandate period (1922-1945), the territory was characterized by intense political activism. One of these challenges was based on the economic negligence, backwardness and underdevelopment of the territory. This was evident through its numerous unexploited resources. This Chapter shall examine how the preceding factors were responsible for the growth of nationalism in Southern Cameroons; the creation of pressure groups, political parties, constitutional developments and its significance to the economic issue of Southern Cameroons.

#### **I. The Emergence of Pressure Groups and Political Parties**

The trusteeship period in British Southern Cameroons witnessed a great deal of political activities and the formation of political parties. This was highly noticed after the Second World War, though slowly but steadily. It is important to highlight that political parties in British Southern Cameroons before 1951 were docile because the territory was linked to the Eastern Region of Nigeria and no provisions were non-existence because the territory under the Clifford constitution of 1922<sup>231</sup>. However, political setting existed in the form of pressure groups.

#### **A. The Emergence of Pressure Groups**

The emancipation of Southern Cameroons and its demand for constitutional reforms was made possible through the formation of pressure groups and trade unions. Pressure groups constituted a strong pillar put in place by Southern Cameroonians to revandicate their rights or express their grievances. To do this, the Cameroon Welfare Union (CWU) was formed in 1939 in Victoria by a veteran schoolmaster, G.J. Mbene<sup>232</sup>. The objectives of the CWU were to pressurize the British colonial authorities to seek for a solution to the economic neglect of Southern Cameroons since it was administered as part of the eastern region of Nigeria<sup>233</sup>.

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<sup>231</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons, 1946-1961*, p.145.

<sup>232</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 297.

<sup>233</sup> J.B. Ebune, *The Growth of Political Parties in Southern Cameroons 1916-1960*, Yaoundé, CEPER, 1992, p.122.

By the early 1940s, the Cameroon Welfare Union became very active and established branches in almost all the Divisions of Southern Cameroons and in Lagos<sup>234</sup>. It petitioned the British colonial authorities in Nigeria, demanding for Southern Cameroons representative in the legislative council. This act according to J. N. Foncha A. N Jua was an evident that British Southern Cameroonians were aware of political issues and willing to decolonize themselves. After serious counter reflections among Southern Cameroonians, on who to seat in for them, Chief John Manga William was nominated by the Nigerian government as the Southern Cameroon representative in the legislative council<sup>235</sup>. The CWU also questioned the British political administrative policy over the territory about the economic neglect and made the British colonial authorities to be aware that Southern Cameroon had her spokesperson<sup>236</sup>. This was enough to proof that Southern Cameroons was ripped to be on her own as opined the leaders of KNDP.

It is important to underline that the nomination of Manga William met with disapproval within some communities in the territory and this resulted in its disintegration thereby paving the way for the emergence of the Cameroon Youth League (CYL)<sup>237</sup>. It was formed in Lagos on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 1940 by Peter. M. Kale as president, E. M. L Endeley as secretary and J. N. Foncha<sup>238</sup>. Its motto was Unity and Cooperation. Their objective was to redress the political, economic and social grievances of British Southern Cameroonians without any discrimination. It also expressed dissatisfaction with the British colonial administrative headquartered in Lagos. Also, it requested for a recognized status for Southern Cameroons in Nigeria.

It had a monthly bulletin called the Cameroon Youth League News Letter<sup>239</sup>. It equally educated the masses on their political right. This work of the founders reveals that Southern Cameroons was economically viable. The CYL disappeared from the political scene after 1949 with the formation of the Cameroon Federal Union (CFU) in 1947. This was the first group to preach for the reunification of British and French Cameroons. It stood for the teaching of English and French in both Cameroons, free trade between the two and a joint

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<sup>234</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 297.

<sup>235</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun, Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p. 87.

<sup>236</sup> Ebune, *The Growth of Political Partie*, p.128.

<sup>237</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons, 1946-1961*, p.45.

<sup>238</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 297.

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

constitutional assembly<sup>240</sup>. The collapse of the CYL and CFU led to the formation of the Cameroon National Federation (CNF).

The CNF was formed in Kumba in 1949 by E.M.L Endeley and it grouped many tribal Unions including the Bakweri Land Committee, the French Welfare Union residing in the British trust territory, the Cameroon Federation Union (CFU), the Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC) Workers Union and the Bamingany Improvement Union<sup>241</sup>. The principal leaders were EML Endeley, N.N. Mbile, S.T. Muna and S. A. George. CNF was the mouth piece of Southern Cameroonians. Its objective was to separate Southern Cameroons from Nigeria and have an ultimate reunification with French Cameroon. The CNF also stood for the achievement of independence as two states separately before unification. With this move, one have to consider what the leaders of the pressure group counted on for Southern Cameroons to be fit to be on her own. In 1949, the Cameroon National Federation and Cameroon Federation Union called on the UN visiting mission to grant a separate Region to British Southern Cameroons under the British trusteeship<sup>242</sup>.

Its pressure on the British administration was soon weakened because of division among its members over its primary objective (reunification). Under the series of pressure groups, the Kamerun United National Congress (KUNC) was formed in 1951 by N. N Mbile and Robert J. K. Dibongue. This pro unification pressure group was formed because the CNF distant itself from the initial idea of independence and ultimate reunification. It advocated for the end of a very rigid bother control, end to British economic neglect of Southern Cameroons. It also preached for the reunification of the two Cameroons and a joint assembly for the two territories<sup>243</sup>.

The KUNC had more political ambitions and had several meetings with French Cameroonians. For example, Ernest Ouandie, Ruben Um Nyobe, R.J.K Dibongue and N.N Mbile met in Tiko and discussed issues concerning the independence of the two Cameroons<sup>244</sup>. During this discussion, the UPC delegation preached the idea of immediate independence and the possibility of using violence, but the KUNC rejected the idea and instead called for relaxation of frontier restrictions without violence<sup>245</sup>. With this move, one

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<sup>240</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons, 1946-1961* p.145.

<sup>241</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 298.

<sup>242</sup> P. M. Kale, *Political Evolution in the Cameroons*, Buea, Government Printers, 1967, p. 50.

<sup>243</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons, 1946-1961*, p.147.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>245</sup> Kale, *Political Evolution in the Cameroons*, p. 43.

may be convinced to reason with British Southern Cameroonians at the time that Southern Cameroons was economically viable.

Trade unions also played an important role during this period. The Cameroon Development Cooperation workers' Union was formed in 1947 and it revandicated the rights of its workers. In this line, the union called on its workers to protest against the cooperation delay in paying the arrears and wages as well as salaries. The CDC workers did alot by educating their members. The union also demanded better working conditions and raised their daily wages from 1s 6d to 2s 6d<sup>246</sup>. The Nigerian Council for Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) also influenced the political scene during this period by exerting pressure on the colonial administration. This was to hasten the political and economic development of Nigeria and Southern Cameroons. In fact, the NCNC was a direct response to the four obnoxious bills of the Richard Constitution. These bills were ordinances which gave the crown control over land in Southern Cameroons<sup>247</sup>.

The crown land ordinance which stated that the Government could declare any land it wished to possess. The NCNC was against the Richard constitution and structured their grievances on these bills. Southern Cameroonians were in charge of pointing out specific issues affecting the trust territory. It is on this premise that politicians at the time argue that if they were not viable they would not have been able to figure out the sites. As if this was not enough, the external political parties came and gave them a go ahead to revandicate. As per the founders of pressure groups, it was certain that the Southern Cameroons agitation against the Richard Constitution was justifiable because one of its bills abolished Manga William's seat in Lagos<sup>248</sup>.

The people also experienced another injustice in the appointment and dethronement of chiefs. This incident made Southern Cameroonians to develop hatred for the constitution. Pro Southern Cameroonians in the Lagos National legislation demanded for fair treatment<sup>249</sup>. With these moves exhibited by political pressure groups and Trade Unions, the claim of British Southern Cameroons politician that the trust territory was able to be on its own needs to be pondered upon.

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<sup>246</sup> Bongfen Chem Langhee ‘‘Southern Cameroons Traditional Authorities and the Nationalist Movement 1953-1961’’, *Afrika Zamani, Revue d’Histoire Africaine-Review of African History*, n°14 et 15, June 1984, p. 150.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, p.138.

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

<sup>249</sup> Chem Languëë, *The Paradox of Self-determination*, p. 43.

## B. The Emergence of Political Parties

The idea of political parties, dates back to the pre-colonial era. During this period, it was mostly cultural ethnic groups that promoted their culture. But during the colonial period, it was more intense. For example, the first reaction against the British colonial policies in Southern Cameroons occurred in 1939. These early reactions were against the way the British colonial policies were implemented in the territory<sup>250</sup>. The clash between Nnadi Azikiwe and Eyo Ita paved the way for Southern Cameroonians to rethink on their political stance with Nigerian. During the clash, nine out of the thirteen representatives of Southern Cameroons in the Eastern House of Assembly at Enugu decided to stay away from Nigerian politics and formed a benevolent neutrality block<sup>251</sup>. The 1953 Nigeria crisis was very important in the political evolution of Southern Cameroons because it offered southern Cameroonians the opportunity to reflect on the idea of staying clear from the Nigerian politics.

The NCNC was perceived as an ethnic party for the Igbos. The break was manifested during the Mamfe conference of 1953. At the end of the conference, a petition was addressed to the secretary of state for colonies demanding the creation of a separate and autonomous legislature for the trust territory<sup>252</sup>. On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1953 Endeley left Lagos for London where he summited the petition to the secretary of colonies. The petition was now in the appropriate hands coupled with their determination to distance themselves from the NCNC and its Igbo affiliation. Southern Cameroonian leaders began forming and organizing independent political parties to work in line with the interest of the trust territory<sup>253</sup>. This in another way was a step to be on their own given that they had judged the trust territory feed.

### a) The Kamerun National Congress (KNC) and the Kamerun People Party (KPP)

The first political party that came up in British Southern Cameroons was the KNC in 1953<sup>254</sup>. Following the dissolution of Eastern House of Assembly on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1953 by the Lt. Governor of the Region, nine of thirteen Cameroon Assemble men declared their hatred for the Eastern House and instructed them to end their relations with the Eastern Region. Their main aim was to have a separate Region. The nine members together with the Endeley- led CNF and Dibonge-led KUNC amalgamated into the first political party, KNC<sup>255</sup>. This was to

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<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, p.142.

<sup>251</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 299.

<sup>252</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons, 1946-1961* p.147.

<sup>253</sup> Amaazee, *The Eastern Nigerian Crisis and the Destiny of the British Southern Cameroons, 1953-1954*, Yaoundé, Presse Universitaire de Yaoundé, 2000, p. 22.

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

<sup>255</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 299

strengthen their decision of staying clear from Nigerian politics, which corresponded with one of the main resolutions of the Mamfe Conference.

This was due to the fact that French Cameroun in Southern Cameroons wanted to protect their interest<sup>256</sup>. It was under the KNC that Southern Cameroon gained a Quasi Federal territory in October 1954 with its own executive council and a House of Assembly<sup>257</sup>. The party continued to rule Southern Cameroons to 1959. This amalgamation was a well calculated strategy to inject into the ears of Southern Cameroonians that it was high time their territory be independent. This therefore convinces one to reflect again on the standpoint of Endey, Foncha, P.M Kale among others on the viability of the territory.

The second political party that was formed in Southern Cameroons was the Kamerun Peoples Party by N.N Mbile. He was not a member of the KNC, but one of the four members who opposed the benevolent neutrality block. The KPP was formed in 1953 and N.N Mbile invited P.M Kale to head the party. P.M Kale as a lover of parliamentary democracy saw that the KPP was the opposition party in parliament. This was because the KNC Party was incompatible with the principle of democracy since Dr Endeley did not share this view. The main aim of the KPP was to continue association with the NCNC and the Eastern Region of Nigeria. but as time went by, it stood for regional autonomy for Cameroons and secession from Nigeria<sup>258</sup>. This idea only came up after they judged the territory ripped to stand on her own.<sup>259</sup>.

The KPP support came from those whose desire for change was paramount. Those that supported the KPP were young officials, students, journalists, and politicians like R.N Charlie, Eno S.E Ncha, Prince Sama Ndi, P Ewusi, Motomby Woleta and some peasant farmers<sup>260</sup>. The party was not structured like the KNC, it had no elaborate structure because of inadequate membership. P.M Kale presided the central executive body and other branches were set up in towns like Bamenda, Buea, Tiko and Mamfe<sup>261</sup>. The idea of self-independence was ventilated to all the inhabitants of southern Cameroon by these branches.

In August 1953, the British were more concerned with what happened during the Eastern Regional crisis at Enugu. This was because it had caused the collapse of the

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<sup>256</sup> Ebune, *The Growth of Political Parties*, pp.142-143.

<sup>257</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 299.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301.

<sup>259</sup> Abwa, *Cameroon, histoire d'un nationalisme*, p.147.

<sup>260</sup> N. Rubin, *Cameroon: An African Federation*, London, Praeger Publishers, 1971, p. 87.

<sup>261</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985: A Hundred Years*, pp. 168-169.

Macpherson Constitution. Due to this, the British authorities called for a constitutional conference in London where all political parties in both Nigeria and Southern Cameroons were invited. E. M. L. Endeley, *Fon Galega*, P. M Kale among others represented Southern Cameroons and demanded an autonomous Southern Cameroons Region and equal in all aspects like other Regions of Nigeria. The Colonial Secretary was willing to grant this request if the KNC won the election to be conducted following the collapse of the Macpherson Constitution<sup>262</sup>. This stance of Endeley and host of others who answered present in the conference educates us that the people were competent to govern the territory separately.

During the election, the KNC won twelve out of thirteen seats. This was the turning point for an autonomous Region for Southern Cameroons. For the first time, British authorities respected the wish of the population for a separate Region of Southern Cameroons. The victory of the KNC proved that at this time, the party was popular. In October 1954 the Lyttleton Constitution granted Southern Cameroons a quasi-federal status within Nigeria<sup>263</sup>. A house of assembly was established and Endeley became leader of Government Business<sup>264</sup>.

By 1955, Endeley failed to respect the initial ideas of the KNC; the wish of the benevolent neutrality group to stay away from Nigeria. A school of thought says Endeley was overtaken by the political events which moved faster than he had expected<sup>265</sup>. When Endeley came to power, he began talking more about autonomy within Nigeria, which made the KNC members like J.N Foncha and A.N Jua to be angry. They decided to distance themselves from him. The split finally occurred when the KNC entered into a formal alliance with the Action Group (AG) of Chief Awolowo. This was a sharp departure from the benevolent neutrality block which he had championed in 1953<sup>266</sup>. This shows how some southern Cameroonians who judged their territory ripped for an autonomous entity avoided distraction by distancing themselves from Endeley for changing his mind.

#### **b) The Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) and the KUP**

In May 1955, J.N Foncha and A.N Jua break away from the KNC and created the KNDP. This was because the KNC alliance with the Action Group of Chief Awolowo of

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<sup>262</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons, 1922-1961*, p. 109.

<sup>263</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 301.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid*, p.148.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>266</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985: A Hundred Years*, p. 181.



Nigeria made them to believe that it will be difficult for them to realise their dream. The aim of the KNDP was independent of British Southern Cameroons and a gradual process towards Reunification with French Cameroun<sup>267</sup>. One reason that made the KNDP popular during its creation was that the KNC was pyramidal; it had local committees found in various quarters of urban centres and in some villages. It should be noted that the KNC had more supporters in towns than in villages. J.N Foncha saw this as a pretext, that with time, Endeley was going to reduce the powers to regional politics and consequently subject them to political robots of the coastal peoples<sup>268</sup>. This accounts for his further move to create the KNDP. The vision of this party as seen in our previous paragraph shows that southern Cameroonians after judging their territory feed to be on its own remained steadfast to the idea.

### **C. The Igbo Domination**

Geographically, Southern Cameroons consisted of two parts; a savannah vegetation (grassfields) Northern zone with head quarter in the hinterland Bamenda, and ethno-anthropologically close to the Bamileke tribe in French Cameroun, and the equatorial rainforest or Southern zone with head quarter in Buea which is ethno-anthropologically close to the coastal zone in French Cameroun. The territory was administered from Nigeria with hope of its eventual integration there. Due to dependency on Nigeria, no administrative or budgetary autonomy was afforded Southern Cameroons; education, investments and infrastructural developments in the territory were thus seriously retarded and the territory was relegated to the backwardness of development in Nigeria<sup>269</sup>.

When the Igbos streamed into Southern Cameroons territory, they were quick to see the profit in engaging in trade and their commercial exposure gave them an edge over the local inhabitants. With unbeatable enthusiasm, they dominated the petty markets and every facet of the territory's economic life. A British resident captioned this scenario "His energy has made him master of the local trading and fishing industry and his clannishness shows itself in nepotism in his habit of renting accommodation for himself and subletting to as many of his compatriots as it will hold and in the way in which he combines with them to achieve a common purpose"<sup>270</sup>.

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<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid*, p.150.

<sup>269</sup> Kale, *Political Evolution in the Cameroons*, 1967, p. 47.

<sup>270</sup> Nfi, *Nigerian on a Mission*, pp. 49-50.

Between 1922 and 1954, more than 90 per cent of internal trade- import and export, was in the hands of Nigerians<sup>271</sup>. Southern Cameroonian traders were no matched to Nigerian traders and could not compete with them equitably for several reasons. Nigerian traders enjoyed credit facilities from banks like the National Bank of Nigeria, the Agbonmagbe Bank, Nigeria Farmers and Commercial Bank and the African Continental Bank, a luxury that Southern Cameroonian traders started enjoying only after 1954 when the Barclays Bank opened branches in Mamfe and Victoria. Consequently, trade in cash crops such as coffee, rubber, palm oil, cocoa was dominated by Nigerians because of the heavy capital requirements involved. Even the administrative departments were not free from foreign domination. The peak of Nigeria's numerical dominance in employment in Government Departments in British Cameroons was between 1950 and 1955<sup>272</sup>.

It is believe that the territory could not be financed directly by British Tax payers because it was no longer a British colony. There were no railways and the inadequacy of road networks made certain areas inaccessible during the rainy season. The situation in the medical and educational field was far from satisfactory. This made Southern Cameroonians to believe that they were experiencing a two-tiered colonization; a colony within a colony. The legal mandate belonged to the British but in reality, the Igbos of Nigeria were perceived in Southern Cameroons as the frontline colonizers<sup>273</sup>.

They ran riots amongst a docile, illiterate and primitive Southern Cameroonian population; by effecting land-grabs, while monopolizing business (restaurants, market stalls, trading) and dominating the public service. Land expropriation, fraud, theft and the adulteration of palm wine and drugs for sheer profiteering was rampant. A Southern Cameroonian who demanded the price of a commodity sold by an Igbo was forced to buy it or was seriously beaten<sup>274</sup>. The act of bullying and victimization, coupled with protracted periods of socio-economic neglect, helped to destroy Southern Cameroons self-esteem and installed a kind of a dependency syndrome that proved fatal during colonization.

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<sup>271</sup> *Ibid*, p.50.

<sup>272</sup> G. Atem, "Cameroon Nigeria Relations,1884-1961: A Study in Political, Economic and Social Interactions Between Neighbouring States", Ph. D Thesis, University of Calabar, 1984, p.230.

<sup>273</sup> A. Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited (1950-1972), Volume I, Unveiling the Inescapable Traps*; Langaa RPCIG.

<sup>274</sup> Nfi, *The Reunification Debate in British Southern Cameroons: The role of French Cameroun Immigrants*; Langaa RPCIG, 2014.

#### D. Anlu Institution

This was a traditional institution in Kom that was used as a political instrument. Before getting deep into the role of the Anlu it is important to explain the context of things around the period such that the importance of the Anlu uprising can be properly understood. It should be noted that the ideas of the KNDP Party were most welcome given its stance for total separation from Nigeria but it was yet to gain popularity. The best way of doing this was to entrap traditional institutions that were much venerated in the Grasslands, especially as the KNDP was created essentially by Foncha and Jua from Grassland origin. Foncha was given no position in the First Executive Council for the Southern Cameroons<sup>275</sup>.

Disturbed with this poor treatment from the system, Foncha made the chiefs to believe that through continuous interaction with the Nigerians, they were going to lose all their powers to the Igbo especially as Endeley was with them. Foncha and Jua then capitalized on regional sentiments to gain their popularity. By 1957, Bamenda province had 57 percent of the population in the Southern Cameroons and 55 percent of the electoral seats were attributed to them. By concentrating their efforts in that area it could thus be very easy for them to gain control of the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly. The Anlu group in Kom was therefore a suitable institution to rally politicians and enable Foncha gain polarity. Jua is said to have instigated the Anlu against the KNC Party. Even though clear evidence is not there to prove, it is held that Jua was responsible for the Anlu uprising events of the time and the outcome of the uprising are all indicative of that<sup>276</sup>.

The primary cause of the Anlu uprising was the dissatisfaction with the agricultural policy of the Colonial Government. The Kom people were disgruntled over the cross-contour regulation passed in 1955 to promote soil conservation. According to this law the women were obliged to construct their ridges horizontally to the slopes rather than their normal vertical orientation to avoid soil erosion in the mountainous area. They were not also in line with the stand of the KNC on the future of Southern Cameroons. This was amidst serious rumours that the Kom land was to be sold to the Igbo people; a rumour whose origin was obvious<sup>277</sup>.

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<sup>275</sup> N. P. Nkwi., *Traditional Diplomacy: A Study in Inter-chiefdom Relations in the Western Grassfields, North West Province of Cameroon*, Yaounde, Department of Sociology, University of Yaounde, 1987, p.177.

<sup>276</sup> J. E. Ngam, "Party Politics and Development in the Kom Fandom: A Historical Survey, 1953-2000" Master of Arts Dissertation, Department of History, University of Yaounde 1, 2019, pp. 74-75.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*

Endeley, the then Prime Minister of Southern Cameroons was said to have planned a visit in which he had to pass through Kom to prepare for the 1959 elections. Prior to his scheduled visit, on 4th July, 1958, a meeting with the main aim of to throwing light on the contour farming law was held in Njinikom. It was chaired by Bobe Chrysantus Kinyam Bartholomew. Jua and Kinyam were all members of the Wum Native Authority Council in 1958.<sup>278</sup> The latter was the Chairman of the Council while the former was a member of the Educational Committee. In spite of the conflict that characterized the party, they were both teachers in the Catholic School Njinikom and both hailed from there.

In order to win a majority of the minds of women, Jua and other KNDP members opposed the implementation of the regulation on cross contour farming in 1958 instituted by the Wum Native Authority Council. Kinyam then went to the Traditional Council as was usually the case to enlighten the council on contour farming, which was a sensitive issue at the time<sup>279</sup>. Jua alienated with him by insinuating that the KNC had sold Kom land to the Igbo people and Endeley. He spelt out that the law should be repealed. Kinyam pointed out that it was beyond his competence to do that. Given this instance, Kinyam was attacked by a group of women invited by Jua to attend the meeting. He was beaten up and only rescued himself by seeking for refuge in Father Woodmans house<sup>280</sup>.

The rupture of the Anlu demonstration proceeded to the Catholic School Njinikom on 7th July, 1958, where it disrupted classes with three KNC teachers in the school being their target<sup>281</sup>. The Anlu accused them of misinforming the children towards their KNC tendencies. Jua, who was headmaster of the school petitioned for the transfer of the teachers in question, but Father Woodman turned down this request. On 11th July, 1958, Anlu succeeded in rendering Endeley's visit to Njinikom unsuccessful<sup>282</sup>. A meeting was planned by the KNDP on the same day to coincide with Endeley's visit. The intensity of the women's reaction surprised even the KNDP leaders.

The Anlu emerging from led by two women: Fuam and Muana set up road barricades to prevent KNC supporters from attending the meeting with the Prime Minister and Chairman of the KNC. The action of the Anlu became so deep rooted that women were prevented from visiting the houses of KNC supporters. They organized ceremonial mock burials of KNC

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<sup>278</sup> Nkwi., *Traditional Diplomacy*, p.,177.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>280</sup> Besong, *An Illustrated History*, pp. 199-201.

<sup>281</sup> . Ngam, "Party Politics and Development in the Kom Fondom, pp.76.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*

officials and supporters, activities which marked the eminent demise of the KNC in Kom. Some KNC supporters either switched to the KNDP out of fear or simply to follow what was loved by the majority in the area<sup>283</sup>.

The District Officer (D. O) informed of the Anlu uprising decided to pay a visit to Kom to make a close-range appraisal of the issue. As such, on 14th July, 1958, the D.O attended a mass rally at Njinikom and listened to the grievances of the women. Some women had visited the Foyn in order to reiterate their discontent and the failure of the government to protect their crops from destruction by Fulani cattle. When the district officer arrived, he was accompanied by the Foyn. During the meeting the Foyn rejected the idea that the Kom land was being sold<sup>284</sup>.

To eliminate the atmosphere of animosity, the D.O and Foyn promised the contour-farming regulation would be suspended and that cases of those prosecuted for violating the law would be reviewed. He made it clear that they were free to send their own children to school but that they must stop molesting and interrupting other children going to school. Concerning the demanded transfer of the four mission school teachers, he made it very clear that it was not within his domain of competence. This did not however stop their regular Saturday demonstrations. The writing was clear on the wall that the Anlu which had absorbed more than 90 per cent of the women had been transformed into an Anti-KNC political movement<sup>285</sup>.

From the foregoing paragraphs, it is convincing to say that the Anlu traditional institution in Kom acted as an agent of decolonization of Southern Cameroons. This was evident as it employed efforts at the maximum level to unseat Endeley and the KNC Nigeria in the Grassland of Bamenda, who stood for the continuous interaction of Southern Cameroons with Nigeria.

## **II. Constitutional Developments in British Southern Cameroons**

A constitution is a body of fundamental principles which a state or an organization has acknowledged to be governed with. It is also a set of values that guides a country, state or other political structures in functioning. A series of constitutions were amended in British Southern Cameroons as examined in our subsequent paragraphs.

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

<sup>284</sup> Nkwi., *Traditional Diplomacy*, p.,177.

<sup>285</sup> Takang, *An Illustrated History*, pp. 199-201.

### A. Clifford Constitution and the Richard's Constitution

The Clifford Constitution which of 1922 abolished the old Nigerian council and replaced it with a legislative council. Under this constitution, the colony and Nigerian protectorates were given a legislative council of 46 members, comprising 27 officials, including the Governor and 19 unofficial members<sup>286</sup>. Under this constitution, Southern Cameroons had no representatives in the legislative council because it was administered as an integral part of Nigeria; it was administered as a Nigerian province. The legislative council legislated for the colony. The protectorate of Southern Nigeria and Cameroons were placed under the British mandate. Although Africa had 19 representatives, none was from Southern Cameroons<sup>287</sup>.

This was one of the grievances that led to the creation of CWU in 1939 by G.J Mbene. The CWU's main objective was to get the British colonial authorities remedy the neglect which Southern Cameroons had been experiencing as a consequence of being administered as part of Nigeria. This explained the emergence of several pressure groups in the territory<sup>288</sup>. This was a step that exposed the economic viability of the territory. The next constitution in Southern Cameroons was the Richard Constitution. In August 1946, the British Government promulgated the Nigeria (Protectorate and Cameroons) Order-in-Council 1946. Section 6 of this Council stipulated that:

The portions of the Cameroons which lie to the northward, and the portions of the Cameroons which lie southward... Subject to the provision of any terms of trusteeship which may hereafter be approved by the United Nations, be administered as if the formal part of the Northern Provinces of the protectorate and of the Southern Provinces of the Protectorate of Nigeria respectively<sup>289</sup>.

Southern Cameroons was a trusteeship territory, and administered by Britain under article 76(b). One of the objectives of the trusteeship system was the promotion of political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories, and their progressive development towards self-government as may be appropriate to the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned<sup>290</sup>. The Richard's Constitution had three principal objectives: promote the unity of Nigeria, work out the diverse elements which constituted the

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<sup>286</sup> R. W. Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation: Political integration in a Fragmentary society*, Princeton, University Press, 1970, p. 70.

<sup>287</sup> John and Ndip, *Cameroon History in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, p. 90.

<sup>288</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.147.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

interest of all Nigeria and secure greater participation of Africans in the management of their own affairs<sup>291</sup>.

The constitution fragmented Nigeria into three: The Northern, Western and Eastern Regions. At the centre there was an executive and legislative council in Lagos while each of the Regions had a Regional executive council and regional council (House of Assembly). The executive was the Governor and the legislative council represented the whole of Nigeria and Southern Cameroons<sup>292</sup>. The legislative council had the Governor as President, sixteen official members in the ratio of thirteen ex-officio and three nominated twenty-eight unofficial members in the ratio of four elected members<sup>293</sup>. The legislative council in the Eastern Region where Southern Cameroons was found was ruled by two official members and five nominated unofficial members<sup>294</sup>.

With this Richard's Constitution Southern Cameroons lost the single seat in the Nigerian legislative council which it had under the Clifford's Constitution. The Richard's Constitution gave Southern Cameroons three seats in the Eastern Regional House of Assembly, but this could not compensate for the non-representation of the territory in the main legislative body for the whole of Nigeria and Cameroons under the British trusteeship. The main concern of Southern Cameroonians was that, their interest should not be appropriately defended by Nigerians within the legislative council. For instance, in the 1948-49 budgetary sessions, they revealed that in the legislative council, no honourable member, official or unofficial posed a question concerning Southern Cameroons.<sup>295</sup>

The CYL also revealed the fact that the honourable members found in the legislative council were not in contact with the problems and conditions found in Southern Cameroons. The Richard's Constitutional constituted the cradle of Regionalism for Nigerians; it left the status quo no little change for Cameroons as Enonchong states:

The limited scope of this constitution for Cameroonians was in many ways apparent: the absence of a separate Regional Organization for the Cameroons within the existing Nigeria structure, the absence of direct representation in the legislative council and the absence of the separation of any budgetary affairs of the territory...<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 301.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>293</sup> H. N. Enonchong, *Cameroon constitutional law: federalism in a mixed common-law and civil law system*, Yaoundé, CEPAER, 1967, p. 54.

<sup>294</sup> Ngo, *Constitutional developments in Southern*, pp. 66.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>296</sup> Enonchong, *Cameroon constitutional law*, p. 59.

Despite the fact that the British government moved a step closer to releasing Southern Cameroons in the Richard's Constitution, both Southern Cameroonians and Nigerians highly denounced the constitution especially with the various bills as exposed by Nghoh:

The public land acquisition ordinance, crown land Amendment ordinance, mineral ordinance and appointment and deposition of chiefs. These four bills were not welcome by the elites, but the bills had been in the book before 1947, Sir Richard restated them, this led to the critics of the constitution.<sup>297</sup>

## **B. The Revision of the Richard's Constitution**

The NCNC remained steadfast against the Richard's Constitution and called for its revision. By the end of 1946, the NCNC received about E 13 000 to finance some of its members to London where they presented their case against the constitution to the Secretary of State for colonies, Arthur Creech Jones<sup>298</sup>. In June 1947, a seven-man NCNC delegation left for London to discuss about the revision of the constitution. In this delegation, PM Kale represented Southern Cameroons and was received in August 1947 by Creech Jones. During their discussion, the NCNC presented the flaw of the Richard's Constitution and denounced the unpleasant bills. P. M Kale equally singled out the absence of Southern Cameroonians representatives in the legislative council, the Bakweri land issue and the inadequate infrastructural developments in Southern Cameroons<sup>299</sup>. He insisted that British Northern and Southern Cameroons were large enough to be self-governing.

PM Kale also raised the issue of the regional status for Southern Cameroons. At the end of their discussion, Creech Jones politely rejected their suggestions and advised the delegation to give a chance by collabourating with Sir John Macpherson who was going to Nigeria as Richard's successor<sup>300</sup>. The Secretary of State for colonies said Kale's demand for a Regional status for Southern Cameroon was difficult because it was a trust territory which was included in the political and economic life of Nigeria<sup>301</sup>. The NCNC delegation organized a march with a mass meeting at Trafalgar square where almost everyone that spoke including P.M. Kale called for the independence of Nigeria with Southern Cameroons as a Region within it. By the end of their journey, PM Kale was appointed Vice President of the

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<sup>297</sup> Nghoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.68

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid*, p.66.

<sup>300</sup> Fanzo, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 296.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*



NCNC which he refused<sup>302</sup>. The disagreement between different State holders led to the birth of the Macpherson constitution.

### C. The Macpherson Constitution

The Macpherson constitution was one of those that gave more weight to Southern Cameroons. On April 1948, Sir John Macpherson succeeded Sir Arthur Richard. Under this new constitution, the British Colonial Office decided to review the Richard's Constitution. This was appreciated by many elites like Nnamdi Azikiwe and P.M Kale who criticized its various bills especially the obnoxious ones<sup>303</sup>. Also, the Macpherson's Constitution made the Native authority system more attractive to the educated class by democratizing it. The most interesting fact was that, before the drafting of the new constitution they were to consult the masses before putting it in place. This process increased legitimacy because the indigenous ideas were taken into consideration.

This constitution divided Nigeria into the Northern, Western and Eastern Regions. Southern Cameroons was found in the Eastern Region for administrative purposes. The Eastern House of Assembly comprised Lieutenant-Governor who was President, five official members, eight unofficial members and not more than three special members. The executive also comprised Lieutenant-Governor as President, five ex-officio members, two official members and nine elected members who were chosen from the House of Assembly. The nine elected members became Regional ministers<sup>304</sup>.

The constitution setup a legislature and executive for Nigeria and the Cameroons. The Ibadan Conference of 1950 defined the functions of the council of Ministers and Regional Executive Council by having the responsibility to formulate policy and direct action of the executive. The council of Ministers was responsible for the overall Nigerian matters as well as matters relating to the central government<sup>305</sup>. The Macpherson Constitution tried to enforce an association between Southern Cameroons and the Eastern Region of Nigeria. The Economic uncertainty of Southern Cameroons coupled with the British attitude vis-à-vis the political future of the trust territory were encouraged Southern Cameroonians to request for a separate regional status.

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<sup>302</sup> K. Ezera, *Constitutional developments in Nigeria: an analytical study of Nigeria's Constitution-Making Developments and the Historical and Political Factors that affected Constitutional Change*, Cambridge University Press, 1964, p. 85.

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>304</sup> Amaazee, *The Eastern Nigerian Crisis*, p.27.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, p.29.

The British knew from the onset that Southern Cameroons wanted a separate Region. They were no more interested to be administered as part of Nigeria. The resident of Southern Cameroons admitted that he was “becoming increasingly convinced by the suggestion of a complete separation of Cameroonians. Despite all the arguments advanced by British Colonial Officials, Macpherson did not review the ultimate goal of his constitution as it affected Southern Cameroons. He appointed a commission to report on the revenue allocation for Nigeria and Southern Cameroons. The members were D.A. Skelton, J.R. Hicks and Sir Sydney Phillipson<sup>306</sup>.

The commission had four guided principles: equality, liberty, fraternity and efficiency. The commission reported and recommended that grants from the centre were based on the principle of derivation need and national interests<sup>307</sup>. The administration of Southern Cameroons within the Eastern Region of Nigeria meant Southern Cameroonians were treated as a distinct political entity from those of the Eastern Region in their location of revenues<sup>308</sup>. This led to a situation where the lion’s share of the revenue destined for the Eastern Region and Southern Cameroons ended up only in the Eastern Region of Nigeria. However, the new constitution had an improvement over the Richard’s Constitution as Africans had four representatives in the Executive Council. The new constitution gave Southern Cameroons representatives both in the House of Assembly and the Council of Ministers in the Eastern Region as well as in the Federal House of Representatives and in the Federal Council of Ministers<sup>309</sup>.

#### **a. The Constitution and Southern Cameroons**

The Macpherson Constitution gave 34 seats to the Eastern Region, and four of the seats were reserved for Southern Cameroons. In the Eastern house of Assembly, Southern Cameroons was given thirteen out of the eighty seats. There were thirty-three divisions in the Eastern Region and these eighty seats were distributed as follows: the areas with high population density of 165,000 were given two seats, those with 400,000 were given three seats in each of the houses of Assembly and finally one division (Owerri) with over 400,000

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<sup>306</sup> Amaazee, *The Eastern Nigerian Crisis*, p.29.

<sup>307</sup> J. F. Ajayi and A. E. Eboko, “Transfer of Power in Nigeria: Its Origins and Consequences”, in *Decolonization and African Independence: The Transfer of Power, 1960-1980*, New Heaven, Yale University, 1988, p. 251.

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

<sup>309</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.79.

given four seats<sup>310</sup>. Following these rules, Victoria, Kumba, Mamfe, Wum and Nkambe Divisions were given two seats each except the Bamenda division which had three seats<sup>311</sup>.

Southern Cameroons therefore had thirteen seats. These representatives were: C. Kangsen and Sama Chi Ndi from Wum; V.T. Lainjo, S.T.Muna and J.N Foncha from Bamenda, J.T. Ndze and A.T. Ngala from Nkambe, E.M.L Endeley and P.N. Motomby-Woleta, N.N. Mbile and R.N Charly from Kumba, S.A. George and M.N. Foju from Mamfe.<sup>312</sup> Despite the fact that Southern Cameroons failed in her demand for a Regional status, the territory was given a seat in the Eastern House of Assembly, the Eastern Regional Council of Ministers, the Federal House of Representative and the Federal Council of Ministers. Out of the thirteen seats which Southern Cameroons had, four were for the Federal House of Representatives of which one of the delegates was in the Federal Council of Ministers and the rest in the Eastern house of Assembly, where one of the delegates was in the Eastern Regional Council of Ministers.

The thirteen representatives later left for Enugu for the first Eastern Regional House of Assembly under the Macpherson Constitution. On January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1952, they took a guarantee in Enugu to work under the control of the NCNC. The constitution as seen above required the Eastern Region to reserve four seats for the Southern Cameroons in the Federal House of Representatives. During their meeting in Mamfe, they chose Dr Endeley, S.T Muna, Kangsen and George to represent them in the Federal House of Representative<sup>313</sup>. It was these nominations of Southern Cameroonians as representatives that offered them the green light to gain more experience on political issues and they started demanding for a separate Regional House.

#### **b. The Eastern Regional Crisis, January-May 1953**

This crisis occurred because the president of the NCNC failed to secure a seat in the Federal House of Assembly. The disagreement between Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo made the latter to leave Azikiwe when two seats were demanded<sup>314</sup>. Also, the reaction of Chief Awolowo towards the leadership of the NCNC in both the Central House of Representatives and in the Eastern Regional House of Assembly fell into the hands of “a new team” of men. In the Central Council of Ministers, the NCNC was represented by A.C. Nwapa Eni Njoku,

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<sup>310</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p. 80.

<sup>311</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 301.

<sup>312</sup> Ezera, *Constitutional Developments in Nigeria*, p.132-134.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid*, p. 135.

<sup>314</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun : histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p.83.

Okoi Arikpo and Endeley while in the Eastern House of Assembly the leadership fell in the hands of Professor Eyo Ita who was the Deputy National President of the NCNC<sup>315</sup>.

The National President of the NCNC Nnadi Azikiwe was less powerful in both the Central House of Representatives and the Eastern Regional House of Assembly. During the crisis at Lagos, Endeley, Ndze, Kangsen and George held a meeting in which they decided that the Southern Cameroons Delegation at Enugu should stay away from Nigerian Politics and opted for a policy of “benevolent neutrality”. When N.N. Mbile was later informed of the decision, he challenged the idea and told them they did not have the mandate to adopt such a policy without the authorization of traditional rulers and electorate in Southern Cameroons<sup>316</sup>.

Despite Mbile’s stance and objection, the policy of benevolent neutrality was adopted. Some members supported Endeley while others like Motomby-Woleta, Ndi and Charley supported Mbile. On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1953, some members under Endeley’s leadership informed Azikiwe on their decision that, Southern Cameroons representatives were no longer bound by the guarantee signed on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1952 and that they did not want to prevent the NCNC from pursuing its policy in the way it deemed<sup>317</sup>. The benevolent neutrals expressed the wish that the NCNC should acknowledge the right to act under their own profound conviction and the people they represented. Endeley elaborated why Southern Cameroonians stood for a benevolent point. This was on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1953 during the Central House of Representatives as he stated that:

Our people have carefully examined the situation and have resolved that they should stay clear from Nigerian politics... We shall remain independent and neutral to all Political Parties in Nigeria... We shall therefore also watch the passage of your newspapers, we shall listen to your public statement and we shall make up our minds finally, having satisfied ourselves whether you really love us for our own sake, or whether you had some other hidden designs... I wish everybody to note that I am here in the Council of Ministers primarily as the representative of the Cameroons and not as the representative of Nigerian Political Parties... Those who do not know this should please read over their constitution... No other interest shall be allowed to take precedence over my first duty to represent the people whose vote brought me into this house<sup>318</sup>.

Endeley’s notification policy of Cameroons benevolent neutrality was immediately thrown on the floor of the House of Representatives by Mbile who disconnected himself from his statement. Mbile went further to reaffirm his support to the NCNC and pointed out that Endeley was not speaking on behalf of all Cameroonians. The “Cameroon bloc” therefore split into two opposing camps: those who sided with Endeley were George, Foju, Muna,

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<sup>315</sup> Abwa, *Cameroon : histoire d’un Nationalisme*, p.83.

<sup>316</sup> Amaazee, *The Eastern Nigerian Crisis and the Destiny*, p.42.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>318</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.99.

Foncha, Kangsen, Lanjo, Ndze and Ngala, while Mbile's supporters were Charley, Ndi and Motomy-Woleta<sup>319</sup>. The issue of Southern Cameroons was a cause for concern as the NCNC and AG forwarded a statement in quick succession, in support of the political aspirations of Southern Cameroons although for different reasons<sup>320</sup>.

On the April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1953 Azikiwe issued a statement supporting the Southern Cameroons request for a separate region with a separate legislative Assembly notwithstanding, a full budgetary autonomy. The NCNC went further to support the stance for the unification of the Cameroons with French administrations and their "aspiration towards independence". On April 25<sup>th</sup> 1953, speaking at Ibadan, chief Awolowo supported the Cameroons demand for a separate legislature and right for independence<sup>321</sup>. He however announced that "in a contest between true Nationalists and fake opportunists, we are all confident that Cameroonians are too patriotic to be neutral<sup>322</sup>. This crisis contributed in decolonising the trust territory of British Southern Cameroon in that it offered room for Endeley and his proponents to distance themselves from the NCNC affair and Nigerian politics.

#### **D. The Littleton Constitution and Southern Cameroons**

This was the constitution that proclaimed a quasi-Federal territory (semi-autonomous state) for Southern Cameroons, but the Governor of Nigeria remained the overall boss. The victory of the KNC over the KPP gave him more grounds of granting a separate regional status for Southern Cameroons thereby precipitating the decolonisation of British Southern Cameroons<sup>323</sup>. After the KNC avalanche victory, S.A George informed the Lieutenant-Governor of the Eastern Region that all the elected members of Southern Cameroons would boycott the Eastern House of Assembly because the KNC would be holding its convention at Mamfe on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1954 which would be attended by all elected members and the Eastern House of Assembly was to meet on the same day.<sup>324</sup> The results of the December elections in 1953 promoted the constitutional request of the KNC but the report of the fiscal commission was a blow to their request.

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<sup>319</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.99.

<sup>320</sup> Interview with Victor Julius Ngoh, 68 Years, Professor Emeritus, Yaounde, 11 November 2020.

<sup>321</sup> Ezera, *Constitutional developments in Nigeria*, p.159-160.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, p.100.

<sup>323</sup> T. Eyongetah and R. Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, London, Longman, 1974, p. 136.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137.

### a. The Fiscal Commission Report on Southern Cameroon

During the London Constitutional Conference on 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1953, Littleton demanded to find out whether Southern Cameroons could sustain itself without financial assistance from other parts of Nigeria taking into consideration that, none of its revenue were henceforth shared with the Northern Cameroons or with any other part of Nigeria. Sir Oliver Littleton said her majesty's Government wished that a separate Region should be established for Southern Cameroons. From the studies of Chick and his team, Southern Cameroons was ripped constitute a separate Region within the Federation if it could survive without financial assistance from other parts of Nigeria and without sharing the revenue derived from it<sup>325</sup>. The financial report showed that, Southern Cameroons had a surplus in each of the three years. That is, 1951-52 estimates which the Central Government transferred to the Cameroon Development Fund<sup>326</sup>.

The 1952-53 budget showed a surplus of £173,000 but the advance estimate for 1953-54 showed a deficit of £200,000. The commission estimated that, the expenditure of Southern Cameroons' Government would be around £825,000 and the total estimated regional expenditure in respect to Federal services was taken to be £1,275,000 for Southern Cameroons as a separate Region. From this point of view of Chick, the nature of the Southern Cameroons economy for further revenue estimation was hypothetical. This was because the territory depended much on the elders and Fyffe's limited and the CDC plantations<sup>327</sup>. Apart from the import duties, the financial commission also reported that the main source of the territory's revenue was based on export duties of cocoa, bananas, palm product and rubber as well as income tax on company profits. After having presented a detail account of the economic situation of the territory, the fiscal commission reached a conclusion that:

...a Southern Cameroons Regional Government would not in the years immediately ahead be financially stable without external assistance. In good years it might pay its way with a slender margin, but in the lean years it would have a deficit and it would have no reserves to fall back on if, over a period the deficit exceeds the surpluses.<sup>328</sup>

The fiscal commission was not appreciated by the commissioner of the Cameroons brigadier, E. J. Gibbons. According to him, the territory's shared of central expenditure was not calculated on a population basis. In this light, the territory was on the periphery of the main central services and therefore, only a small percentage of capital expenditure per head

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<sup>325</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of the Cameroon*, p.137.

<sup>326</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.115.

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid.*, p.116.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*, p.117.

of population was devoted to it. He presented that the share of Southern Cameroons central expenditure was calculated to be about 1.25 percent of the total which under dispensation was then used. Southern Cameroons share of expenditure was around £275,000. From Gibbon's point of view, a total estimated Regional expenditure of £1,100,000 would have been attributed to the Federal services. This amount proved that every modestly organized Cameroon Region was able to survive.<sup>329</sup>

### **b. Lagos Constitutional Conference January 1954**

The Lagos Constitutional Conference of January 1954 was chaired by Littleton and the main agenda was on the Southern Cameroon solicitation for Regional status. The central matter was the supposed incapacity of Southern Cameroons to survive as a viable economy as outlined by the Fiscal Commission. The option which was available for the British was to separate the Southern Cameroons from Nigeria completely, but this option demanded financial responsibilities for the administration of the territory. Although the option was very costly, it gave the British treasury full control over the territory's budget. The option also required a re-negotiation of the trusteeship agreement since it involved a complete rupture of the two parts of the trust territories given that Northern Cameroons was still administered as part of the Northern Regions of Nigeria<sup>330</sup>. This reveals that the British wished to continue having Southern Cameroons as a part of Eastern Region of Nigeria

The second alternative was to establish Southern Cameroons as a separate Region of the proposed new Federation of Nigeria where Southern Cameroons will continue benefiting from the Federal services. For the British, it was the best alternative because it was financially less demanding. The issue of Southern Cameroons economic viability was not a problem of inadequate resources but that of governing themselves in the future. This was an opportunity cost to the British since administering Southern Cameroon as part of Nigeria was less costly than giving them a separate state.

The most serious option of this alternative was that, Southern Cameroons electorate had shown decisively that they did not want to be administered as part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, a fact which the British Government could not dismissed lightly<sup>331</sup>. In January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1954, a memorandum was presented by the Action Group (AG), where it revealed that financial considerations was not used as a pretext to reject the request for a separate Regional

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<sup>329</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.115.

<sup>330</sup> Abwa, *Cameroun: Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p. 347.

<sup>331</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985, A Hundred Years*, p.229.

status for Southern Cameroons<sup>332</sup>. According to the memorandum, self-determination could easily overcome financial limitation. Also, the Lyttleton Constitution had promised that after the 1953 election in Southern Cameroons the territory will be granted a Regional status<sup>333</sup>.

After various discussions based on the Fiscal Commission, the British Government was finally left with three possible options, but the options were all linked towards administrating Southern Cameroons as part of Nigeria. The three possible options were: Southern Cameroons was to be a normal Region for all purposes including the allocation of revenue, Southern Cameroon was to be a Federated territory and finally the territory was to have a special constituted Government<sup>334</sup>.

### c) **The London Constitutional Conference, May-June 1957**

Sir John Macpherson retired as Governor General of Nigeria in April 1955 and was succeeded by Sir James Robertson who was to conduct the delegation of the Federal Government. The Conference was chaired by Alan Lennox Bogd<sup>335</sup>. The Secretary of State for colonies prior to the Conference, the Southern Cameroons delegate left with a memorandum which was entitled “the Kamerun society and Nigerian, Constitutional Conference and the Unification Question”. In this memorandum, four accessible options were for Southern Cameroons.<sup>336</sup> The first option was complete integration with Eastern Nigeria but this option was rejected by the Kamerun Society in 1953, 1954 and 1957 elections. The second option which was for the Regional Status for Southern Cameroons within Nigeria was also rejected by the Kamerun Society, for there was no real contact between the two territories and in localities where contact existed, it was not always sweet-sounding as it detected that a Regional Status within Nigeria will break the spirit of the trusteeship agreement<sup>337</sup>.

The third proposal was based on separation without Reunification with any party neither French Cameroon nor Nigeria. But it was rejected by the society on the basis of financial reasons. They said: “where will financial capital come from”. The last option was based on Reunification and this proposal was highly inscribed by the society. These options were proposed to the Southern Cameroons delegation after presenting the argument for and

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<sup>332</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985, A Hundred Years*, p.229.

<sup>333</sup> Abwa, *Cameroon: Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p. 348.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>336</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A History of Cameroon*, p.60.

<sup>337</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985: A Hundred Years*, p.215.



against reunification; this explained the relative decline of the KNC and the corresponding increase in popularity of the KNDP<sup>338</sup>. Just this step of disassociating from Nigerian politics was good enough to think that the trust territory was capable to be on its own.

The Constitutional Conference assigned eight seats to Southern Cameroons, the KNC which was the ruling party was given four seats, KNDP had two seats and KPP had two seats. The KNC delegation was led by Endeley, Victor E. Mukete as the adviser, J.T. Ndze and Fon Galega II. The KNDP delegation was led by Foncha with Jua as an adviser and the KPP delegation was led by Kale with Mbile as the adviser. Endeley by adding Fon Galega II in his delegation expected reliable support from traditional rulers especially because in the memorandum of the chief conference in 1956, traditional rulers had requested to “remain within the Federation” of Nigeria. This program was also supported by the British who later promoted it<sup>339</sup>.

#### **d) British Plan of Action at the 1957 London Constitutional Conference**

The KNC and KPP went to the London Constitutional Conference with a clear agenda. They demanded for a separate regional status within Nigeria, on the other hand the KNDP wanted secession. The British authorities with the idea that the territory should be associated with Nigeria became afraid that Southern Cameroons delegates would press for direct administration of the territory by the British Government. It was certain especially if Nigeria refused to accept the territory within the Federation. With the outcome of this situation, Southern Cameroons then exerted pressure on the trusteeship council to check any move to foster their association with Nigeria<sup>340</sup>. The British were of such a layout because it was extremely costly for her Majesty’s Government, which wanted to cut its financial expenditure in Southern Cameroons.

British officials therefore decided to adopt a two-pronged plan facing Southern Cameroonian Constitutional request. Their plan was to convince the Southern Cameroons delegation that the territory will benefit from associating with Nigeria where an effective substitute was likely to be found. This plan suggested that, the British delegation should meet with the Southern Cameroons delegation in the absence of the Nigerian delegation. After the meeting with Southern Cameroons delegation, the British delegation was required to impress the Nigerian delegation that Southern Cameroons was a potential prosperous part of the

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<sup>338</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985, A Hundred Years*, p. 216.

<sup>339</sup> Le Vine, *The Cameroons from Mandate*, p. 52.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

federation which was well worthy of their help. This was also to be done in the absence of the Southern Cameroonian delegation<sup>341</sup>.

In their discussion with the Nigerian delegation, the British had to stress that the Southern Cameroons budget needed to be much, if at all out of balance. It merited to be treated for fiscal purposes like the other Regions of Nigeria rather than being the subject of special and supposedly generous treatment. All these actions took place behind the scene before Southern Cameroons delegates presented their memorandum for deliberations<sup>342</sup>. Endeley presented a joint KNC-KPP memorandum. This memorandum called for the British government to grant full territorial autonomy to Southern Cameroons in association with the federation of Nigeria. They also requested that the territory be given its own Governor and necessary political administrative machinery in keeping with the trusteeship agreement. This decision of requesting for a territorial autonomy for southern Cameroons convinces us to believe that the territory feed to survive on its own.

J.N Foncha of the KNDP kicked against Endeley's proposal as he requested for the secession of Southern Cameroons from the federation of Nigeria and to assume direct management of its own affairs. With this stance, one can see that the territory was ready to rule itself. Again, Fon Galega II who went under the KNC delegation abandoned the delegation and presented a third memorandum, requesting for a full regional status for Southern Cameroons with its own Governor. He went further to say that, after the independence of Nigeria, Southern Cameroons should become the direct responsibility of the Colonial Government. He also suggested that Southern and French Cameroons should achieve independence separately before negotiating their Reunification. It was clear that his request was more or less similar to that of the KNDP and different from that of the KNC and KPP. He spoke as the representative of traditional rulers<sup>343</sup>. This position of his tells us that Southern Cameroonians were ready to be own their own.

In the same line, Alan Lennox submitted a proposed constitution of Southern Cameroons for deliberation and adoption. Before doing that, he precised to the various delegations that one of the options available for the territory was for it to remain as part of Nigeria when the latter became independent. The other option was for the territory to continue under the trust administration of Britain. He added that Southern Cameroons would

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<sup>341</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.144.

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

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*, p.146.

not be given the golden key to the bank of England<sup>344</sup>. He further said many of the best friends of Southern Cameroons did not foresee a destiny more likely to promote her happiness and prosperity than continue association with Nigeria. For every indication, the British government preferred association with Nigeria, despite Southern Cameroons capability to stand on its own as seen in their incessant request for a constitutional change<sup>345</sup>.

At the end of the discussion, it was agreed that the term: “quasi-federal territory” would be replaced with Southern Cameroons. It was also agreed that the Governor General would be responsible for matters within the competence of the territory and he will become the high commission for Southern Cameroons and British special representative at the UN for the trust territory as a whole. He was equally to empower to appoint a speaker for the Southern Cameroons House of assembly after consultation with the premier. Also, the membership in the house had to increase from thirteen to twenty-six, with no native authority members. There was also going to be a House of Chiefs of about twenty members with not less than three members from each Division<sup>346</sup>. This increase in number of members was move towards the decolonisation of British Southern Cameroons.

#### **e) The Endeley and Mbile Alliance 1957**

Despite the clash between Endeley and N.N Mbile in the early 1950s, the two personalities during the London Constitutional Conference in 1957 almost had the same point of view. The KNC and KPP had the same aspiration concerning Southern Cameroons. This was shown in the Bamenda conference of 1956 and was clear in London in 1957 when the KNC and the KPP presented a joint memorandum. The main objective of Endeley after 1955 was Regional autonomy of Southern Cameroons with Nigeria while the KPP of Mbile stood for Regional autonomy for the trust territory and secession from Nigeria when the latter became independent. In order to achieve these objectives, the KPP worked in partnership with Nigerian and other African Nationalist political parties.<sup>347</sup>.

#### **i. Endeley as Premier**

On May 15, 1958, Southern Cameroons experienced another constitutional development when sir Ralph Grey, acting Governor-General and also acting high commissioner of Southern Cameroons appointed Endeley at the age of 42 as premier of Southern Cameroons.

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<sup>344</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A History of Cameroon*, p.60.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*, p.146.

<sup>346</sup> Falso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 117.

<sup>347</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985*, p. 210.

Endeley as the premier made a statement in his introduction of a ministerial system of government in Southern Cameroons that reads:

Finally, I should like to state the attitude of my Government towards French Cameroon. Most of us... advocated the ultimate unification of the French and British Cameroons as it was before 1914-18 War. While we still hold this view, new events and circumstances have overtaken us and have removed the question of unification out of the realm of urgency and priority... With the Northern Cameroons absorbed into Nigeria and the French Cameroons assimilated into the French Union, it now seems unlikely that the Cameroons would never return to the status it was before 1914<sup>348</sup>.

Endeley's speech wasn't welcomed by the unifications because he had abandoned the main idea of reunification with French Cameroun in favour of association with the federation of Nigeria. His modified position meant that, Southern Cameroons could reunify with French Cameroon only as part of the movement to the creation of the United States of West Africa. In January 1955, he said the KNC had "modified its policy on unification and it is not on our priority list. Given that some politicians (unificationists) were able to oppose Endeley's decision of associating British Southern Cameroons with Nigeria one can say the territory was ripped to be on its own because the people proved to be able to manage their affairs themselves.

## **ii. The Rise of J N. Foncha as Premier**

Foncha became premier of Southern Cameroons on January 30<sup>th</sup> 1959<sup>349</sup>. The KNDP stood for secession from Nigeria which pleased the electorate. The party won fourteen of the twenty-six seats in the house of Assembly and the KNC-KPP alliance had twelve seats. The votes were in order: 75, 326 for the KNDP and 51,425 for the KNC-KPP alliance<sup>350</sup>. The defeat of the KNC-KPP alliance brought about differences. Mukete left the party and joined the KNDP because of its political ideology. On the other hand, P.M Kale left the KPP and formed KUP, which stood for secession from Nigeria and a separate independent political entity with membership in the Common Wealth. Foncha became Premier because the electorate appreciated his political ideology of secession and ultimate reunification with French Cameroon<sup>351</sup>.

## **f. Southern Cameroons Independence**

After the January 1959 elections the main concern of the KNDP was centered on the constitutional future of the territory. The party regarded the defeat of the KNC-KPP alliance

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<sup>348</sup> Abwa, *Histoire d'un Nationalisme*, p. 381.

<sup>349</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>351</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985: A Hundred Years*, p. 117.

at the polls as a victory for its political stance but Endeley and Mbile alliance refused to abandon. Another major concern was the financial potentiality of the states as a separate independent political entity. This was due to the economic and administrative reports of Sydney Phillipson Doctor Kenneth. Both reports were completed in 1959 and it was based on the investigation and assumption that Southern Cameroons would have a longer period of trusteeship after separation. Based on Phillipson report, the territory was going to be potentially viable only if prices will remain stable<sup>352</sup>.

The territory also had favourable conditions to attract foreign and internal investments. He concluded that the available revenue could enable it to maintain a precarious hand-to-mouth existence<sup>353</sup>. Foncha was disappointed by the report because he wanted to use it as a support for his ideology. The second economic report of Dr Kenneth E. Berrill was a survey of the economic situation of the Southern Cameroons. This report did not take into consideration the political future of the territory. It started in December 1959 and was submitted on August 25, 1960. As per the report, the basic economic requirements of Southern Cameroons in the coming years irrespective of the outcome of the plebiscite were an improved road system, enlarged agricultural extension program and improved marketing and gardening system. The report recognized the progress made by CDC but questioned the advisability of continuing the Santa coffee Estate<sup>354</sup>.

Another economic report on the Southern Cameroons was prepared from December 1960 to February 1961 at the demand of French Cameroon Government. The report was financed by the International Corporation Administration of the USA, headed by Kjell Anderson. The team was to report on the economic aspect of a possible Reunification of British Cameroon with the Cameroons Republic. The team was asked to work on the assumption of a Unified Cameroon having as objective the removal of economic barriers. These suppose a common currency, a common external tariff and the absence of internal tariffs. This report was presented by Anderson on February 18, 1961 and it recommended that a Reunified Cameroon should join the Franc Zone, a Cameroon Central bank should be established and a currency, established at the early stage of Reunification<sup>355</sup>.

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<sup>352</sup> Tazifor and Ndip, *Cameroon History*, p.163.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>354</sup> E. Bustin, *Five African States Responses to Diversity*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1963, pp.272-277.

<sup>355</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon Revisited North-South West Nexux 1858-1972 Myth, History and Reality*, Vol. 2, Paul's Press, 2013, p. 45.

### **g. The Southern Cameroons at the Thirteen Session of the UN**

This main concern of this session was the Unification question to electorate. Southern Cameroonians were divided in their opinion. Foncha the premier called for the separation of the territory from Nigeria and ultimate Reunification with French Cameroon by mutual discussion and agreement, the KNC-KPP alliance was against this proposal and stood firm on their main idea. This session of the UN general assembly finally agreed that a plebiscite should be held to decide the issue. The plebiscite questions to be posed were separation from the federation of Nigeria or association with it and that Reunification should not arise until separation was effective. On the other hand, Endeley wanted a plebiscite based on Reunification with an Independent French Cameroon or association with an Independent Nigeria.

Foncha requested that Nigeria and French Cameroonians who were residing in Southern Cameroons should not be given franchise. For him the plebiscite was a matter to decide if the indigenes of the territory wanted an association with Nigeria or Reunification with French Cameroon; those who were born in Southern Cameroons of Nigeria or French Cameroon parents had to be considered separately. On the other hand, Endeley wanted Nigerians and French Cameroonians residing in the territory to be franchised. The failure to arrive on a compromise made them to meet at the Mamfe Plebiscite conference.<sup>356</sup>

The Mamfe conference was attended by Southern Cameroonians in August 1959. The agenda was centred on the status of self-governing Southern Cameroons within an independent federation of Nigeria: Separation from Nigeria with a period under trusteeship and separation from Nigeria with the opening of early negotiation with French Cameroon for Reunification of acceptable terms. These politicians, unable to arrive at a compromise at the Mamfe Constitutional conference in the House of Assembly therefore had to return to the UN<sup>357</sup>. It was at the UN General Assembly in 1959 after a serious debate concerning the future of Southern Cameroons, that Endeley went further to propose that the questions in the plebiscite should be:

- 1) Do you wish to continue as an autonomous self-governing region in an independent federation of Nigeria?

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<sup>356</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-198*, p.229.

<sup>357</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.177.

- 2) Do you wish to secede from Nigeria to effect reunification with the Republic of French Cameroon (formerly under French administration)?

After a long period of talks, Angre Brooks of Liberia who had observed and listened finally tabled a draft resolution to the trusteeship committee in October 1959. The Draft resolution was tabled by Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Tunisia, Morocco, Mexico, the United Arab Republic, Sudan, Libya and the USA. It stipulated that the arrangement for the plebiscite should begin on September 30<sup>th</sup> 1961 and that the plebiscite should be held on later than March 1961. It also spelt out that the two questions in the plebiscite should be;

- 1) Do you wish to achieve independent by joining the independent federation of Nigeria?  
2) Do you wish to achieve Independent by joining the Independent Republic of Cameroon?

The draft resolution also recommended that only a person born in Southern Cameroons or one of whose parents was born in the territory be allowed to vote. It also proposed that the administering authority in consultation with the Government of Southern Cameroons take steps to separate the administration of Southern Cameroons from that of the Federation of Nigeria not later than October 1960<sup>358</sup>. The Draft resolution was subsequently adopted by the fourth trusteeship committee with two abstentions (Afghanistan and Iraq) as UN General Assembly resolution 1352 XIV) October 16, 1959<sup>359</sup>. Southern Cameroonians leaders did not appreciate the resolutions of the UN. It was witnessed by the stand of political leaders like P.M Kale and traditional authorities like Stephen E. Nyenti of the Cameroon Commoners Congress (C.C.C)<sup>360</sup>.

#### **h. The London Conference of November 1960**

The London conference was attended by political leaders, traditional authorities and Sir Iain Macleod who was the secretary of state for colonies. Before this conference in May 1960, a series of events took in place Southern Cameroons as it later developed a cold feeling regarding the two alternatives. The CPNC leaders proposed to the KNDP to cancel the upcoming plebiscite and demand independence as a separate political entity<sup>361</sup>. Foncha agreed and a conference was held in November 1960 to get the approval of the British Government. This request was rejected by Macleod and he said “the UN in adopting the two alternatives of joining Nigeria or the Cameroon Republic clearly ruled out the period of

<sup>358</sup> Bustin, *Five African States*, p. 279.

<sup>359</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p.177.

<sup>360</sup> Louka, *Crisis of the State in Kamerun. The stakes of Federalism*, p. 20.

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid.*

continuing trusteeship or separate independence for Southern Cameroons.<sup>362</sup> Due to this failure at the conference, Foncha met Ahidjo on December 1960 and expressed his full agreement that the UN General Assembly had stated with clarity the two questions which were to be put at the time of the plebiscite on February 11, 1961.

On February 11, 1961, Southern Cameroonian voters went to the polls and 233,571 voted for reunification with the Republic of Cameroon while 97,741 voted for independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria. The KNDP emerged victorious from the 1961 plebiscite in Southern Cameroons. After these results, it was now left for Southern Cameroonians to work out a constitution with the Republic of Cameroon that will govern the Union. Southern Cameroons preparations were done during the Bamenda “all party constitutional conference” in June 1961. Some resolutions were taken in the conference to guide Southern Cameroonians at Fouban<sup>363</sup>. These decisions were to sustain the economic viability of the trust territory.

#### **i. The Fouban Conference of July 1961**

The Fouban Conference opened in July 17 and ended on the 21st, 1961<sup>364</sup>. The conference was attended by delegates from Southern Cameroons including members of the government, the CPNC, OK and the House of Chiefs led by Foncha and delegates from the Republic of Cameroon led by Ahidjo. The main agenda of the conference was to set the base of unity between the two states (the rules and regulations that would govern the union). Foncha speaking on behalf of Southern Cameroons stood for a confederal system of government where the different values of each state would be guaranteed<sup>365</sup>. This reveals that before the Fouban conference, southern Cameroonians had sat and judged their territory feed to be on its own.

Digesting the opening statements of the two leaders (Ahidjo and Foncha), one would say that they had different ways of looking at the union. It was on this premise that Endeley intervened and said the issue should not be singly handled by the ruling the parties, he cautioned them to take much time and produce something good for both parties. According to Ngoh, three days were given the Foncha to reflect on the issue. Whatever that happened, the fact remains that the wishes of Southern Cameroonians were either ignored or largely

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<sup>362</sup> Louka, *Crisis of the State in Kamerun. The stakes of Federalism*, p.195.

<sup>363</sup> Ngoh, *Cameroon 1884-1985:A Hundred Years*, p.238.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>365</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons* p. 167.



modified to suit the aspirations of French Cameroonians<sup>366</sup>. Southern Cameroons had its independence on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1961 by joining the Republic of Cameroon<sup>367</sup>.

### **Conclusion**

The chapter has examined the decolonization process in British Southern Cameroons. It has presented how pressures groups and political parties influenced the process of independence in the territory and how constitutional developments influenced this process. The chapter taking into consideration the resources of British southern Cameroons has defended the fact that the territory was ripped to be on its own. The chapter ends with the role played by the UN in the process of the independence Southern Cameroons.

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<sup>366</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons* p. 167.

<sup>367</sup> Ndi, *Southern West Cameroon revisited 1950-1972. Unveiling Inescape Traps*, vol 1, Bamenda, Paul's Press, 2013, 56.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FAILURES OF THE TRUSTEESHIP SYSTEM AND IMPACT

#### **Introduction**

The trusteeship system in British Southern Cameroons ended in 1961 and it stemmed from the mandate period which ran from July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1922-1945. Southern Cameroons was administered as Mandate B territory of the League of Nations. British activities were marginal as compared to those of the French in their portion of Cameroon or other British colonies elsewhere. British Southern Cameroons had been neglected during the “trust” period<sup>368</sup>. The evidence of the neglect was abundant and this caused the failure of the trusteeship system in the territory. Our bone of contention in this chapter is to bring out evidence of the failures during the “trust” period and how it affected the economy and development of the territory<sup>369</sup>.

The trusteeship did not initially change the status of the British Southern Cameroons until some constitutional developments took place in Nigeria. The inherent part under which the territory was administered as an integral part of Nigeria during the mandates period was maintained in the trusteeship agreement and endorsed by the general assembly of the United Nation in 1946. Based on article 5(b) of the agreement, Britain had to constitute Southern Cameroons into a customs, fiscal, administrative union or federation with alongside territories to establish a common service between such territories and the British Southern Cameroons<sup>370</sup>.

#### **I. Failures: Economic Neglect (Plantation Agriculture)**

This is one of the aspects that exposed the failures of the “trust” system in the territory. The official end of the First World War in Cameroon on February 18, 1916 that earlier started in 1914 brought about the birth of the League of Nations, which resulted from the Paris Peace Conference of January 18, 1919. The main aim of the conference was to negotiate the fate of Germany and her supporters. Article 119 of the Treaty of Versailles signed by Germany on June 28, 1919 completely stripped her of any claims or titles over her overseas possessions.

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<sup>368</sup> Le Vine, *Cameroon Federal Republic*, p. 268.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>370</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 74.

The British, just like the French mandatory power were instructed by article 22 of the League of Nations' Covenant to promote the socio-economic development of their respective sectors. The period which officially started on July 20, 1922 when Southern Cameroons was administered mandate B territory of the League of Nations. For administrative convenience, Britain further partitioned her portion into two: British Southern Cameroons and British Northern Cameroons and appended them to the Eastern and Northern Regions of Nigeria respectively. The British did not invest in the territory because they thought as at mandate, its future was not certain and potential investors feared that the League of Nations could reassign the administration of the territory to another power if deemed necessary

The neglect during this period can be understood from the organization of the auction sales of German plantations in 1923 and 1924<sup>371</sup>. In 1923, Britain organized the first auction sale of the former German plantations with the exclusion of German buyers. This sale did not yield fruit as British citizens were not interested in buying the plantations. On November 24, 1924, the second and last auction took place in London. During this auction sale, German planters were permitted to participate in the purchase of the plantations and they bought the entire plantations in British Southern Cameroons. From 1924 to 1939, the Germans dominated the sector of cash crop farming in the territory<sup>372</sup>. The total sale fetched the British some 224,670 pounds, which was nearly twice what was obtained in the French sphere. In 1925, the new owners of the various estates started operation. They controlled most of the economic activities during this period.

They were over two hundred German planters in the territory. The act of auctioning these plantations reveals that the British neglected the territory. They saw it as a burden to invest on the plantations which could bring about infrastructural development in the territory. The return of German planters in 1925 once again, stimulated plantation production in Cameroon as the Germans were determined to make profit out of their investments. During this era, the Cameroonian population too had developed an interest in plantation work and voluntarily gave in for recruitment. Due to the willingness of Cameroonians to work in the plantations coupled with the unflinching desire of the Germans to revamp the plantations and make profits, new machines were imported and recruitment of labour stepped up to unprecedented levels. This drive led to total labour population of over 12,000 in 1926 and

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<sup>371</sup> Fanso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools*, p. 74.

<sup>372</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 166.

over 14000 in 1928. There were also workers of other African nationalities such as Togo, Liberia and Nigeria.

Within four years of operation, the resuscitating plantations witnessed a setback as they were hard hit by the Great Depression of 1929. The effect was so severe that labour retrenchment and other measures became increasingly recurrent. Expansion, therefore, fell and both export and imports decreased tremendously in volume. During this period, the only consolation in production was the increasing importance of banana. From 1925, bananas gained some significance among export crops but owing to difficulties in shipping conditions, only dried bananas were exported. Yet the demand for this fruit crop rose increasingly every year.

With only 7 tons in 1925, by 1930, a total of 1,436 tons were produced for export. The relieving effect of banana production on the economy during the recession was quite considerable. The depression in Cameroon came to an end in the year 1932, and production in all economic sectors once again rose. Trade relations with Britain were limited since the plantations had been re-appropriated by the Germans. In 1937, the exports to Germany came up to 79.75% of the total exports while only 6.4% went to Britain and conversely British Cameroon's imports from Germany rose to 47.57% and only 11.9% from Britain. These figures are a clear indication that the economy of the territory was dominated by the Germans. During this period of German control of the economy of Southern Cameroons, their main focus was to maximise profits. The economic development of the territory was therefore not a topmost priority for the British.

The Germans who were ousted in Cameroon in 1916 following their defeat in the First World War saw how the British Neglected southern Cameroons and came back to manage their plantations<sup>373</sup>. Germany controlled all the agricultural activities thereby educating people that the British were not interested in developing the territory. The British did not put in place real taxations policy to control the import and export agricultural produce in the territory<sup>374</sup>. This hindered the advancement of the territory since the revenue that was supposed to be accruing from it for the development of the territory was lost.

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<sup>373</sup> Interview with Bessem Isemme, Aged 79, Truck driver, 18 September 2019.

<sup>374</sup> Bustin, *Five African States Responses*, p. 283.

## A. Trade

It is important to note that trade was mostly controlled by the Germans and Nigerians present in the territory and not by the British and Native Authorities. This was a failure to the British because it proved that they were unable to handle the economy of the territory during their stay<sup>375</sup>. Nfi affirms the fact that Nigerians were the once who dominated trade in Southern Cameroons as he puts it:

...before the administrative union of the Southern Cameroons and Nigeria, Nigeria had experienced a greater degree of economic and social development and had already produced a viable middle class. Nigerians especially the Efik and Igbo in Calabar had for several decades played the role of middlemen in trade between Europeans and the groups in the Southern Cameroons through Banyang middlemen. They were therefore more experienced in trade than Southern Cameroonians<sup>376</sup>

Throughout the mandate and trusteeship periods, the economy of Southern Cameroons remained backward and underdeveloped. This was quite astonishing considering the territory' export crops production capacity which in terms of variety was one of the greatest by West African standard. Palm oil and kernel production for instance, far exceeded the quantity exported by the Gambia in 1928. . In the department of Public Works in Kumba and Victoria, the number of Nigerian workers rose from about 35 in 1925 to about 290 in 1950 and in 1955 it was 452 out of a working population of 928. While civil servants left Nigeria for government services in British Cameroons, other Nigerians left to seek employment in the Cameroonian plantations.

In the 1950s the output of palm products, rubber, banana and cocoa increased considerably due to expansion in European- owned plantations and the increasing participation of Africans in the production of cash crops. Contrarily, the progress recorded in the agricultural sector and export trade did not directly reflect in the physical economic development of the territory. The Southern Cameroons remained backward, neglected and exploited by Germany, Britain and Nigeria

German planters exported all the crops they cultivated in British Southern Cameroons to Germany and brought equipment like fertilizers and other farming tools from Germany. We should note that the economy of British Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship periods was not based only on trade. The failure of the system was also felt in the taxation and income sector. In comparison with French Cameroon, non-Cameroonian was allowed to settle, buy land and exploit resources from their own benefits meanwhile, in British Southern

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<sup>375</sup> Bustin, *Five African States Responses*, p. 294.

<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.*

Cameroons most of the non-Cameroonians were civil servants, priest, medical officers who had only temporal residence<sup>377</sup>. This deprived Southern Cameroonians of getting employment and raising capital for trade.

## **B. Revenue Allocations**

Revenue allocation can be described as a method of sharing the generated revenue among different sectors of government and how the amount allocated to a particular sector is shared among its components for economic development. The greatest evidence of the failure of the trust system can be traced back to 1916 after the partition of Cameroon where the British took 1/5 of the territory and administer it as a Nigerian province<sup>378</sup>. Throughout the mandate period the territory had no budget on its own for the development of her project despite the fact that some members of the trusteeship council insisted that the budget of the territory be separated from that of the Eastern Region of Nigeria<sup>379</sup>. The territory depended on the so-called special obligation of the Nigerian government kind gesture granted to Southern Cameroons. Southern Cameroonians reasoned that their territory is exploited for the growth of Nigeria given that what was invested in the territory was not up to what they exploited from it<sup>380</sup>.

Following the constitutional development of 1946, a study was carried out in order to establish a rational system of financial allocation to the respective regions of Nigeria. The resolution was that the revenue of each of the three regions be derived from taxes and fees collected and also from a block grant from the central government. The 1952 was another commission that recommended that the allocation of revenue to the regional government should be based on the principle of derivation, need and national interest with particular reference to the Southern Cameroons region<sup>381</sup>. The commission concluded that ‘‘Southern Cameroons could pay its way and have a surplus but would have a deficit in future unless there was an increase in taxation, especially under the direct taxation ordinance which stated that the revenue allocated to each region be depended on the central treasury.

Southern Cameroons revenue allocation was not on the basis of the overall need but on the basis of the various Nigerian regions. The regional government opposed any change in

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<sup>377</sup> NWRA, file n° NW/Cc/1955/1, Trusteeship Council Drafting Committees Report on Conditions in the Cameroons under British Administration, 1955, pp. 88-90.

<sup>378</sup> Aka, *The British Southern*, p. 167.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>380</sup> E. L. Ngalame, ‘‘The Evolution of Native Administration in Kumba Division 1916-1945, A Background Study’’, A Dissertation in History, University of Yaoundé, 1979, p. 42.

<sup>381</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p. 58.

the principle of derivation and was not prepared to reconcile with the possibilities of relocation on the basis of need which might have favoured the Southern Cameroons did not favour Southern Cameroons especially as her revenue allocation was decided in Nigeria<sup>382</sup>. Again, over the years some trusteeship council members drew the attention of some of the deficiency in the system of financial allocations to the Southern Cameroons. It was pointed out that the territory was not getting its fair share of the revenue and the system of allocation delay the economic and social development of the territory<sup>383</sup>.

The first commission on revenue allocation stated that it was nearly impossible to determine with precision what proportion of the revenue a country contributed or any particular area within the country especially Southern Cameroons. The canalisation of so much of its trade through a particular port made the division of revenue a little less uncertain than in other cases<sup>384</sup>. The commission also reported that it was impossible to know what proportion of the general expenditure should be attributed to British Southern Cameroons.

The commission pointed out the problem of Southern Cameroons being an integral part of Eastern Nigeria and therefore had no separate budget on its own. Even when it was separate from the Eastern Region of Nigeria or when it became a quasi-federal state in 1954, it was notice that the territory was still not receiving its due share of financial allocations<sup>385</sup>. This was a clear failure on the trusteeship system which was supposed to prepare and accompanied the territory toward its independence. For example, in 1957 instead of 354000 pounds the territory was allocated only 51000 pounds which was approximately 14 per cent of it due share<sup>386</sup>.

The trusteeship council did not help Southern Cameroons in carrying out meaningful development projects. For example, when CDC was put in place in 1946, the top leaders and managers were in Nigeria<sup>387</sup>. The cooperation was mostly managed by Nigerians even fishing grounds found in Southern Cameroons were mostly exploited by Nigerians. The failure of the council in the territory was seen as the allocated revenue for the development of Southern Cameroons was instead invested in the Eastern Region, even after it had become a separate

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<sup>382</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p. 58.

<sup>383</sup> M. N. Basung, "The Economic History of British Southern Cameroons (1916-1960), A study of Economic Evolution in British Southern Cameroons", M. A. Dissertation in History, University of Yaoundé, 1975, p. 40.

<sup>384</sup> Interview with Rendol Pascal, Aged 50, Mamfe, business man, 24/09/2019.

<sup>385</sup> Interview with Fenong Abigail, Aged 81, Ex Food Vendour, Buea, 30/10/2019.

<sup>386</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>387</sup> C. Welch, *Dream of Unity, Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1966, p. 162.

Region<sup>388</sup>. It was shown in official records as having been spent in the Southern Cameroons meanwhile it was instead spent in the Eastern Region. For example, in 1956 approximately 2.9 million pounds was voted for the construction of roads either wholly in, or leading in trust territory where actually only eleven of the 207 miles on the roads were constructed in the territory. There is no doubt that the commission affirmed that it was possible for a Regional Government to assign its normal expenditure and then credit amount to other inferior territory<sup>389</sup>.

### **C. Transport and Communication**

During the British mandate and trusteeship, Southern Cameroons was administered as a part of Nigeria. Here, the territory confronted serious neglect in the domain of transport and communication. Except for ports development at Tiko and Bota, infrastructure development in Southern Cameroon witnessed just a marginal improvement until 1958. The British relented efforts in investing in the territory in the field of transport and communication. Seas and rivers became the best means of transport and communication between Nigeria and British Cameroons until after 1945.

By sea, the ports of Tiko and Victoria were connected to the Nigerian ports of Calabar, Port Harcourt and Lagos. The Cross river from Mamfe and the Ndian river from Ikassa also linked up Southern Cameroons with South-Eastern Nigeria through Calabar, which was an important seaport and trade centre. But it must be stated these ports facilities were not enough to boom the economy of the territory at a reasonable degree. Victoria-Bota was a port with relatively higher shipment and discharge charges. Port charges were twice those of Calabar and with visibly more damage to cargo.

Newspapers and radio services were piloted from Nigeria. Telephone and electric power were almost nonexistence. Only the Tiko airport provided flight services to Nigeria on certain days of the week. Eight airstrips were also located near the plantations for light crop-spraying planes but no interior passenger or goods services. In the domain of roads, the British also failed to develop the sector. Roads throughout the mandate and trusteeship periods were of poor state. In fact, roads in the territory were very bad and few. By 1961, there existed only 633 miles of government roads and a further 442 miles of Native Authority roads.

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<sup>388</sup> Welch, *Dream of Unity, Pan-Africanism*, p.162.

<sup>389</sup> Amaazee, *The Eastern Nigerian crisis*, p. 20.



#### **D. Economic Flow and State Revenue**

Revenue that was derived from custom duties was not equally distributed or allocated to each region. It was noticed that the amount of import duties credited annually to the territory was far below the amount actually derived from imports consumed in the territory and surely much smaller than the revenue which could be due to the territory<sup>390</sup>. Southern Cameroons was attributed half share of the custom duties. In 1960, five years after the Southern Cameroons separated from the Eastern Region, there was no certainty of what percentage of imports entered Southern Cameroons.

CNF sent a petition in 1949 to the trusteeship council pointing out some problems within the territory especially as the council failed to control the migration process between British and French Cameroons<sup>391</sup>. The issue affected various ethnic groups and people leaving around the frontier. British Cameroonians were required to possess a passport in order to cross the frontier and to also pay custom duties on any commodities including food stuffs. CNF pointed out that the partition created commercial restriction between the two territories<sup>392</sup>. Given the poor means of communication in Southern Cameroons, the alternative to trade in the border areas in with French Cameroon was difficult thereby making economic and social stagnation to be the order of the day. The Trusteeship system failed to restructure the economic flow within the territory. Apart from the poor economic flow within the territory, the citizens were also faced with the Igbo's atrocities<sup>393</sup>.

#### **E. The Cameroon National Federation**

The economic backwardness of Southern Cameroons gave political leaders of the territory the zeal to demand for regional separation. CNF presented numerous resolutions during the Kumba conference criticizing the British administration for neglecting the territory<sup>394</sup>. They presented a memorandum to the UN visiting missions stating the strategy to be used in solving the difficulties of Southern Cameroon resulted from establishing a Cameroon region within Nigeria<sup>395</sup>. Based on their argument that Southern Cameroons was not economically developed, the British administration was highly responsible for it<sup>396</sup>.

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<sup>390</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 169.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, p.170.

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>393</sup> Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 159.

<sup>394</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A History of the Cameroon*, , p. 89.

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>396</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p. 171.

The British administrators commented in 1949 on gap and the degree of progress between the trust territory and the rest of Eastern Nigeria. Only plantation areas under the public ownership through the CDC in 1947 could be considered a major undertaking to revamp the economic during the early years of functioning of the cooperation activities<sup>397</sup>. The problem here was that most of its profit was reinvested or used to pay back loans. Thus, the major instrument of economic improvement seemed to make only a slight change for the development of the territory<sup>398</sup>.

Plantation issues were further complicated by the Bakweri land committee which petition the UN trusteeship council in support of its claims over the plantation land alienated to the Germans<sup>399</sup>. The finding of economic recession was added with the grievances of social domination resulting from immigration of alien groups. The opening of the Kumba-Mamfe road and the enlargement of plantations after the Second World War was witnessed and increase of immigrants<sup>400</sup>. Thousands of Nigerian workers and traders were attracted by the relatively high wages and available land. Southern Cameroonians induced some bitterness towards the immigrants especially with their ambitions of earning money couple with the fact that most of them were unmarried or separated from their wives. The British government failed to regulate the immigration process<sup>401</sup>.

The increase of Nigerians in Southern Cameroons created social problems, more particularly because the Igbo monopolized many local enterprises. It was observed by the CDC that the Igbos were ideal migrant workers, since they were quick to react to labour market devoted by distance and familiar to a cash economy. The Igbos controlled all the fishing grounds and mastered local trading activities in the territory. It was base on this that regional status seen to be the best method of reducing Igbo threat and the fear of Nigerian domination<sup>402</sup>. The zeal with which Nigerians came to dominat the petty commerce and to fill a substantial proportion of governmental positions indicated that the too-close ties with Nigerians limited the chances for the advancement of local habitants<sup>403</sup>. The trusteeship

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<sup>397</sup> Amaazee, *The Eastern Nigerian crisis*, p. 16.

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>399</sup> Interview with Njang Pride, Aged 64, Driver, Bamenda, 27 November 2019.

<sup>400</sup> Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 155.

<sup>401</sup> Interview with Forbid Helen, Aged 72, Vendour, Limbe, 17/10/2019.

<sup>402</sup> Interview with Fong Foka, Aged 79, Truck driver, Limbe, 19/10/ 2019.

<sup>403</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p. 49.

council failed to control the economic activities within the territory with basis that its main objective was to prepare the territory for self-ruled<sup>404</sup>.

### **F. British Responsibility**

British administration did not help Southern Cameroons during the independence process because its main objective was to administer the territory within Nigeria. When the British attempt to introduce their local style of government in the territory failed, the political leaders and traditional rulers let go the quasi-federal status for the region in 1954. The British aspiration was to integrate the territory as a self-governing region into the independent Nigeria. All these aspects reveal how Britain was not willing to carry out meaningful development in the territory. The British administration did not also take into consideration the concern of the inhabitants as a paramount importance<sup>405</sup>.

This was seen in the response of B.O.B Giddens of the colonial office to S.A George in August 1953 in London. In response to the question from S.A George, Giddens said “the steps taken for the development of the territory should be allied with the general wishes of the people, but there was no obligation imposed on Britain, who wanted full legislation, administration and jurisdiction power in the territory through the trusteeship agreement<sup>406</sup>. The British administration in Southern Cameroons tried persuading political leaders to believe that the best future of the territory was neither a separate independent political entity nor reunification with French Cameroon but rather an association with Nigeria<sup>407</sup>.

This accounts for the numerous economic reports on the territory written by British officials pointed out that the territory could not survive as an independent political entity essentially because of financial reasons<sup>408</sup>. Some of these reports were criticized by some British officials. For example, the Chick report during the London constitutional conference in 1957, said British officials secretly told the Nigerian delegates that Southern Cameroons were economically viable to survive as a separate state<sup>409</sup>. This sounds convincing if one could consider the case of Gambia which was smaller and more economically weak than Southern Cameroon but given independence. The table below captures this scenario.

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<sup>404</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p. 49.

<sup>405</sup> Interview with Georges Ngwana, Aged 71, Carpenter, Buea, 11/10/2019.

<sup>406</sup> H. Penelope, *British Imperialism and Africa, 1902-1940*, London, Frankcass, 1978, p. 50.

<sup>407</sup> NAB, File n°89 Ab/1958, Cameroon under the UN Trusteeship Report for the Years 1958, p. 21.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>409</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 172.

**Table 7: Public Revenue and Expenditure of The Gambia and Southern Cameroons in Pounds Sterling**

Year	The Gambia revenue	Expenditure	The Southern Cameroons revenue	Expenditure
1947	694,000 (2.395)	633,000 (2.185)	301,000 (0.045)	541,000 (0.728)
1948	867,000 (2.993)	1,014,000 (3.50)	519,000 (0.698)	647,000 (0.87)
1949	964,000 (3.328)	1,170,000 (4.04)	1,045,000 (1.405)	880,000 (1.184)
1950	990,000 (3.449)	1,062,000 (3.667)	1,145,000 (1.54)	1,061,000 (1.42)
1951	1,145,000 (3.95)	1,171,000 (4.04)	1,402,000 (1.89)	1,388,000 (1.87)

Source: E. Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 171.

From the table above, one can easily realize that Southern Cameroons' revenue and expenditure was not the same with that of Gambia. The figure in the bracket represents the capital revenue and expenditure. During this period, the population of Gambia was 298,000 while that of Southern Cameroons was 743,000. Southern Cameroons had a greater population than Gambia; the geographical area of Gambia was 4,004 while that of Southern Cameroons was 16,561 square miles. Gambia was one quarter of the size of Southern Cameroons. This convinces one to believe that Southern Cameroon could stand on its own.

This also makes one to think that the third option was excluded during the plebiscite questions on February 1961 in order to assure the achievement of their objective<sup>410</sup>. British officials never relent efforts to remind the leaders of Southern Cameroons that the best option for Southern Cameroons to promote her happiness and prosperity was to continue the association with Nigeria<sup>411</sup>. The British insisted on Nigeria connection not because any particular love for Nigeria but for the fact that they were unwilling to shoulder the financial responsibility of the trust territory<sup>412</sup>.

The British went further to partition the territory into political leader groups: those who favoured association with Nigeria, those who favoured a separate independent political entity and those who wanted separation from Nigeria and negotiate reunification with French Cameroon<sup>413</sup>. British attitude during this period did not help Southern Cameroonians, considering the fact that political leaders were dealing with illiterate masses that did not understand the political implication of their decision and therefore needed a lot of education<sup>414</sup>. Time was therefore needed to educate the masses. Political leaders were also

<sup>410</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A History of the Cameroon*, p. 153.

<sup>411</sup> *Ibid*, p. 154.

<sup>412</sup> Interview with Marco Ndede, Aged 82, Retire farmer, Buea, 7/11/2019.

<sup>413</sup> Ngoh, *A Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p. 51.

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid*.

pushed into a tight situation when Britain informed them in 1959 that the administration of Southern Cameroons had to be separated from that of Nigeria not later than 1<sup>st</sup> October 1961<sup>415</sup>.

The importance of the time was also apparent after the November 1960 London meeting. Even though, they rejected the proposal of being independent as a separate political entity<sup>416</sup>. Some voters went to the polls thinking they were voting for a separate and independent political entity. Political leaders also failed to brief the electorate on the outcome of the November 1960 meeting. In a nut shell, the British did not help Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship period. The British administration laid the foundation of what we are witnessing today in Cameroon<sup>417</sup>.

The economic situation of Southern Cameroons under British administration is not desirable. The neglect of plantations during the mandate period and the increase in prices of goods and services during the great depression couple with the unwillingness of the British government to finance new projects accounts for the under development of the territory. Trade relations with Great Britain were limited since most of the plantations were auctioned to Germany. In 1931, Germany received 109,603 tons of Cameroonian products while Britain received 6, 341 of total export of 155, 482 tons. In 1937, 47.57 percent of the import of Southern Cameroons came from Germany 11.9 percent came from Great Britain, 79.75 percent of export went to Germany and only 6.4 percent went to Britain<sup>418</sup>. From these statistics it is clear that Germany controlled the economy during the mandate period. An impression that the insignificant prosperity the Cameroonian enjoyed could be ascribed to the German not the British.

Annual reports from British officials confirmed the neglect and under development of the territory<sup>419</sup>. To visit some remote parts of Bamenda required a work of fifteen days. Some villages were never visited by administrative officials. Communication with Nigeria was very slow and made movement almost impossible. It was difficult to reply or receive a letter from Enugu, the capital of Southern Cameroons province. The first road connecting with the

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<sup>415</sup> NAB, File n<sup>o</sup>1937, Report by his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to Trusteeship Council of the UN on the Administration of the Cameroons under the United Kingdom Trusteeship for the Year 1959, pp. 79-82.

<sup>416</sup> Chem-Langhee, "The Kamerun Plebiscites", p. 89.

<sup>417</sup> Welch, *Dream of unity*, p. 155.

<sup>418</sup> A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, London, Longman, 1973, p. 168.

<sup>419</sup> J. S. Epale, *Plantation and Development in Western Cameroons*, New York, Nantage Press, 1985, P. 85.

border of grassfields was uncompleted until 1947<sup>420</sup>. The backwardness of Southern Cameroons became even more striking after the Second World War because the British did not concentrate on the development of the territory. Infrastructural development was a great failure in Southern Cameroons during British administration<sup>421</sup>. The thirty-nine years of British administration in Southern Cameroons did not impress the population much.

Their administration did little to develop the territory. The federal government invested not more than 2700.000 pound on the territory for infrastructural development<sup>422</sup>. The figure clearly shows that British administration failed to implement the resolutions of the mandate system and the UN which were to prepare the territory toward independence both political, social and economically. The British administration in Southern Cameroons did not undertake any meaningful construction in the territory. All the railway lines built by the Germans in Cameroon for passenger's transportation were found in French Cameroon.

British administration concentrated in developing Nigeria and took Southern Cameroons as a Nigerian province. Given the laxity of the British administration to construct the Kumba-Mamfe road, Germany opted to construct it, in grounds that the British colonial administration would reduce the landing fees paid by the German ships in Southern Cameroons but the idea failed to yield fruit as it was denied in London. The British administration turned down the offer because the development of such and economic project would lead to pro-German feelings. It was later constructed in 1950s by the British<sup>423</sup>.

### **G. Reasons for British Neglect of Southern Cameroons**

The British neglected Southern Cameroons because it was not their colony but the League of Nations territory and later the Trust territory of UN. As such, Britain was not under strict obligation to develop the territory. Again, the League of Nations as well as the UN did not help the British financially to invest in the territory. The threat by Adolf Hitler to regain former German territories discouraged Britain to take proper care of the territory. There were also pro-German movements in British and French Cameroons. All these made Britain to be scared of investing in the territory<sup>424</sup>.

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<sup>420</sup> S. J. Rockel, *Carriers of culture: Labour on Road in the Nineteen Century East Africa*, Porstmouth, Heinemann, 2005, p. 5.

<sup>421</sup> NAB, file N° 1335 Rb/b/1958/2, Road Development General, 1958, p. 68.

<sup>422</sup> Basung, "The Economic History", p. 50.

<sup>423</sup> G. Walker, *Trafic and Transportation in Nigeria the example of Underdeveloped Tropical Territory*. London Cambridge University Press, 1959, p. 159.

<sup>424</sup> Nfi, "French Cameroonians in the Docolonisation Politics", p. 296.

The British were also discouraged by the size and shape of the territory of Southern Cameroons. The size of the population of Southern Cameroons was relatively small for any separate meaningful development<sup>425</sup>. Moreso, the surface area was about 88.000km<sup>2</sup> which according to the British should be attached to Nigeria for any significant progress. Furthermore, the administrative set up introduced in British Southern Cameroons accounted for the neglect of its development. Britain jointly administered British Southern Cameroons as part of Nigeria. As such British Southern Cameroons shared a common budget with Nigeria<sup>426</sup>.

Again, the money was mostly managed by the Nigerians who dominated the economic activities. This situation hindered the economic growth of British Southern Cameroons. The British neglected the development of Southern Cameroons because she doubted the economic potentials of the territory. Britain, through studies made earlier by the Chick Commission noted that British Southern Cameroons didn't have enough resources which could permit her to be administered as a separate entity. Britain therefore was unwilling to labour the British citizens with taxes for the administration of Southern Cameroons<sup>427</sup>.

The practice of the policy of indirect rule in British Southern Cameroons also accounted for the British neglect of the development of the territory. Through the policy, lower taxes were collected and the development of the territory was basically in the hands of the native authorities. This was mainly the traditional chiefs who had little to contribute in the development of the territory. The native treasury of British Southern Cameroons put forth by the British was made up of only money generated by the Natives through taxes, fines and sales. The British did not ensure that the resources in the treasury were inched.

In 1929, great Depression also accounted for the British neglect of Southern Cameroons. The Great depression affected the economy of Britain. It also made the prices of raw materials from Cameroon to be lower. The situation weakened the economic power of the territory for any development. Britain barely tried to maintain her administration than investing in British Southern Cameroons<sup>428</sup>. British Southern Cameroons was also neglected because of Nigerian domination of the territory. Nigerian tribes like the Igbo and the Ibibio dominated the socio-economic activities of British Southern Cameroons. Even the

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<sup>425</sup> Nformi, "The Impact of the Plebiscite ", p. 34

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>428</sup> Takang, *An Illustrated History of Cameroon*, p.118.

administrative and teaching work was dominated by the Igbo especially. Their domination brought much hatred by Cameroonians or Ibophobia which worsened the situation. This Situation made the atmosphere uncondusive for development<sup>429</sup>. The British failure to develop the territory brought additional repercuation in the territory.

## II. The Impact

One of the effects of British failure in British Southern Cameroons was the rise of nationalism. British Southern Cameroons became discontented with British attitude of not developing the territory adequately. This discontentment created consciousness in the minds of Southern Cameroonians to create a nation of theirs, void of any foreign influence. This was initiated by the formation of pressure groups CWU in 1939 by John Mbene and CYL in 1940 by Emmanuel Mbella Lefafe Endeley, the Kamerun United National Union (KUNU) in 1953<sup>430</sup>. These pressure groups demanded for the improvement of the situation of British Southern Cameroons and the autonomy of the territory.

The British poor administration also led to the birth of trade unions. This was due to hardship that resulted from low wages and poor working conditions including inadequate health facilities, especially in the plantation like CDC. This situation led to the formation of the CDC workers Union in 1954<sup>431</sup>. This Union organized strikes like the one in 1959 which coincided with the visit of the United Nations (UN) visiting mission in Cameroon. There were about nine industrial strikes from the various agricultural establishments. There was also the emergence of the quest for external education and migration. British administration did not build many schools in British Southern Cameroons especially the secondary schools<sup>432</sup>. By 1939, there was only the Saint Joseph College Sasse and by the 1950s, there was also the Cameroon Protestant College Bali. All these mission schools were expensive to many Southern Cameroonians<sup>433</sup>.

The sector of communication was also neglected by the British administration who did not construct any railway in the region as was the case in French Cameroon. Ports were not developed. They only made use of the natural wharves and no effort was put in to develop

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<sup>429</sup> Nformi, "The Impact of the Plebiscite ", p. 34.

<sup>430</sup> Takang, *An Illustrated History of Cameroon Since 1800*, p. 107.

<sup>431</sup> F. D. Lugard, *The Rise of our East African Empires*, Vol 1, London, William Blackood 1893, pp. 3816382.

<sup>432</sup> Fanzo, *Cameroon History*, p.

<sup>433</sup> Interview with Tomas Tobi, Aged 71, Palm Wine Tapper, Eyang, 02 september, 2019.



them into ports<sup>434</sup>. The ports of Tiko, Bota and Victoria were not developed or expanded and no bigger ship could use them.

**Figure 5: Tiko Sea port before 1961**



Source: <https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=british+southern+cameroon+palm+oil+plantation+consult+March+28th+2020,+at+10+AM>.

**Figure 6: Tiko Airport before 1961**



<sup>434</sup> Interview with Mbessa Tom, Aged 64, farmer, Nguti, 12 August 2019.



Source: <https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=british+southern+cameroon+palm+oil+plantation+consult>  
 March 28th 2020, at 10 AM.

The economy of British Southern Cameroons only depended on the budget of the Eastern Nigeria. British Southern Cameroons did not have a separate budget. This was worsened by the domination of Nigerians who harassed Cameroonians and the British did nothing significant to put the situation under control<sup>435</sup>. They also dominated the teaching field. All the fishing grounds were controlled by the Igbos.

As concerns the social sector, the British administration neglected the educational field. There existed no secondary school in the territory except those constructed by the mission bodies in 1939 in Buea called the Saint John College and the Cameroon Protestant College in Bali in 1941<sup>436</sup>. The British never granted scholarships to Cameroonians to study in Britain. Very few Cameroonians succeed to study out of Southern Cameroons like Emmanuel Lefafe Endeley who studied in Yuroba Medical College in Nigeria<sup>437</sup>. Only six hospitals with six medical doctors existed in the territory.

These hospitals remained congested as it was more expensive to get a medical assistance from the mission hospitals. From the above analyses, one can say that the British administration during the mandate or trusteeship period did not respect the terms of articles 22 and 23 of the League covenant nor the charter<sup>438</sup>. This situation made some Southern Cameroonians to look for educational opportunities in either Nigeria or elsewhere. Even professional and vocational schools were only limited to the primary Schools teacher training

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<sup>435</sup> Kale, *Political Evolution*, p. 60.

<sup>436</sup> M. Torrent, *Diplomacy and Nation-Building in Africa.: Franco-British relation and Cameroon at the End of Empire*, London, Tauris, 2012, p. 26.

<sup>437</sup> NAB, file n°89 Ab/1959, Cameroon under the United Kingdom Trusteeship, Report for the year 1959, p. 26.

<sup>438</sup> Basung, 'The Economic History', p. 55.

college in Kake and Victoria and a trade centre in Ombe which later became a technical college after independence<sup>439</sup>.

Another effect of the failure of British administration in Southern Cameroons was the demand for reunification of British and French Cameroons. John Ngu Foncha, the leader of the KNDP compared the advancement and development of French Cameroon with the backward situation of Southern Cameroon and argued in favour of reunification<sup>440</sup>. Others like R.K. Dibongue earlier called for the teaching of English and French in British Southern Cameroons which was a step to reunify with French Cameroons<sup>441</sup>. In addition to these appeals of Foncha were other factors like the Igbo domination which caused Ibophobia issue. These all made a plebiscite to be organized in the 11<sup>th</sup> of February, 1961<sup>442</sup>. Despite Endeley warning that it was unwise to abandon a secure and floating vessel which is Nigeria to shift to an open life boat which is French Cameroon, British Southern Cameroonians voted in favour of unification with the latter, because of British neglect<sup>443</sup>.

#### **A. The UN Responsibility**

The situation of Southern Cameroons under the British administration was peculiar because the region was a UN trust territory and not a British colony. As a trust territory, the UN through its trusteeship council was directly concerned with the political, social and economic progress of territory. But this is not what prevailed as the UN never interfered during the British administration of the territory despite numerous petitions or complaints of Southern Cameroonians. Article 76b of the UN charter and article 5a of the trusteeship agreement called on the administering authority to make sure that in the administration of the territory nothing should be done to preclude the development as a separate entity<sup>444</sup>. The main objectives of the trusteeship council were to prepare the territory towards self-government or independence for the trust territory.

Despite these objectives, the division of the UN members into two blocs: western known as capitalist and the Eastern known as the socialist complicated the form of self-governing or independence of Southern Cameroons should take. The trusteeship agreement indicated that British administration was allowed to administer Southern Cameroons in

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<sup>439</sup> Basung, ‘‘The Economic History’’, p. 55.

<sup>440</sup> Interview with Peter Obi, Farmer, 65 Years, Manyemen, 12/08/ 2019.

<sup>441</sup> Ngoh, *Constitutional Development in Southern Cameroons*, p. 47.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>443</sup> Interview with John Ndopu, Age.

<sup>444</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of Cameroon*, p. 324.

accordance with Nigeria laws<sup>445</sup>. The Eastern bloc led by the Soviet Union called for the unilateral reunification of Cameroons under British and French administration. The western bloc was more inclined to support the British position which wanted Southern Cameroons to be associated to Nigeria<sup>446</sup>.

Again, a small Afro Asian bloc emerged in the UN given the Bandung conference of 1955. This bloc tried to avoid the cold War politics which characterized the national relations since the end of the Second World War. The Afro-Asian bloc feared of the balkanization or the split of African continent<sup>447</sup>. According to them, the creation of small independent States had to be discouraged in favour of large independent once. This could facilitate the formation of the United States of Africa<sup>448</sup>. This view was appreciated by pan Africanists<sup>449</sup>.

In addition, the Afro- Asian bloc worked out the understanding which the Southern Cameroon political leaders accepted at the UN in 1959. The decision to accept the plebiscite alternative to be either reunification with the Republic of Cameroon or association with Nigeria reflected the view of this bloc<sup>450</sup>. This understanding was however accepted by the political leaders of Southern Cameroons without consulting their constituencies. The UN had its owned responsibility to carry concerning the independent process of Southern Cameroons. The UN did not help the territory to achieved a proper independence, it instead used the trusteeship council to impose on them a date when the territory would achieve independence without taking into consideration the view of the masses<sup>451</sup>.

## **B. The Impact of the Second World War**

British colonial policies during their administration did not place emphasis on the development of the territory. Their policies were silent concerning the political independence of the territory. The British based their policies on the development of agricultural resources and economic infrastructures to a level where it could facilitate the efficient exploitation of the colonies<sup>452</sup>. During the 45 years, the British administration faced some difficulties resulting from the outbreak of the great depression in 1929 and the Second World War

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<sup>445</sup> Eyongetah and Brain, *A history of Cameroon*, p. 325.

<sup>446</sup> Torrent, *Diplomacy and Nation-Building*, p. 56.

<sup>447</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 172.

<sup>448</sup> Chem-Langhee, "The Kamerun Plebiscites", p. 220.

<sup>449</sup> *Ibid*, p. 221.

<sup>450</sup> Hopkins, *An Economic History*, p. 168.

<sup>451</sup> Interview with, Ngome Zacharie, Aged 75, Farmer, Nguti, 30/07/2018.

<sup>452</sup> *Idem*.

including the riots that broke out in the West Indies. These happenings compelled Southern Cameroons to enjoin its negative effects<sup>453</sup>.

This was due to the fact that the Germans disappeared from the territory's economic scene and the domination and exploitation of the economy once more shifted to the Nigerians especially the Ibos. This time it was decided that the plantations should not be returned to their former owners, but that they should rather be farmed through a Statutory Corporation for the benefit of the people of Cameroon. In response to this consideration, CDC was set up in 1946 to manage the plantations. The adverse fact here was that the majority of CDC top officials were Nigerians. Southern Cameroonians were therefore relegated at the back and the British gave a deaf ear to the issue.

It is therefore important to point out that the Second World War placed Britain in a state where their ultimate colonial objective could be fully archived without British southern Cameroons not realizing a significant degree of social progress. Again, economic and social stagnation in the territory was a situation which Britain wanted to avoid given the repercussions on the metropole or capital but the Second World War hindered it<sup>454</sup>. The territory was not to be developed in a way that it could create a situation of competition with the mother country. Britain was not prepared to sacrifice her ultimate interest for the sake of the colonial subject.

### **C. Colonial Development and Welfare Fund (CDWF)**

This was a recommendation put in place by the British colonial administration against a riot that took place in West Indies. The riot posed a serious threat to Britain because it threatened extending to her colonies protectorates including Southern Cameroons. The riot also took place at the time when Britain was engaged in a war and needed cooperation with her overseas colonies. A commission was put in place to investigate its cause and make address. In 1940, the commission submitted its report and proposed solutions. These were therefore the circumstances that brought about colonial development and Welfare Act in 1940. Crowther pointed out that the generous support Africans gave Britain during the war had to be recompensed<sup>455</sup>.

The British government therefore passed the colonial development and welfare fund to finance economic and social projects in the colonies so as to compensate the colonial

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<sup>453</sup> Interview with Meka Jeremey, Aged 78, Trader, Limbe, 9 August 2018.

<sup>454</sup> Aka, *British Southern Cameroons*, p. 175.

<sup>455</sup> W. Rodney, *Hox Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Washington, Havard University Press, 1981, p. 225.

people. Through this financial assistance a sum of one million pounds was to be given annually for ten years to each colony. Colonial administration could undertake a long term project of economic and social development on a large scale than during the inter war years. It should be noted that the Act was passed when the war was going on and Britain combined all her efforts to contain the war.

The British Labour Party which was not satisfied with British administration over Southern Cameroons came to power after the Second World War. The party was concerned with the nature of under development infrastructures in the territory. To support the activities of CDWF, another body, Colonial Development Cooperation was established in 1948 with the specific objective of developing agricultural and minerals resources in the territory<sup>456</sup>. The British colonial government was later invited to draw up developmental plans covering a period of ten years where they could be able to undertake long term projects in response to post war British colonial interest.

It is important to mention that the development that has taken place in recent years has given Africans the opportunity to participate in the process of economic, social and political development. Another development was the report of the commission to Nigeria in the early 1950s sponsored by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) which stood for the separate development agency and a separate department of agriculture for Southern Cameroons. It was observed that from 1955 to 1960, a total sum of 726,000 pound of which Southern Cameroonians contributed 10,000 pound was spent on Southern Cameroons in the agricultural sector, with emphasis on cocoa production, veterinary services among others. Establishment of agricultural schools and the use of research in tea plantation became the order of the day<sup>457</sup>.

Between 1946 and 1954 the CDWF to Gambia was 865,000 pounds, representing a per capital of approximately two pound and ten shilling. Within the same period that is, from 1946 to 1954 Southern Cameroons received grants of 548,557 pound representing a per capital of about seven shilling and four pennies which was 24% or less than one quarter the amount given to Gambia<sup>458</sup>. It was not normal because Southern Cameroons were much bigger than Gambia. This convinces one to think that some of the grants made to Southern

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<sup>456</sup> Rodney, *Hox Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, p.225.

<sup>457</sup> Aka, *The British Southern Cameroons*, p. 175.

<sup>458</sup> Interview with Nextol Nfon, Aged 77, Retired from CDC, Limbe, 19 August 2019.

Cameroons diverted to other part of Eastern Region of Nigeria. This only reveals how the British failed to treat the territory fairly.

Britain did not solve the financial problems of Southern Cameroons either by increasing its grants or raising public revenue and financial allocation for the federal government. After the trusteeship period, a study was carried out by Sydney Phillipson which highlighted that the revenue of the territory was just enough to maintain services at their level, and that it was a hazardous situation of hand to mouth existence<sup>459</sup>. He further added that as an independent sovereign state Southern Cameroons could not at its present stage of development be viable to stand on its own.<sup>460</sup>

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the failure of the trusteeship council in Southern Cameroons. It has exposed how the trusteeship council never respected article 76b of the UN Charter and article 8a of the trusteeship agreement which called on the administrative authority to ensure that in the administration of the territory, nothing should be done to prevent its development as a separate entity. This was seen as the main objective of the trusteeship; prepare the territory for self-government was not respected by the trusteeship council. The chapter has equally brought out the responsibility of the UN as it not question the British administration despite the numerous petitions forwarded to its council by Southern Cameroonians.

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<sup>459</sup> Interview with Foje Isaac, Aged 58, Driver, Buea, 28/10/2019.

<sup>460</sup> Aka, *The British southern Cameroons*, p. 176.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Examining the economic issue in British Southern Cameroons compelled us to trace the genealogy of the territory. In this light, pre-colonial Cameroon was discussed and we gathered that a good number of things never existed hitherto the coming in contact of Cameroonians with Europeans: a defined demarcated boundary separating Cameroon from her neighbours, the name of the country (Cameroon), and finally, a government governing the national territory, but there were ethnic groups or communities. The inhabitants of these communities during this period depended more on subsistence farming. In fact, the pre-colonial economy was relatively a close one with very little exterior influence and exchange through the barter system was the order of the day.

The discovering of America in 1492 by Christopher Colombo led to the establishment of plantations there. This resulted in the transformation of the Trans-Sahara slave trade that existed in Africa including our area of study into Trans-Atlantic slave trade. This undoubtedly brought Europeans to Cameroon. The abolition of this trade and the introduction of the legitimate trade increased the influx of Europeans in the territory that resulted in the scramble for it. The Germans after acquiring the territory later lost it to the League of Nations following their defeat in the First World War. Their 32 years of administration in Cameroon was characterized by economic and infra-structural development. They established about 58 plantations in Cameroon.

The First World War cemented substantial pains on the colonized peoples of Cameroon. It nursed enormous social, economic and political dislocation and inspired increased resistance to imperial institutions. Germany lost Cameroon and all its other African territories to the Allies. Britain and France survived the war as the world's two largest overseas colonial powers. These were the two imperious powers in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 where the question of restitution the lost German colonies was opposed. The lost colonies were placed under the supervision of a newly created League of Nations. Cameroon was partitioned into British and French Cameroons and was given to Britain and France as Mandates within a framework of international accountability, rather than as colonies under national sovereignties.

The British and French then administered the territory under the supervision of the League of Nations. This mandate period, 1922-1946 witnessed a slowdown in the development of plantations. Given the failure of the joint military administration



(Condominium), the territory was partitioned into French and British Cameroon, 10th July, 1919.

Cameroon was given to Britain and France as a category “B” Mandate. The British merged the administration of their sector with that of Nigeria while the French considered their own sector for administrative purposes as an Overseas Department of France *outré-mer*. The British considered the mandates as the expression of the very best intentions of British imperialism while their French counterparts considered it as a danger to French imperialism in Africa. Despite its flaws, the mandate contributed to the solution of the culture of colonialism that affected not only the vast diplomatic and colonial Araucarias of both Britain and France with all the mandated territories as well.

It is important to mention that even if the partition of Cameroon was solidified, Cameroonians did not see the boundary as divisive. This was because pre-colonial concept of boundary in Cameroon which was con. The alien concept of a boundary was what sparked off disregard for the Anglo-French frontier in Cameroon. It made the partition to shatter the unity of a people after close to 32 years under a common German administration. The Germans had built the foundation of a Cameroon state by establishing its boundaries and putting its inhabitants under the same administration with a good communication network, plantations and schools, which fostered a sense of a common political destiny.

Cameroonians were not consulted and the Anglo-French frontier paid scant attention to the interests and rights of the people. This became all the more glaring when the “picot-line” drawn as the provisional boundary was artificial at almost every point. It cut across ethnic groups, kingdoms, villages, families, farmland, plantations, fishing and hunting grounds of the border peoples like the Tikar, Bamileke, Balong, Mbo, Balondo, Bakossi and Mungo. These groups had shared a common culture and similar historical experiences. They shared traditions of origins, possessed the same socio-political and economic institutions, adhered to the same religious beliefs and had been exposed to a remarkably similar degree of contact with the outside world.

After the partition, the British and the French installed their administration on their respective spheres of the territory. Differences in European colonial administrative heritage teased Cameroonians apart. The most remarkable difference was administrative practices especially the use of the chieftaincy institution. The British consciously attempted to connect their method of governance to indigenous rule and customs. It should be noted that the portion Britain took was 1/5 of the territory and for the sake administration convenience,

Britain further divided her territory into two parts; the Northern and Southern which were administered as part of Northern Nigeria and Eastern Nigeria respectively.

To make ease administration, Southern Cameroons was divided into four Divisions: Victoria, Kumba, Mamfe and Bamenda. These divisions were headed by District Officers and directly placed under the Resident residing in Buea and answerable to the Secretary of State for colonies in London. Under this administration, Southern Cameroons suffered from Igbo domination. The Igbo established control over Southern Cameroons who were then badly discriminated against. This attachment to the British colony of Nigeria was backed by various reasons among which were: to curb administrative expenditures, the small nature of the territory, northern and Southern Cameroons were geographically disconnected and made administration difficult. The close ties the people of Southern Cameroons had with Nigeria also encouraged the British to extend their policy of Indirect Rule to the territory.

The achievement of independence by British Northern Cameroons by associating with Northern Nigeria left British Southern Cameroonians in a situation of complexity, they started thinking about theirs. This could only hold with the consent of Britain and the United Nations that had succeeded the League. It is from here that we find reasons in examining the resources the politicians of the territory relied on to clamour for their dispatchment with the Federal Republic of Nigeria, activities of the trusteeship councils and the economic structures of Southern Cameroons during the trusteeship period, 1946-1961.

Through the analysis of the data gathered from the field, we noticed that British Southern Cameroons was blessed with enormous economic potentials. The rich nature of its fertile soil encouraged the creation of plantation agricultures in the territory, that later became the CDC. The territory was also blessed with land resources like timber, rubber, tea, coffee and banana, water resources like the sea found Victoria and Airport found in Tiko. The territory also had a good banking and marketing system that permitted them to make transaction.

The measures taken by British Southern Cameroonians to decolonize the territory has been one of the elements of the work. Pressures group, political parties and some traditional institutions were agents of this move. Constitutional developments equally played an influential role in decolonizing the territory. It is worth noting that the resources the territory depended included human. This accounts for their incessant petitions proving that they were ripped to be on their own. The role played by the UN in the process of the independence Southern Cameroons equally imposed itself on the work.

This work also has examined the failure of the trusteeship council in Southern Cameroons. It has exposed how the trusteeship council never respected article 76b of the UN Charter and article 8a of the trusteeship agreement which called on the administrative authority to ensure that in the administration of the territory, nothing should be done to prevent its development as a separate entity. This was seen as the main objective of the trusteeship; prepare the territory for self-government was not respected by the trusteeship council. The study has equally brought out the responsibility of the UN as it not questions the British administration despite the numerous petitions forwarded to its council by Southern Cameroonians.

Whatever the issue, the work has underlined that British Southern Cameroonians clamoured for the disassociation with Nigeria because they were eager to reunite with their brothers, French Cameroonians. They believed their rich resources could be reunited with those of their bothers to make a better living. This was achieved as they ended up in a federation with the Republic of Cameroon, meaning the people voted in favour of joining that part since the third option was denied them. thus, the form of state became federal with the name Federal Republic of Cameroon. But then, this form of government was short live as another event occurred in 1972 which brought about a new name, the United Republic of Cameroon.

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<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Aged</b>	<b>Function</b>		<b>Date and the place of interview</b>
1	Bessem Iemme	79	Truck Driver	Buea	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
2	Bismark Oben Taku	70	Forest guard	Limbe	October 17 <sup>th</sup> 2020
3	Gwanvoma Henry N.	80	Former Manager of Cameroon Bank	Buea	August 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2020
4	Eben Pascaline	60	Former Food Vendour at the CDC	Bamenda	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
5	Elizabeth Besson Ayuk	64	Principal G.B.H.S Limbe	Buea	October 19 <sup>th</sup> 2020
6	Elvis Ebune Mola	69	Retired CDC Worker	Buea	September 27 <sup>th</sup> 2020
7	Fenong Abigail	81	Ex Food Vendour at the CDC	Buea	30 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
8	Foje Isaac	58	Driver	Buea	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
9	Fong Foka	79	Truck Driver	Limbe	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
10	Forbid Helen	72	Vendour at the CDC	Limbe	17 Octobre 2019
11	Georges Ngwana	71	Carpenter	Buea	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
12	Ghislain-Victorine Menye	64	Worker SONARA	Limbe	October 17 <sup>th</sup> 2020
13	John Ndopu	70	Cocoa Farmer	Kokumbe	13 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
14	Marco Ndede	82	Retired CDC worker	Buea	7 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
15	Martin Abeng Ayissi	59	Worker Governor Office Buea	Buea	October 20 <sup>th</sup> 2020
16	Mbessa Tom	64	Farmer	Nguti	12 August 2019
17	Meka Jeremey	78	Trader	Limbe	9 <sup>th</sup> August 2019
18	Nextol Nfon	77	Retired of CDC	Limbe	19 August 2019

19	Ngome Zacharie	60	Farmer	Limbe	30 july 2019
20	Njang Pride	64	Taxi driver	Bamenda	27th November 2019
21	Oscar Tabe Otu	70	Retired teacher	Mamfe	September 20 th 2020
22	Peter Obi	65	Cocoa Farmer	Manyeme n	4 <sup>th</sup> August 2019
23	Rendol Pascal	50	Business Man	Mamfe	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
24	Sampson Elive Inoni	74	Retired worker CDC	Limbe	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
25	Sandrine Ngoh Ebi	68	House Wife	Limbe	October 17 th 2020
26	Thompson Enow Ebi	70	Farmer	Limbe	29 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
27	Tomas Tobi	71	Palm Wine Tapper	Eyang	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sptember 2019
28	Victor Julius Ngoh	68	Professor Emeritus of History	Yaounde	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2020
29	Verkijika Godfred Fanso	82	Professor Emeritus of History	Yaounde	27 <sup>th</sup> August 2022

## APPENDIX

### Appendix 1: Names of Delagates to the Bamenda all party Conference on the Constitutional future of the Southern Cameroons

**CHAIRMAN**                      Mr. J.H. Beeley, Esq.,

#### REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENT PARTY

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hon. J.N. Foncha</li> <li>2. Hon. S.T Muna</li> <li>3. Hon. A.N. Jua</li> <li>4. Hon P.M. Kemcha</li> <li>5. Mr. S. Mofor</li> <li>6. Mr. F.N. Kome</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Mr. M.C. Fontem</li> <li>8. Mr. S.K. Mbinkar</li> <li>9. Mrs. A Martins.</li> <li>10. Mr. Menhi</li> <li>11. Mr. H.D. Tankoh</li> <li>12. Mr. P. Tameu</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

#### REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CPNC

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Hon. N.N. Mbile</li> <li>14. Hon. Motomby-Woleta</li> <li>15. Rev. Ando-Seh</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Mr. V.T. Lainjo</li> <li>17. Mr. Ewuse</li> <li>18. Rev. Kangsen</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

#### REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OK

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19. Mr. Ndeh Ntumazah</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20. Mr. A.W. Mukong.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

#### REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HOUSE OF CHIEFS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21. Fon of Bali</li> <li>22. Chief Dipoko</li> <li>23. Chief Ebanja</li> <li>24. Chief Bokwe Sakwe</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25. Chief Oben</li> <li>26. Chief Kumbongsi</li> <li>27. Chief of Mankon</li> <li>28. Chief of Issu</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

#### REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIVE AUTHORITIES:

- |   |   |                             |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29. Mr. L. Bongmoyong</li> <li>30. Mr. W.C. Banboye</li> </ul> | } | Nsaw District Council.      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>31. Mr. F.H.M Ikome</li> <li>32. Mr. J.L.M Molombe</li> </ul>  | } | Victoria Divisional Council |

- |                        |   |                                  |
|------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 33. Mr. A.M. Etoto     | } | Kumba Divisional Council         |
| 34. Mr. I.K. Mesumbe   |   |                                  |
| 35. Mr. R.M. Forkum    | } | Bamenda Widekum Council.         |
| 36. Mr. J.M. Tikum     |   |                                  |
| 41. Chief S.Z. Ngufor  | } | Ndop/Bafut District Council.     |
| 42. Chief of Bambalan  |   |                                  |
| 43. Chief Forekechacha | } | Mamfe Divisional Joint Committee |
| 44. Mr. A.A. Ajong     |   |                                  |
| 45. Chief S.T. Galabe  | } | Bali District Council.           |
| 46. Mr A.N. Daiga      |   |                                  |
| 47. Mr. A.M. Uze       | } | Wum District Council.            |
| 48. Mr. H. Kini        |   |                                  |

**LEGAL ADVISOR**

B.G. Smith, Esq.

**SECRETARY**

J. Dixon, Esq.

Central	5059	4288
South	7051	2921
<b>Totals</b>	<b>97741</b>	<b>233,571</b>

**Source:** U. N. Document T/1556, report of the United Nations Commissioner for the Supervision of the Plebiscites in the Southern and Northern parts of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom Administration, April 3, 1961, p.140

## Appendix 2 : Results of the 1959 Election, Southern Cameroons

Constituency	Registered Voters	K.N.C./ K.N.D.P./ K.P.P.* O.K.⊕	Indep.
Victoria Southwest	5,769	2,100*	1,027 71
Southeast	5,916	1,182; 813*	1,293
Northwest	6,309	3,086	841
Northeast	8,652	2,079	2,464
Kumba Northeast	12,870	4,876	4,089
Northwest	9,550	Unopposed	---
Southeast	15,459	5,057	6,429
Southwest	3,880	1,538	513 247
Mamfe West	8,630	1,202	4,004 297
North	12,085	6,519	2,111
South	8,074	1,449	3,024 1,769
East	10,590	3,076	5,761
Bamenda North	10,793	3,083	2,879
East	7,205	473	3,239 269
Central West	7,746	462	5,736
Central East	10,423	725	4,937 133
West	12,950	1,595	7,478 79
South	15,932	166	5,929 6,908 $\alpha$
Wum North	3,709	674	1,031 736 $\kappa$
Central	4,234	1,442	1,398
East	4,469	453	3,263
West	2,621	769	1,079
Nkambe North	2,440	1,215	87; 81
East	5,444	2,113	1,355
Central	5,775	2,638	2,243
South	4,051	2,099	1,095
Totals	205,576	51,384	75,326 10,509

**Source:** U.N. Document T/1426/Add.1, *Addendum to the Report on the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under British Administration*, Feb. 1959, p. 6.

\*An asterisk indicates a K.P.P. candidate, the others were K.N.C. candidates.

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

$\alpha$ Three independent candidates polled 5,780, 988, and 140 voters respectively.

$\kappa$ Two independent candidates polled 621 and 115 votes respectively.

## Appendix 3: Result of the 1961 plebiscite, Southern Cameroons

<b>Plebiscite district</b>	<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>Cameroon</b>
Victoria		
Southwest	2552	3756
Southeast	1329	4870
Northwest	4744	4205
Northeast	3291	9251
Kumba		
Northeast	9466	11991
Northwest	14738	555
Southeast	6105	12827
Southwest	2424	2227
Mamfe		
West	2039	8505
North	5432	6410
South	685	8175
East	1894	10177
Bamenda		
North	8073	18839
East	1822	17858
Central west	1230	18027
Central east	529	18193
West	467	16142
South	220	19426
Wum		
North	1485	7322
Central	3644	3211
East	1518	13133
West	2137	3449
Nkambe		
North	5962	1917
East	3845	5896

**Appendix 4: Constitutional proposal by the CPNC (Prepared during the Bamenda All party Conference)**

**PREAMBLE**

In attempting to formulate a constitution for a United Cameroons, i.e. a political entity embracing the present Southern Cameroon and the present Cameroun Republic, one is right away beset with a multiplicity of problems and complications, significant among which is the big question of a choice between a unitary and a federal form for a country of approximately five million inhabitants comprising of two district but vastly unequal units, one of the English speaking British minded Southern Cameroons with about a million people and the much vaster French speaking French minded Cameroun Republic of some four million. The problem is worsened by the time element brought about by the United Nations Resolution which fixed the date of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1961, for the termination of the United Kingdom Trusteeship and attainment of independence by the Southern Cameroons. It is therefore clear that in making the choice between a Unitary and a Federal form of Constitution one shall in fact be choosing between the ideal and the expedient/ To us of the C.P.N.C. the ideal constitution for a country of the size, population and resources as one envisaged is Unitary, but idealism and practicability are not always synonymous. Therefore in order to meet the peculiar setting and circumstances in which the problem is being faced we cannot avoid choosing the expedient, namely the federal system in spite of its attendant cost, a federal; constitution will be easier to apply, and commends itself more to the people o the Southern Cameroons. It has great advantage over the other of preventing the stunning impact of unification but to be realistic it will only act as a cushion to minimize the inevitable collision between two opposite system.

In venturing to propose a Federal Constitution for a United Cameroons with its implications we are fortified by the text of the joint declaration signed on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, 1960, between President Ahidjo of the Cameroun Republic and Premier Foncha of the Southern Cameroons, in which among other things, they stated,

“That they wish to use every available means to bring to a successful conclusion the task of national reunification which they have set themselves;  
That in no case will the United Cameroon be part of the French Community or the British Commonwealth;  
That they wish to create a Federal state whose institution could be broadly outline as follows...”



## Appendix 5: One Kamerun : Proposal for a United Kamerun, (Prepared during the Bamenda All Party Conference)

We are a bit disturbed that a very short notice was given to the Political Parties to attend this conference. At the moment; the all-party conference has started off without an agenda, a steering committee and a serious working paper. In order to consider the Party Proposal, as well as delve into all the memorandas submitted, a conference with duration with of three days cannot handle all the problems.

We want to clarify a point. The Southern Cameroons and its people cannot, in any way, be handed over as a sop to Ceberus. We anticipate a more fully representative conference of the Kamerunian people in the weeks ahead to go into the careful job of Constitution making.

In order to seriously expedite the work of this historic Conference, the O.K. suggest, in all good faith, that a selected committee, representative of all shades of opinion be appointed to study all proposals before Conference and report to the General House.

We put hereunder a few points, which we feel should be included in the government proposals.

1. The State shall be called the United Kamerun Republic.
2. The Head of State shall be a President elected by popular vote for a period of five years. His functions shall be mainly ceremonial.
3. Emergency powers shall be vested in the Head of state which may only be evoked with the approval of Parliament
4. The executive Power shall be vested in a Prime Minister who shall be appointed by the President
5. The Prime Minister shall be such a person that shall in the opinion of the President command a majority in Parliament
6. There shall be only one citizenship in the State of a United Kamerun
7. Parliament shall be composed of the elected representatives of the people from single member constituencies based on population
8. All legislative powers shall be vested in Parliament

### **JUDICIARY:**

1. The Judiciary shall be independent of the Government
2. There shall be established a Supreme Court and inferior Courts in a United Kamerun
3. Until such a time that the English and French Legal systems shall have been blended together to codify a Kamerun Law, the English legal system shall apply in the Southern Cameroons and the French in the Cameroon Republic
4. There shall be entrenched in the Constitution the Fundamental Human Rights as contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

5. The Supreme Court shall be the competent authority to interpret the Constitution and shall have the right to reverse any legislation of Parliament that runs contrary to the constitution and/or the spirit of the constitution
6. There shall be a judiciary commission appointed by the President on the advice of the Attorney General.
7. The Chief Justice shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Judiciary Commission
8. A panel of judges versed in the French and English legal systems shall sit in the Supreme Court

**DEFENCE AND SECURITY:**

1. The President shall be the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces
2. The Kamerunian army shall be exclusive to Kamerunians except in-so far as foreigners may be employed to train the Kamerun National Army
3. Soldiers may not be imposed upon citizens except in a manner prescribed by law
4. There shall be established a state commission to control the method of training and discipline of the State Police
5. There shall be a reorganization of the State Police to fall in line with the British System (note the British Colonial type)
6. There shall be no interterritorial tariffs

**CURRENCY:** There shall be one currency which shall be determined by the Parliamentary Finance Committee

**LANGUAGE:** The Official Language shall be French and English

**AFRICAN UNION:**

1. The Constitution shall permit of the surrender of part of the whole of Sovereignty to a Union of African States
2. The United Kamerun Republic shall not be attached to or aligned with any other powers

**CHIEFS:** The traditional and customary positions of the Chiefs shall be protected and they shall exercise such traditional powers, as many not infringe on accepted democratic principles

**TRANSITIONAL PERIOD:**

There shall be set up a council of state composed of all shades of Political opinions charged with the duties of receiving powers from the United Kingdom Government and conducting elections to a constituent Assembly. This body shall desolve itself immediately a new Government formed.

The electoral Laws shall be elaborated in the Constitution.

Bamenda  
27<sup>th</sup> June, 1961

## Appendix 6: The Southern Cameroons: Colonial Experiences and Name changes

The Southern Cameroons, in its more than a century of four different colonial experiences, has had several names. The reader will come across several different names of the Southern Cameroons in this book and in most of the literature on the territory. The names can sometimes be overwhelming and confusing. The reader will find names like British Southern Cameroons, Southern Cameroons, British Cameroon, West Cameroon, Anglophone Cameroon, English-speaking Cameroon, Southwest and Northwest Provinces, Anglophone Provinces, used in this volume. These names all refer to one territory. As the reader will notice, the Southern Cameroons is not the Southern part of any country. Rather, it is the name of a territory that has been subjected to four different colonial experiences as the dateline below indicates.

### A Southern Cameroons Dateline

- 1885** *Britain transferred territory to Germany in the Treaty of April 21, and Southern Cameroons became part of German Protectorate of Kamerun*
- 1916** *Defeat of Germany in World War I, Southern Cameroons converted by Britain*
- 1922** *Southern Cameroons became League of Nations Mandated Territory under United Kingdom rule*
- 1923** *Southern Cameroons appended to Nigeria by United Kingdom*
- 1946** *Southern Cameroons made United Nations Trust Territory under United Kingdom as Administering Authority*
- 1951** *First Parliamentary Elections organized in Southern Cameroons to choose representatives to Eastern Nigeria House of Assembly (Enugu) and Federal House in Lagos.*
- 1953** *Southern Cameroons Representatives Walked out en-masse in protest from Eastern Nigeria House of Assembly, Enugu.*
- 1954** *Southern Cameroons achieved Self-Governing status with Dr. EML Endeley*

- 1956 Southern Cameroons organized parliamentary elections for the second time.
- 1957 London Constitutional Conference increased the number of elected membership of the House from 13 to 26 and created a House of Chiefs for prominent Traditional Rulers
- 1959 Southern Cameroons organized democratic elections for a third time and effected first peaceful and democratic transfer of power in 20<sup>th</sup> century Africa. Government party defeated and first Premier became Leader of Opposition in the House. This democratic feat remained unchallenged in Africa until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Sept. 30 – Both the new Premier, John Ngu Foncha and Dr. EML Endeley, the Leader of the Opposition appealed to the United Nations Trusteeship Committee to delay decision on the future of the British Southern Cameroons until 1962.
- 1960 United Nations imposed the Two Alternatives on Southern Cameroons.
- 1961 Southern Cameroons was federated with La Republique du Cameroun as autonomous state of West Cameroon. Beginning of Annexation Process
- 1972 Federation abruptly ended by President Ahidjo of Cameroun. Southern Cameroons annexed as the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> provinces of RepubliqueUnie du Cameroun.
- 1984 Annexation is completed with change of country's name to revert to Republique du Cameroun, the name by which French Cameroon gained its independence from France on January 1, 1960.
- Emergence of Southern Cameroons Liberation Movements, arrest and detention of FonGorji Dinka
- 1993 Southern Cameroons Liberation Movements convened under the banner of the All Anglophone Conference (AAC I) in Buea issued the Buea Declaration
- 1994 The second All Anglophone Conference (AAC II) issued the Bamenda Proclamation
- Aug. 6- AAC was re-baptized. Southern Cameroons Peoples Council (SCPC); the Anglophone Council became Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC), and the Anglophone Advisory Council was renamed the Southern Cameroons Advisory Council (SCAC).
- 1995 Southern Cameroons People Council issued the Buea Peace Initiative (BPI) and sent a delegation to the United Nations to petition against annexation. Delegation issued the London Communique.
- 1996 January – Government of La Republique du Cameroun published the country's third Constitution with no mention of Southern Cameroons.
- September – Southern Cameroons conducted a Signature Referendum on its future.
- 1999 December 30 - Justice Frederick Alobwede E bong proclaimed the Restoration of Independence and Sovereignty of Southern Cameroons. President Frederick

**Appendix 7: The constitutional arrangements for the implementation of the decision at the Plebiscite**

**SOUTHERN CAMEROONS PLEBISCITE**

**THE CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION  
AT THE PLEBISCITE**

**INTRODUCTION**

The United Nations General Assembly, after hearing the statement made by the representative of the Administering Authority, by the Premier of the Southern Cameroons and by the leader of the opposition in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly, by Resolution 1352 (XIV) of 16th October, 1959, decided that arrangements should be made for a plebiscite to be held in the Southern Cameroons and that the two questions to be put at the plebiscite should be :—

- (a) Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria ?
- (b) Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroun ?

On 31st May, 1960, the United Nations Trusteeship Council, by Resolution 2013 (XXVI), requested the Administering Authority to take steps, in consultation with the Authorities concerned, to ensure that the people of the Territory are fully informed, before the plebiscite, of the constitutional arrangements which would have to be made, at the appropriate time, for the implementation of the decision at the plebiscite.

This booklet is being produced in pursuance of the Trusteeship Council Resolution referred to above and will be used to explain to the public of the Southern Cameroons the constitutional implications of the two plebiscite choices.

The implications of joining the Federation of Nigeria have been made clear in undertakings given by Nigerian Ministers. Trusteeship would be terminated at an early date and the Southern Cameroons would join the Federation with the status of a fully self-governing Region equal in all respects with the other Regions in an independent Nigeria. The Federation of Nigeria already has a constitution which provides for regional Governments and it is, therefore, possible to set out in detail the constitutional arrangements that would be made if the plebiscite decision is in favour of the first alternative: these arrangements will be found on pages 7 to 12 below.

Insofar as the implications of joining the independent Republic of the Cameroun are concerned, Mr Foncha, in his capacity as leader of the political party advocating joining the independent

Republic of Cameroun, has consulted directly with the President of the Republic of the Cameroun on the terms upon which the Southern Cameroons might be united with the Republic if the result of the plebiscite should be in favour of such a course. Her Majesty's Government, as Administering Authority, have on several occasions enjoined upon those concerned the need for clarification of these terms. A number of meetings have taken place in Yaoundé, Douala and Buea at which Mr Foncha and his colleagues have discussed this question with President Ahidjo and members of his Government. These meetings have resulted in two joint communiques which are reproduced in full on pages 13 to 15, and which the Government of the Republic of Cameroun, in response to a formal request by Her Majesty's Government have authorised for publication.

In November, 1960, the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Iain Macleod) received, at the request of Mr. Foncha, a delegation representing the government and other parties in the Southern Cameroons. The main matter discussed at the talks was the implication of the second choice in the plebiscite. The Secretary of State said that in the view of Her Majesty's Government, the United Nations in adopting the two alternatives of joining Nigeria or the Cameroun Republic, clearly ruled out a period of continuing Trusteeship or separate independence for the Southern Cameroons. In Her Majesty's Government's view, therefore, if the plebiscite goes in favour of the Cameroun Republic, arrangements would have to be made for the early termination of Trusteeship. The Secretary of State had noted that the Premier of the Southern Cameroons had ascertained from the President of the Cameroun Republic that a Federal form of constitution would be acceptable. The following interpretation was proposed as being consistent with the second question, it being understood that the association of the United Nations with the post-plebiscite conference mentioned in the text below would be subject to its agreement :—

“A vote for attaining independence by joining the Republic would mean that, by an early date to be decided by the United Nations after consultation with the Governments of the Southern Cameroons, the Cameroun Republic and the United Kingdom as Administering Authority, the Southern Cameroons and the Cameroun Republic would unite in a Federal United Cameroun Republic. The arrangements would be worked out after the plebiscite by a conference consisting of representative delegations of equal status from the Republic and the Southern Cameroons. The United Nations and the United Kingdom would also be associated with this conference. During the short period while the arrangements for transfer were being made the United Kingdom would of course be ready to continue to fulfil their responsibilities under the Trusteeship Agreement.”

The President of the Republic of Cameroun and Mr. Foncha have endorsed the interpretation of the second plebiscite question set out above in the terms of the communique quoted on page 15.

The Republic of Cameroun at the present time has a unitary form of constitution. A federal form of constitution for the Federal United Republic of Cameroun would be drawn up after the plebiscite and when it is known what states will form the Federation. The communiques quoted in pages 13 to 15 set out in outline the terms and conditions, as agreed by Mr Foncha and President Ahidjo and endorsed by the Government of the Republic of Cameroun, upon which the Southern Cameroons would join the Republic in the event of the vote in the plebiscite being in favour of such a course.

It will be observed from a study of the statements on pages 7 to 15 that there are a number of matters, arrangements for which would fall to be made after the plebiscite.

In the arrangements which have been made for the plebiscite, GREEN is the colour which has been allocated to the first alternative on which a vote can be cast, namely, for achieving independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria; and WHITE is the colour which has been allocated to the second alternative on which a vote can be cast, namely, for achieving independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroun. The ballot boxes to be used in the plebiscite will be painted GREEN and WHITE respectively.

The day fixed for the plebiscite is Saturday, 11th February, 1961.

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**CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF THE SOUTHERN  
CAMEROONS IN THE EVENT OF IT ELECTING  
TO BECOME A PART OF THE FEDERATION OF  
NIGERIA**

**I**

**Undertaking of the Nigerian Governments**

In paragraph 70 of the Report by the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference held in London in 1958 it was stated:

“The Conference confirmed that, if this proved to be the wish of the people of the Territory, Nigeria would welcome the Southern Cameroons as part of the Federation with the status of a full self-governing Region equal in all respects with the other Regions in an independent Nigeria”.

This was confirmed at the Constitutional discussions between Nigerian Ministers and Ministers of the United Kingdom which were held in London in May, 1960. In the final communique issued after these discussions it was stated :

“There was an exchange of views on the Cameroons under British Trusteeship which in accordance with the resolution of the United Nations would be separated from Nigeria when Nigeria became independent. It was noted that the questions in the plebiscites to be held early in 1961 posed a choice between joining Nigeria or joining the Republic of Cameroun. It was agreed that if the Southern Cameroons joined Nigeria it would, as stated in paragraph 70 of the 1958 Conference report, be with the status of a full self-governing Region equal in all respects with the other Regions. It was hoped to ascertain from the government of the Republic of the Cameroun the terms on which the Northern and/or Southern Cameroons would enter the Republic”.

**II**

The Federation of Nigeria would consist of the Regions of Northern Nigeria (including the Northern Cameroons if it decided to join the Federation), Western Nigeria, Eastern Nigeria, the Federal Territory of Lagos and the Region of the Southern Cameroons.

The Federation and each of its component Regions is a parliamentary democracy with ministerial councils responsible to the legislatures and with a Governor-General (in the case of the Federation) or a Governor (in the case of a Region) as Her Majesty's Representative.



### III

#### Federal Structure

The Federal Parliament consists of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The Senate consists of twelve senators from each Region, four from the Federal Territory of Lagos and four nominated by the Governor-General on the advice of the Federal Prime Minister. The Southern Cameroons would thus have twelve senators. The House of Representatives would consist of 320 directly elected members (including the Northern Cameroons if it decided to join the Federation) the number of members from each Region being based on the proportion the population of that Region bears to the total population of the Federation. On this basis the Southern Cameroons would have eight members in the Federal House of Representatives.

The Governor-General appoints as Prime Minister of the Federation a member of the House of Representatives who appears likely to command the support of a majority of the members of that House. The other ministers are appointed in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister from among the members of the Senate and House of Representatives.

The principal matters in which only the Federal Parliament can legislate (*i.e.*, reserved *exclusively* to it) include :

- Aviation and meteorology
- External borrowing, currency and coinage, exchange control
- Control of Capital issues
- Copyright
- Customs and excise, including export duties
- Defence and Police (other than local government police)
- Certain Higher Educational Institutions
- External affairs
- External trade
- Immigration and emigration
- Incorporation and regulation of companies
- Insurance (other than purely intra-regional)
- Shipping and navigation
- Mines and minerals, including oil and natural gas
- Naval, military and air forces
- Nuclear energy
- Patents and trademarks
- Posts, telegraphs and telephones
- Railways
- Trunk roads
- Company taxes and sales taxes
- Wireless broadcasting and television

In certain matters the Federal and Regional legislatures have *concurrent* authority, *i.e.*, they have equal right to initiate legislation; but if a Regional law is inconsistent with Federal law the Regional

law is void to the extent of the inconsistency. The principal concurrent subjects include :

- Antiquities
- Arms and ammunition
- Bankruptcy
- Census
- Commercial and industrial monopolies, combines and trusts
- Higher Education (other than the institutions in the Exclusive list)
- Industrial development
- Labour, industrial relations
- National monuments and parks
- Prisons
- Professional Qualifications
- Public safety and public order
- Scientific and industrial research
- Surveys and statistics
- Tourism
- Traffic on Federal trunk roads
- Water power

All *residual* matters, *i.e.*, those which are not specified as exclusive or concurrent, would come within the sole authority of the Southern Cameroons Government.

The Federal Supreme Court is the court of appeal from the High Courts of the Regions and Lagos. It has no original jurisdiction except in disputes between the Federation and a Region or between Regions, and in questions as to the interpretation of the Federal and Regional Constitutions.

#### IV

#### Regional Structure

If the Southern Cameroons elected to join the Federation of Nigeria it would become a full self-governing region within the Federation in all respects equal to and having the same powers as the other Regions. In particular, it would have :

- (a) A Governor, who, as Her Majesty's Representative, would be bound to act in accordance with the advice of his ministers except in respect of a limited number of topics, *e.g.* dissolution of parliament, appointment of the Premier.
- (b) A legislature consisting of a House of Assembly elected by universal adult suffrage and a House of Chiefs containing not less than eighteen chiefs selected in accordance with special regulations. The power of the legislature to make laws would be exercised by bills passed by both Houses. A bill (other than a money bill, *i.e.*, one involving financial measures) may originate in

either House, but a money bill may originate only in the House of Assembly. The House of Chiefs would have a delaying power only.

The legislature would be empowered to legislate on all concurrent matters and on all matters not specified as concurrent or exclusive. These residual subjects would include primary and secondary education, agriculture, forestry, veterinary services, co-operatives, local government, land, medical services, administration of justice and roads (other than Federal trunk roads). The legislature would be empowered to pass its own budget and to raise revenue for all matters within its competence.

- (c) An Executive Council consisting of a Premier appointed by the Governor and other Ministers appointed on the recommendation of the Premier. The Premier would be the person who appeared likely to command a majority among the members of the House of Assembly. The Premier and other Ministers would be members of the House of Assembly but at least two of the Ministers would be members of the House of Chiefs. The Executive Council would be responsible for the executive government of the Southern Cameroons.
- (d) A High Court of the Southern Cameroons with full jurisdiction in Civil and Criminal matters. The Southern Cameroons would also have its own system of Magistrates Courts and Customary Courts.
- (e) A Southern Cameroons Public Service, distinct and separate from the other public services in the Federation. The Public Service would be controlled by a Southern Cameroons Public Service Commission responsible to the Southern Cameroons Government and pensions of retired officers of this Public Service would be a charge on Southern Cameroons funds.

The Southern Cameroons Government would advance to the status of a full self-governing Region in a sovereign Federation equal in all respects with the other Regions and its Government would consequently be supreme in all matters within its competence. The Federal Government would have no overriding powers in such matters, except that if the Federal Government and the Southern Cameroons Government were both to legislate on a subject in the *Concurrent list* the Federal law would, in the event of inconsistency, prevail.

## V

The following are the provisions for the amendment of the Constitution :

- (a) Federal Constitution —
  - (i) Entrenched provisions : amendment requires a two-thirds majority of all the members in each House of

the Federal Parliament and the concurrence, by simple majority, of each House of the Legislatures of at least two Regions. (The entrenched provisions include such matters as human rights, the operation of regional constitutions, the Federal Parliament and its exercise of legislative power, the Executive's powers, judicial and police affairs, public funds, the public service and the Exclusive and Concurrent legislative lists).

- (ii) Ordinary provisions : amendment requires a two-thirds majority of all the members of each House of the Federal Parliament.
- (b) Southern Cameroons (Regional) Constitution—Amendment would require a two-thirds majority of each House and, in the case of entrenched provisions, would also require the concurrence of the Federal Parliament.

## VI

### Miscellaneous Provisions

Arrangements in respect of the following subjects would be broadly on the same lines as those obtaining before October 1st, 1960 :

**Defence** National defence is assured by the Federal armed forces recruited from all parts of the Federation, which would include the Southern Cameroons.

**Police** The Federation is policed by a federal police force recruited from all parts of the Federation, which would include the Southern Cameroons.

**Local Government** would continue as at present.

**The Legal System** would continue as at present. There would be magistrates' and customary courts and a High Court presided over by a Chief Justice. Appeals from the High Court would be heard by the Federal Supreme Court which would hold sessions as necessary in the Southern Cameroons. Appeals from the Federal Supreme Court would go to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

**Currency** The present currency would continue to be used.

**Education** The following higher educational institutions are a Federal responsibility :

- The University College at Ibadan
- The University College Teaching Hospital
- The Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology
- The West African Institute of Social and Economic Research
- The Pharmacy School at Yaba
- The Forestry School at Ibadan
- The Veterinary School at Vom

Other higher education is a concurrent responsibility and the Southern Cameroons would consequently be able to found institutions for higher education itself; the remainder of educational matters is an entirely Regional responsibility.

**Official Language** The language of the legislature, the Courts and the administration would be the English language.

**Position of Native Rulers** Chiefs recognised by native law and custom as the traditional rulers would be recognised by the Federal and Regional Governments as provided by existing legislation and their representation secured in the House of Chiefs.

**Federal Public Service** The Federal Public Service is open to citizens of all Regions, which would include the Southern Cameroons. There are at the present time thirty-eight Departments and services staffed by members of the Federal Public Service, opportunities for advancement in which are equal for all members whatever their Region of origin. The pensions of Federal officers are a charge on Federal funds.

**Internal Tariffs** There would be no internal tariffs (*i.e.*, duties on the internal movement of goods) and internal trade would be free.

**Revenue** Federal revenue is raised principally from the proceeds of Customs and Excise, import and export duties, and sale taxes on certain commodities. Part of this revenue goes into a pool of funds which is shared out on an agreed basis amongst all the Regions, which would include the Southern Cameroons.

Regional taxes are collected in such manner as the legislature may provide, *e.g.*, Income Tax, direct taxation.

**Membership of the British Commonwealth** The Federation is a sovereign independent member of the Commonwealth and by joining the Federation the Southern Cameroons would enjoy all the benefits of membership of the Commonwealth; being entitled amongst other things to the preferential treatment for its exports as at present enjoyed and to other sources of aid available to Commonwealth members.

**Roads** Trunk roads and the expansion of trunk roads (but not the traffic on them) would be an exclusively Federal responsibility to be paid for out of federal funds. Other roads would be constructed and maintained from regional funds.

**Human Rights** Fundamental human rights (such as protection against deprivation of life and liberty, freedom from discrimination, freedom of conscience, expression and movement, the right of recourse to the courts and of a fair hearing or trial) are written into the Federal Constitution and laws which contravene them will not be enforced by the courts. All these constitutional provisions covering fundamental rights are entrenched.

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**CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF THE SOUTHERN  
CAMEROONS IN THE EVENT OF IT ELECTING TO  
BECOME A PART OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROUN**

**COMMUNIQUE**

**CONSIDERING** that in the application of the Republic at the 14th Session of the United Nations a plebiscite is to be organised in February 1961 to allow the people of the Southern Cameroons under British Trusteeship and the people of the Northern Cameroons under British Trusteeship to declare whether they wish to join the Federation of Nigeria or to be united with the Cameroun Republic,

**CONSIDERING** that in the event of the result of this plebiscite being in favour of Reunification the application of this reunification on a federal basis allowing for the particular conditions of each group, could not be automatic but gradual,

**CONSIDERING** that the representatives of the Cameroun Republic and of the Government Party of the Southern Cameroons vigorously reaffirm the desire of their peoples to be reunited in one Nation,

**CONSIDERING** that the political heads have already met twice to examine the broad outlines of the Constitution of the two Federated States, they have, at the conclusion of their third meeting of the 10, 11, 12 and 13th October, 1960, decided to adopt the broad outlines of the Constitution which they will adopt in the event of the plebiscite vote being favourable to them.

**JOINT DECLARATION**

The representatives of the Cameroun Republic and the Government Party of the Southern Cameroons under British Trusteeship met for the third time to continue their discussions on the projected Constitution which would govern the reunified Cameroun.

At the conclusion of these talks, the Hon. J. N. Foncha, Prime Minister of the Southern Cameroons, His Excellency M. Ahmadou AHIDJO, President of the Cameroun Republic, and M. Charles ASSALE, Prime Minister and Head of the Cameroun Government,

**STATE:**

1. that they wish to use every available means to bring to a successful conclusion the task of national reunification which they have set themselves;
2. that in no case will the United Cameroun be a part either of the French Community or the British Commonwealth;

3. that they wish to create a Federal State whose institutions could be broadly outlined as follows:

The Federal United Cameroun Republic will be a democratic state. It will have its motto, its anthem and its flag. The nationals of the federated states will enjoy Camerounian nationality. The Federal State in the first stage will have power to deal with matters listed below as a minimum:

- public freedoms
- nationality
- national defence
- foreign affairs
- higher education
- immigration and emigration
- federal budget
- posts and telecommunications

A list of powers which would fall within the competence of the Federal Government in the second stage will be set out in the Constitution.

The Federal Authorities will be composed of:

- a Federal Executive headed by the President of the Republic, Chief of the Federal State,
- Federal legislature consisting of a Federal Legislative Assembly and a Federal Senate.

Certain federal laws will only be enacted in such a way that no measures contrary to the interest of one State will be imposed upon it by the majority (system of second reading with a qualified majority).

In the event of a conflict of laws between the Federal State and the Federated States, the federal law will prevail.

In non-federal matters, the Authorities of each of the Federated States will have exclusive competence.

Each of the Federated States will be ruled by a Government and will have a Legislative Assembly.

A federal Court of Justice will have as its purpose to unify judicial systems and to act as the Highest Court of Appeal of the Federal State.

Federal services will be established to carry out federal Administration.

Legislation (or systems of legislation in force) will remain valid until the enactment of federal legislation.

4. The Federation will be created by the Cameroun Republic and the Southern Cameroons under British Trusteeship. The two parties hope that the Northern Cameroons under British Trusteeship will also enter into this federation, either as a separate State, or as a part of the Cameroons at present under British Trusteeship.

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