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CABINET

PRIME MINISTER'S AFRICAN TOUR

NOTE BY THE SECRETARY OF THE CABINET

By direction of the Prime Minister I circulate, for the information of the Cabinet, the attached record of the tour which he made in **January-February** of this year to four Commonwealth countries in Africa.

This print is circulated mainly for purposes of record. But, in addition to the notes of meetings and discussions, it also contains some material of more general interest, viz.,

- (i) A general introduction (pp. 3-5).
- (ii) Commentaries on the particular countries visited and a despatch from the High Commissioner in each—
 - Ghana (pp. 7-8 and 27-29).
 - Nigeria (pp. 30-31 and 58-59).**
 - Federation (pp. 60-61 and 125-128).
 - South Africa (pp. 129-130 and 159-165).
- (iii) The full text of the main policy speech made by the Prime Minister in each of the countries visited—
 - Accra (pp. 24-27).
 - Lagos (pp. 55-57).**
 - Salisbury (pp. 120-125).
 - Cape Town (pp. 153-158).

(Signed) **NORMAN BROOK.**

*Cabinet Office, S.W.I,
5th April, 1960*

N/B

(Southern Cameroons information (pages 42-43) stated below is recorded under Nigeria since Southern Cameroons was jointly administered from Nigeria by Her Britannic Majesty's Government. The full document is 174 pages tag SECRET by Her Majesty's Government).

Record of a Conversation between Mr. Macmillan and the Premier of the Southern Cameroons held at Government House, Lagos, on Wednesday, 13th January, 1960, at 12 30 p.m.

Mr. Macmillan was accompanied by the Governor-General and Sir Norman Brook.

The Premier of the Southern Cameroons, **Mr. J. N. Foncha**, was accompanied by the Commissioner, **Mr. Field**.

Mr. Foncha said that he was sorry that Mr. Macmillan had not been able to find time to pay a personal visit to the Southern Cameroons. This being so, he had made a special journey to Lagos, so that he might have the opportunity of meeting him there.

In reply to questions by Mr. Macmillan, Mr. Foncha first gave some factual information about the constitution, population and economics of the Southern Cameroons. *Mr. Macmillan* then turned to the problems involved in administering the territory during the interim period from 1st October, when Nigeria would become independent, to the date when the United Nations would reach a final decision on its future in the light of the plebiscite which was to be held before March 1961. He asked whether the existing Government in the Southern Cameroons were confident that they would be able to handle that situation.

Mr. Foncha said that it would be some months before the plebiscite was held and he hoped in that period to get some constitutional experts to help him.

Mr. Macmillan said that this would be good. But he was rather more concerned about the stability of the Administration during this difficult period. There seemed to him to be two needs: first, the Government must be ready to encourage existing administrators to stay and, secondly, the officers themselves must be willing to remain, for they could not be compelled to do so. Would these two needs be met?

Sir James Robertson said that Mr. Field, with assistance from the Federal Government of Nigeria, was now carrying out a survey of the existing staff to see who would be willing to remain. Some of the public services (*e.g.*, Posts and Customs) were run on a federal basis and these consisted largely of Nigerian and expatriate officers. The regional service contained a larger proportion of local officers. *Mr. Field* said that even in those services very few of the senior posts were held by local officers; and, in some of them (*e.g.*, health services) a high proportion of the specialists were Nigerians or expatriates.

Mr. Foncha then made a prepared statement which he had evidently hoped to make at the outset of the meeting. He said that the people of the Southern Cameroons were grateful to the United Kingdom for the benefits which had come to them during the period of British administration. They were also grateful for being given the chance to determine their own future. It was right that, despite the grant of independence to Nigeria, the separate identity of the Cameroons should be preserved until plebiscites could be held. They were particularly grateful to Mr. Lennox-Boyd for his readiness to preserve that opportunity for them at the conferences on the constitutional future of Nigeria. He also wished to express his appreciation of the work which had been done in his territory by expatriate officers. Finally, he expressed his appreciation for the grants from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund for the construction of roads in the Southern Cameroons. Further investment in trunk roads would be required. Provision for minor roads could be made from the resources of the territory itself.

Mr. Foncha went on to say that the future of the Southern Cameroons must lie in association either with an independent Cameroon republic or with an independent Nigeria. The choice must lie with the inhabitants. His own Party favoured union with a Cameroon republic. They did not wish to be associated with an independent Nigeria. This did not however affect their gratitude to the United Kingdom; and they would wish to maintain some sort of connexion with the United Kingdom even if they joined an independent Cameroon republic.

As regards officials now employed in the Southern Cameroons, these were being assured that the result of the plebiscite, whichever way it went, need not prejudice their future and would not diminish the gratitude of the people for their past services.

Mr. Macmillan said that, whatever the result of the plebiscite, it was important that the Government and people of the Southern Cameroons should in the meantime maintain friendly relations with Nigeria. If the plebiscite resulted in union with the French Cameroons, the unified territory would wish to be on friendly terms with Nigeria. On the other hand, if it resulted in union with Nigeria, it would be unfortunate if a climate of opinion had been created in which the Southern Cameroons would not be welcomed back by Nigeria. On either view, therefore, it seemed desirable in this interim period to avoid any action which might endanger relations between the Southern Cameroons and Nigeria. It was also important that everything should be done to ensure that in that interim period a stable and efficient Administration could be maintained in the territory. He hoped therefore that the Government would do all they could to encourage officers to stay on.

Sir James Robertson said that it was to be hoped that Mr. Foncha would also ascertain from the Premier of the French Cameroons the precise terms on which union with a Cameroon republic could take place. If the two Premiers could agree on the principles, officials could meet and work out the details. But it was most important that, at the time of the plebiscite, the people should know clearly what union with a Cameroon republic would involve. They knew already what would be involved in union with Nigeria. *Mr. Foncha* said that he hoped to discuss this question with the Premier of the French Cameroons in February.

Sir James Robertson again stressed the importance of retaining during the interim period Nigerian officers who were serving in the Southern Cameroons, especially in the federal services. He reminded Mr. Foncha that these officers could not be required to stay on: they must volunteer for this duty: and the Government must make a special effort to secure their goodwill if they wished to retain their services.

In further discussion reference was made to the activities of terrorists in the French Cameroons, and the extent to which they were able, on a plea of political asylum, to operate from British territory. *Sir James Robertson* said that reinforcements of Nigerian troops and police had been sent to this area to control the situation. He reminded Mr. Foncha that this assistance would not be available after Nigeria became independent. *Mr. Foncha* said that he hoped to be able during the interim period to recruit ex-servicemen from his own country to form a Home Guard for this purpose. *Sir James Robertson* said that it was very brave of Mr. Foncha to contemplate union with a territory which contained these terrorists. To this *Mr. Foncha* replied that in a united Cameroon republic it would be easier to preserve law and order. While the territories continued to be divided the authority of the Chiefs was being progressively undermined.