

THE REBELLION OF AMBAZONIA (July 11, 1985)

Postscript:

*Prior to the issuing of The "Revolt of Ambazonia", which we have often called "The Rebellion of Ambazonia," there were two other landmark documents issues by the Ambazonia Restoration Movement spearheaded by Fon Fongum Gorji-Dinka, the Doyen of All Cameroon Lawyers. These were **The New Social Order**, issued March 15, 1985, **The letter to the L'état Major of Cameroun: Defuse the Timed Bomb**, May 5th 1985. Timed Bomb was what landed the Ambazonian leader behind the bars of the Maximum Security Prison, Kondengui, Yaounde, Cameroun.*

While in jail, one Prison Guard questioned Fon Dinka whether his crime was one by which he could not work out some compromise with the government, lamenting that it was terrible for a country to see its highest lawyer behind bars! We are not certain whether the officer was sent by government or whether it was his own private initiative. It quickly occurred to the Fon that this was an opportunity to ask and utilize a typewriter and make clear his intensions of not willing to give up simply on some compromise without actually having the government fully understand the implications of their actions, while correcting them.

The Prison Guard returned to government Officials that morning boasting that the Anglo leader in jail has just told him he was willing to confess his crime against government and that he has demanded a typewriter to type out his confession. The Fon was to wear a smile when he returned with a typewriter the following morning. After a few days, Fon Dinka issued what the Prison Guard took to the Cameroun government as a confession. The following day the Prison Guard came back fuming with anger and disappointment:

"Maitre Dinka, tu ma trumpe! Nes pas tu ma vais dit" And before he could finish ranting, the Fon said "yes, I confessed!" The guard said, "Mais le directeur lui meme ma dit" "I did confess about the truth!" -the Fon Dinka said emphatically. But the Guard pointed a shaking finger at him and said, "Maitre, vous les anglos, sont tres, tres dangereux!" and stumbled out.

What you read below is what piss off the Guard, triggering what has become an aberration in international politics, unveiling what passes for sins of a peoples against another -a "Me Against My Brother" (Scott Peterson, 2000) disaster and disgrace in a

polity once admired by many out of and within Africa as exemplifying and promoting Pan-Africanism, now a part of the whole scheme is senseless schism of the decay of Africa. The violation of human rights at its highest levels and implicating officials from within and without Cameroun is the result of the suppression of Ambazonia and its rebellion thereof-a prelude of things to come, things that do not look good at all.

THE REBELLION OF AMBAZONIA

(UN TRUST TERRITORY OF THE SOUTHERN CAMEROONS)

ANALYSES AND SOLUTIONS

BY FON FONGUM GORGI-DINKA

INTRODUCTION:

Having been asked by the Authorities to propose a solution to the Ambazonia Revolt, I find that no solution can be valid unless it is scientific. And there can be no scientific solution unless it flows from a scientific analysis of the revolt.

DEFINITION:

Where the West African Coast line meets the Southern African coastline, is a bay of the Atlantic Ocean called AMBAS BAY. Geography identifies the territorial zone around Ambas Bay as Ambas Zone since the 16th and 17th Century. From Ambas Zone, we get Ambazonia. For example, Arizona, Amazon both refers to Arid Zone and the zone around the Amazon River respectfully. The inhabitant of Ambazonia-Ambazonians (geo-politicalunit) carries the appellation AMBAZONIA.

To obviate the confusion, by which "Southern Cameroons" or "West Cameroon" may be mistaken for the Ebolowa Province and Bafoussam Province, respectively, of the Republic of Cameroon, we will fall back on this geo-political appellation AMBAZONIA whenever necessary.

CAUSES OF THE REVOLT

There are six causes, four of which are remote and two are immediate.

REMOTE CAUSES:

Socio-Anthropological Differences

From 1884 to 1914 the German colonial administration set out to create a single state out of the arbitrary mixture of Bantus, semi-Bantus Negroid and Semitic races, which the Berlin Conference handed to Germany. The Germans gave the area the appellation KAMERUN-a German spelling for Cameroes, the Portuguese name for Shrimp, Cray Fish (Njanga).

When the British and the French threw out the Germans in 1914, they partitioned the area between them. France created four states out of her own portion. One of which was annexed to Gabon, the Second to Congo, the third to the Republic of Central Africa and the fourth became the Republic of Cameroun on 1/1/60.

Britain on her part created two states one of which was annexed to their kith and kin in Northern Nigeria and the other became internationally known as The UN Trust Territory of Southern Cameroons-under UK Administration. The native name is Ambazonia.

French colonial administration developed the Republic of Cameroon along its policy of cultural assimilation of France Outre-mer. Cameroonians were encouraged to become Citoyens Francais(French Citizens).

The British on their part prepared the people of Southern Cameroons alias Ambazonia by the policy of indirect rule for eventually self-government or independence.

So while the German effort lasted only thirty years, the acculturation of Ambazonia and Republic of Cameroon as separate and distinct countries went for 47 years, 1914-1961, without any link whatsoever. Each state therefore acquired a socio-anthropological identity that was different in mentality and personality from the other.

It is by virtue of this socio-anthropological distinction created by Italian, French and German colonial administration that the Helvetica people of Switzerland found a Confederation as the only scientific approach to their unification. The Fouban Accord linked the two countries till 1972. But distinct administrations continued till 1972. So from 1914-1972 is 58 years of distinct socio-political distinction.

This socio-anthropological distinction imposes a Confederal Union, upon Ambazonia (Southern Cameroons) and Republic of Cameroon, as the only workable basis of association.

The appellation Cameroon held no magic stronger than the appellation Congo or Guinea, so as to turn Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroun into one country, while Congo Leo, now Zaire, and Congo Brazzaville, or Guinea Bissau and Guinea Conakry remain distinct countries.

A study of the ethnic or other aspects across the boundary linking Southern Cameroons and Republic of Cameroun, shown that such links whether they arise from ethnic

identity, cultural similarity, linguistic affinity, commercial intercourse, or geographical propinquity, they apply strongly between Southern Cameroons and Nigeria which shares 60% of Ambazonian frontiers.

Furthermore, while Southern Cameroons (Ambazonia) had no links with Republic of Cameroun for 47 years, all Southern Cameroons teachers, nurses, pastors, priests, doctors, lawyers and administrative cadre, had their training wholly or partly in Nigeria or from Nigerians, or Ambazonians formed in Nigeria!

Yet Anglophone Southern Cameroons alias Ambazonia resisted integration with Anglophone Nigeria. Nations like humans manifest self-preservation very jealously.

THE UNIFICATION SLOGAN

UNIFICATION was imposed on Ambazonians by:

A. FACULTATIVE IRREDENTISTS:

Some of us believed that just by the fact that we were once called Kamerun, every square inch of land that was Kamerun should be recovered, and re-united (See my speech at the UN, March, 1959). I even solicited the aid of UN members to insist that the three portions annexed to Congo, Gabon and Central African Republic be brought back (Fon Dinka probably forgot Chad!). But since these did not come within UN Trusteeship agreement, there was no way of raising the matter at the UN.

B. ATTACHMENT TO ANCIENT HOMES:

French Cameroonians who escaped force labour and settled in Ambazonia naturally wanted to unite their new homes in Ambazonia with their ancestral homes in Republic of Cameroun where they usually insisted on being buried even if they were born, bred, worked, owned property and died in Ambazonia. In fact, the first unificationist Party, the Kamerun United National Congress (KUNC), was led by a French Cameroonian, R.J.K. Debonge who was settled in Buea.

C. INTERNATIONAL MANIPULATIONS:

Southern Cameroons was budgetarily autonomous and had reserves invested abroad which amounted to over 180.000.000 francs CFA, as at 31/12/60. This was what we used to buy planes and establish our Airlines-Cameroon Air Transport, Cameroon Bank, West Cameroon Electricity Corporation, West Cameroon Development Agency, etc.

The Republic of Cameroun on their part was budgetarily dependent on France even up to about 1968-69! But because the British very much wanted Southern Cameroons to

be part of Nigeria, they invented a story that Southern Cameroons, though it was ripe for independence, was not viable to go it alone. They had hoped that with terrorism tearing Republic of Cameroun apart, Southern Cameroons would vote in favour of Union with Nigeria rather than with Republic of Cameroun.

For us the facultative unificationists, this was a God sent excuse for Re-unification with what we naively called "Our Brothers."

For the above reasons we got the Re-Unification of Southern Cameroons and Republic of Cameroun, purely on facultative reasons, and through the manipulations described above by French Cameroon settlers.

From French Cameroon side there were no sentiments for Re-Unification with Southern Cameroons at all. Not even one of the French Cameroon political parties identified itself with unification by bearing the appellation Kamerun. Not even the UPC, which claimed to be for it.

Again, the fact that there was no vocal opinion from the portions of German Kamerun which had been merged with Gabon, Congo, and Central African Republic even though these portions had more in common with Francophone Republic of Cameroun and were under the same French Administration with Cameroon, only goes to prove that the name Cameroon alone was not a unifying factor, as some of us mistakenly believed then.

ABSENCE OF CONSENSUS AD IDEM

At the Fouban Conference the two countries were at cross-purpose on the meaning of the word re-unification. The Republic of Cameroun believed that it meant the beginning of a new process of the annexation of the Southern Cameroons (Ambazonia) by Republic of Cameroun. Southern Cameroons (Ambazonia) understood unification to mean full de jure independence than the de facto independence, which they had since 1-10-60. So Southern Cameroons proposed a Confederation, with dual nationality; each state to keep her own nationality and both to enjoy a common nationality as a united country. The Federal structure, which emerged from Fouban, was therefore a compromise solution. But it took pains to underline the fact that the two countries, each with a separate nationality had federated. Article 1(a) emphasized this separate nationality of each. It stated that Nationals of Southern Cameroons shall become citizens of the Federal Republic and thus enjoy Cameroonian nationality.

But annexationist Francophone leaders have refused to respect even that compromise. Ahidjo swept it off one morning by decree, claiming that the gigantic fraud of 20th May 1972 had relieved him of treaty obligations to seek the procedure of a Federal law of Parliament procedure.

Fouman Akame, while presenting his bill for the secession of Republic of Cameroun in November 1983, declared that the word "United" was misleading people to believe that two states had been united. That, according to them, there was only a Republic of Cameroun, and Ambazonia has been part of it even before the Fouban Accord. What falsehood!

In other words, the Fouban Accord meant to the leaders of Republic of Cameroun-a process of annexation of Southern Cameroons, where as to the leaders of Southern Cameroons it was a process of co-existence between two countries in a Confederation. In legal terms, there was therefore no consensus ad idem between Southern Cameroons and Republic of Cameroun leaders.

But this Confederation concept is what the UN accepts. That is why the Fouban Accord is named in the UN records as: **INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION!**

ABSENCE OF TRUE REPRESENTATION

In a radio interview, soon after Ahidjo resigned, Pa Muna, the Speaker of the Cameroun National Assembly was asked why he had not been candid to Ahidjo about the Anglophone feelings, he Pa Muna replied, "Did you want me to sign my own death warrant?" This coming from the number 2 man of the country, and number 1 constitutional leader of the Ambazonians, proves that conspiratory hypocrisies have been the characteristic of the handpicked Anglophone representatives. In a word the truth about Ambazonia has had no conduit or channel to the leaders of the Republic of Cameroun.

Had there been that remorseless candor which is expected of representatives, the Ambazonian feelings would never have been allowed to reach the present dimensions of revolt. But in fairness to Pa Muna, the brutal treatment I am receiving by being arrested and detained for speaking the truth confirms his fears. But the truth would either come out of a human mouth like mine, or out of the barrel of the gun.

ETHNOCENTRIC AND SPOILATIVE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

The system of government established by Ahidjo is still in practice despite the proclamation of New Deal. Participation in power and institutions is based on personal relationship and tribe rather than on merit.

Consequently an Ambazonian no matter how qualified must fall in value below his Francophone counterpart. He must fall below the Francophone whose quality may even be far below that of the Anglophone.

Kept strictly within the peripheries of power and national endeavours -the Anglophone Youth finds his future so bleak and frustrating that he is forced to seek a violent redress

to it. The US produces more Ambazonian graduates a year than the University of Yaounde. Let alone Nigerian Universities, which put out about three times this number per year.

When these intellectuals cannot get employed in their own country because of a system that condemns them to a status of strangers in their own home, a case is made out justifying the ill-feelings against the system. The unfortunate thing about this spoiliative and ethnocentric system of government is that it is even shamelessly justified as "TRIBALISM ECLARE, DEVELOPPEMENT-AUTO-CENTRE"-(Enlightened Tribalism, Auto-Centered Development).

IMMEDIATE CAUSES

While the above long-standing grievances were biting into the Ambazonian mind, the following immediate causes have brought the revolt into near physical manifestation.

a) Humiliating Provocation:

The fact is that the average francophone in his heart of hearts does not really accept the Southern Cameroons as part of Cameroon, nor the Anglophone as a Cameroonian -- these records with Article 1 (a) of the Foumban Accord. Consequently, the Francophone prefers to call the Southern Cameroons "Les Anglo-foul," Les Biafrains, Les assimilés, "Les outre-moungos," "Les étrangers." The name Cameroon must be qualified before it can apply to Ambazonia.

The questions: "*Est-ce que c'est nous qui vous avons invite?*" meaning "Did we invite you?"

C'est vous meme qui etes venus nous jiondre. Vous n'avais qu'a supporter tout!" "You yourselves came and joined us. You just have to endure it!" tells the mind of the Francophone.

Such humiliating provocation is quite revolting. For no human being, let alone persons infused with a sense of British freedom can accept that unity implied a surprise submission to arrogance and contempt from people whom Ambazonians thought were fellow African Brothers.

It was therefore natural that the more impatient Ambazonians would look for ways of ending this humiliation. For some, the answer lies in total severance of Ambazonia from Republic of Cameroon with no talks of any new association. For others the answer is for a Confederation in which the mutual sovereign equality of the component parts would be fully protected from the Ahidjo style of one man coup.

Those who are abroad accusing every Ambazonian of conspiratory treachery for collaborating with the regime of Cameroun must be from this first category. And the training of Ambazonians for a liberation war against Cameroun would therefore be of that category of those want no links again with the annexationists.

SECESSION OF REPUBLIC OF CAMEROUN

Every country that runs into a minority problem always runs into a separatist movement, if the minority problem is badly handled. The Ambazonian grievances therefore were a domestic minority problem as long as there was this legal fiction that the two countries were in "UNITED" Cameroon. **But the Cameroun Restoration Law effaced this legal fiction on 4/2/84.** This law formerly legalizes the breakup of the links, and formalized the secession of **East Cameroon** and its restoration as **La Republique du Cameroun**.

The right of that Republic of Cameroon to rule territory, which falls entirely outside the internationally recognized boundaries of the Republic of Cameroun becomes an international issue. It is a violation of international law-a breach to international peace and security.

There is no internationally accepted reason for Republic of Cameroun ruling Ambazonia. It is **annexation and colonialism**. So Republic of Cameroun has in effect declared itself the metro-pole, and degraded Ambazonia into a dependency or province of the metro-pole. Hence the name "Cameroun outre Moungo".

a) This Restoration Law gives legislative legitimacy to the humiliating names, which Francophones call Ambazonians- "Les assimilee," les outre-moungos, les Biafrains, les etrangers, les anglo-fools.

b) It elevates the Ambazonian struggle from the realm of a domestic problem of minority into the international case of a people struggling to liberate their country from the colonialism of the Republic of Cameroun.

Colonial status is too revolting to be acquiesced in by a people who had attained a sophisticated system of Parliamentary Democracy. It has the effect of swinging the feelings of the majority of right thinking ordinary Ambazonians behind a liberation cause and a liberation leadership.

Finally it gives legal justification to external help for the liberation and decolonization of Ambazonia. For, to both annexation and colonialism the UN says NO, the OAU says NO, our neighbours-Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo, RCA, Tchad, Libya, Nigeria each say NO! NO! NO! to colonialism. No country can accept annexation.

DIMENSIONS OF A DECOLONIZATION WAR

As I see it, the following forces would be willing allies of the separatist.

a) Northern Cameroun Secession:

The francophone North had wanted to secede in 1957/58. It was the clever trick of the Southern francophone politicians forming a national alliance with Ahidjo as leader of the alliance, which stopped Ahidjo breaking the Northern French Cameroon off. So the price paid for keeping French Cameroon united was to have a Northern Ruler. Now not only have they, the North lost that ruling position, but recent events, the witch hunting and detention of Northern elites, have totally estranged the average Northerner. It is therefore not beyond the realm of probability that Northern elements within and without the Republic of Cameroun would exploit an Ambazonian decolonization war to realize their own secession.

b) Northern Revenge:

Innocent Northerners were rounded up and killed or imprisoned for no other reason than on suspicion of being sympathetic with the abortive coup of April 1984. Ahidjo, like Shylock of "Merchant of Venice" is spoiling for a chance to get his pound of flesh from nearest Paul Biya's heart. The Northern families suffer the loss of their bread winners. The Northerner would not be expected to fight to defend Yaounde if Ambazonians, the only friends of the Northerners attack Yaounde, Cameroon. It is therefore quite conceivable that the Northerner would morally and materially support an Ambazonian war against Yaounde, so as to also precipitate a secession of the North, and revenge for the death and treatment of Northerners by Yaounde.

c) International Liberationists:

An Ambazonian decolonization war would be bound to enlist the aid of those external groups and foreign countries who hold it as an article of faith that to aid "peoples liberation wars" is their binding duty.

d) Anti-Biya:

There are persons within and without Republic of Cameroon who must be anti-Paul Biya. Such elements would not hesitate to help any cause, which they see as likely to undo him.

e) Vital National Interest of Neighbouring States:

An Ambazonian decolonization war is bound to have repercussions on neighbouring countries. It is therefore conceivable that for the purpose of protecting its vital national interest a neighbouring country would intervene to bring the fighting to a quick end. This was what prompted India to aid the secession and creation of Bangladesh out of East Pakistan.

I repeat-what I stated in *The New Social Order*, that there is a course, which the Nigerians, and the fact that the people now ruling are a group of no-nonsense men, are taking to reconstruct their economy. They would not sit idly by and watch a senseless war provoked by annexationists Yaounde, when the consequences of this war would adversely affect Nigeria's reconstruction efforts. Nigeria is engaged in the decolonization of Southern Africa. It cannot ignore colonialism next door.

My accusers say I am a friend of Nigeria and my statement is an invitation to Nigeria to wage war against the Republic of Cameroun. To this I say NO! My statement is a prognosis based on a study of the attitude of the Nigeria of today and its present priorities. What Nigerian leaders would like seeing hundreds of thousands of Ambazonians and settler Nigerian population flood Nigeria, because Yaounde wants to be a colonial power in the 21st Century?

CHANCES OF SURVIVAL OF REPUBLIC OF CAMEROUN

Against the foregoing conjuncture of forces we have a Republic Regime invalidated by its own laws are tempting Cameroun.

a) Its leaders by their own badly drafted laws

(i) 83/11 of 21/7/83,

(ii) 84/001 of 4/2/84 have put an end to their own mandates and so lost all legal authority to govern even Cameroun.

b) Its armed forces would be morally split between loyalty to Ambazonians and/or to the Republic of Cameroun.

c) Even what would be left of the Army of the Republic of Cameroun would be further split if Northern Cameroun secessionist offensive is launched to exploit the Ambazonian decolonization war.

It is clear that out of any violent encounter between the Republic of Ambazonia and the Republic of Cameroun, the chances of the Republic of Cameroun further disintegrating are not an inconceivable probability. It is therefore suicidal for Yaounde to try using

force to counter the Ambazonian Revolt. The Republic of Cameroon would certainly not survive such a violent encounter.

SOLUTION

In the light of the foregoing analysis we are condemned to a peaceful solution, and that must come out now before it is too late. Having agreed that we are condemned to a non-violent solution, the choice is with those who are effectively in power. **If reassertion of the identity of the Republic of Cameroon was an act consistent with policies of self-preservation which is characteristic of every state, the question then is: Why does the leadership of Republic of Cameroon believe that the State of Southern Cameroons (Ambazonia) has lost this same urge of self-preservation?**

It is generally known that the average francophone is totally impatient with this unification with Southern Cameroons, which has introduced an imponderable element in his mental direction of national development.

Because this unification has been in fact facultative, it is clear that if the Francophones had been asked to vote for or against unification, the majority would have voted against it. The rivalry that has ensued between Ambazonia and Republic of Cameroon over a share of the national cake has clearly justified the Francophone objection to the injection of Ambazonia into their national process. The logic of secession dictates that the Republic of Cameroon should quietly withdraw its administrative machinery from Ambazonia.

But if on the other hand the reassertion of Republic of Cameroon was not intended to mean secession (even though it indeed does mean secession) then all we need to do is to move immediately to undo what is now the unintended consequence of unscientific legislation by Yaounde.

ANY NATIONAL INTEGRATION BETWEEN PEOPLES IS A NATURAL EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS, WHICH PRECEDES OUT OF HARMONIOUS CO-EXISTENCE OF DIFFERENT UNITS WITH MUTUAL RESPECT OF EACH OTHER. The very fact of the word integration presupposes that several units exist whose integration is desired. Force has never integrated any units. It has always produced frictions.

If we can learn from recent experience, between Southern Cameroons and Nigeria, we will see that the moment Southern Cameroons or Ambazonia secured her identity, and seceded from Nigeria, there has been more harmonious interaction between Nigerians and Southern Cameroons than while Southern Cameroons was in Nigeria.

So a solution to the Ambazonia Revolt is to acknowledge that these are two distinct countries and that any integration between them must be evolutionary and not revolutionary.

CONFEDERATION

A scientific approach to unification imposes on Ambazonia and Republic of Cameroun a Confederation. The advantage in this is that the Ambazonia would enjoy its sovereignty, which is identical to, if not greater than what she was as Southern Cameroons within the Federation of Nigeria. This will stop the separatist seeking total severance between Yaounde and Buea.

Anything that gives Ambazonia a subservient status will not assuage the present revolt and will play into the hands of the separatists.