

## **Declaration by the Anglophone Congress assembled at Buea on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 1993**

*-Note: This is a retranslation from French to English of a document which was originally in written English. All errors in translation are completely mine-*

Source: <http://www.politique-africaine.com/numeros/pdf/051139.pdf> (Frechh)

**In the name of God almighty from who comes all life, wisdom, power, glory and protection:**

**W**e, the people of Anglophone Cameroon, from whom a representation of more than five thousand delegates coming from a total thirteen regions which make our territory (Boyo, Bui, Donga-Mantung, Fako, Kupe-Manenguba, Liebialem, Manyu, Meme, Menchum, Mezam, Momo, Ndian, Ngokitunjia), as well as entire Cameroon, having in its midst experienced politicians and old traditional leaders, spiritual and religious chiefs, leaders of political parties, deputies and members of the Economic and Social Council, peasants, workers, students and elites of all professions, are assembled in Anglophone congress, at the Mount Mary maternity center in the historic town of Buea, this second and third day of the month of April 1993, with an aim of adopting a joint position of all Anglophones with regards to the national debate on constitutional reform which will soon open, as well as to examine other subjects which relate to our wellbeing and that of our descendants, our territory and the entire nation of Cameroon.

**Solemnly assert the declarations contained herein, and justify it by the following arguments:**

In our time, no group of people having freely chosen to join a political union should be treated as prisoners. When in 1961 the people of Southern Cameroons (1) decided, by referendum under control of UNO, to form a political union with the citizens of the Republic of Cameroun (2) whom we regarded as brothers and compatriots, they did so, thanks to God, freely, without contest or the participation of the people of the Republic of Cameroun. They aspired to found a single federation on the African continent and to develop to develop a society in which cultural duality inherited by both parts could blossom. We believed that it was possible to achieve such an ambitious goal. However, our experience of the Union during these thirty-two years leaves us no doubt: our people are now confronted with a problem.

Our problem, which, by its intolerant and hypocritical behavior, our brothers would like to uproot, comes owing to the fact that the Francophone leaders betrayed our confidence and that there is no transparency in public affairs. Over these thirty-two years, our union Agreement was violated. They deprived us of electoral rights, marginalized ; treated with suspicion; no taking into account of our interests; confined to nonessential functions our participation in the life of the nation; shamelessly plundered our natural resources, without no benefit to our territory or for its citizens. The development of this latter was negligible and was limited only to areas which, directly or indirectly, benefited the Francophone people. With the continuation of maneuvers and manipulations, we have gone from the status of equal partners to that of people under the yoke.

The vision of the world, values and aspirations common to our people and those of our Francophone partners are different and cannot obviously be based within the framework of a unitary State such as the one imposed on us in 1972. By nature, we are peaceful, patient and tolerant; in fact we have shown these qualities since we entered into the Union. Our Francophone

brothers believe they can get rid of opponents with brutality, torture and assassination. They raped our daughters and our wives and responded with grenades to peaceful demonstrations. This cruelty is alien to us and seems to us to lack the elementary principles of any civilized democratic society.

We subscribe fully to the comments of Voltaire: “*I completely disapprove what you say, but I will defend until death your right to say it*”. Our concept of the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press brings us to believe in the virtues of open discussion of problems which concern the life of the nation. Our Francophone brothers suppress the freedom of expression and censure the press. Government of the majority and minority rights, this democratic principle is at the foundation of our conviction that minorities have rights and freedoms. The Francophone regimes which followed one another in this country continued a policy of assimilation which aimed to erase our identity, so that our ideal of cultural duality became an illusory and unattainable objective. It will remain so unless and as long as we have not designed a framework better suited for the expression of this aspiration.

In Buea today, we make a decision of importance and, for the benefit of those who, later, could question the integrity of our intentions, we consign, for memory, the following facts:

### **The agreement before the referendum**

As in the United Nations document entitled *The Two options*, which was widely distributed on the eve of the referendum to explain to the citizens the implications of their choice, as well as in the Joint Declaration made by Prime Minister J.N. Foncha and President Ahmadou Ahidjo, attached herein, it was clearly explained to the people of Anglophone Cameroon that, if they would choose the second option, there would be, at independence, the formation of a federation of two States of equal status.

It was clear that the majority in one of the States could not impose its will or its interests on the other State. This was not doubted in the least in 1972. Not only has the Francophone majority indeed imposed its will on the Anglophone minority and has done so, by deceptive schemes, but still, it has put an end to the equality of statute between the two founding members of Cameroon.

### **Cameroon constitution**

The union between Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroun developed over the course of the last thirty-two years with no constitutional basis; with no process for negotiation of the terms of the reunification being completed, with no meeting of a constituent federal assembly, with no project for writing a federal constitution. In the absence of any representation of Southern Cameroons, the National Assembly of the Republic of Cameroun adopted, on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1960, proposals for an amendment to its own constitution. This one, once amended, was promulgated as the constitution of the Federal Republic of Cameroun by **Mr.** Ahmadou Ahidjo, president of the Republic of Cameroun on September 1<sup>st</sup> 1961, one month before the reunification was to take effect. Insofar as the legislation of one of the components of a future federation could not validly pass for the legislation of one of the components of a future federation, the alleged federal constitution of September 1<sup>st</sup> 1961 is, in fact, null and void *ab initio*. Therefore, there never was a basis, either constitutional or legal, legally binding for the reunification of both Cameroons, nor for a common government for these two territories.

Without prejudging the fact that the so-called federal constitution of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1961 is clearly without value, it is worth noting that its article 47 stipulated that it could be amended only by a law adopted by the federal Parliament; it granted, moreover, to a majority of the deputies

representing each of the two States, a right to veto in opposition to any bill aiming at such an amendment. It indicated also, unambiguously, that no private bill could be proposed which with to tamper with the unity and with the integrity of the Federation. In addition, it established a specific process for amendments. In addition, passing over to, president Ahidjo chooses, to put an end to the Federation, to organize a referendum in which the Francophones took part. The alleged “quiet revolution” of 1972 was actually a ruse employed by the Francophones so that their crushing majority in the Parliament would serve them in modifying the bases of a reunification for which the Anglophones and they ALONE had voted for. The referendum of 1972 were therefore illegal insofar as it did not respect the provisions relative to the amendments, such as the constitution had established, and insofar as its objective were not only to undermine the integrity and the unity of the Federation, but quite simply to abolish it. The anti-constitutional character of the referendum of May 20, 1972 harkens back on and discredits all the legislative actions which followed from it and in particular the constitution of June 2, 1972 and the subsequent amendments. It is now necessary to establish the constitutional bases and the legal framework for the union between the Republic of Cameroun and Southern Cameroons.

### **Plundering and Ransacking of our economy**

By imposing this form of unitary, anticonstitutional and illegal government, it was not only sought to dismantle the institutions of the Anglophone State (the legislature, the executive, the judiciary, the police force, etc) but also to plunder and ransack our economy:

- The successive Francophone governments could not have enough of benefiting from our natural resources, in particular from oil and wood;
- they destroyed the effective system that Anglophone Cameroon had set up before independence, in order to finance small and medium-sized companies by the means of organizations such as West Cameroon Development Agency or Cameroon Bank. They killed the banking structure;
- they plundered West Cameroon Marketing Board which Anglophone Cameroon had created before independence and appropriated for themselves in all impunity, the massive reserves, estimated at more than 78 billion francs(USD\$164Million);
- They closed the Electric Company of Western Cameroon (POWERCAM) and with it our supply source of cheap hydro-electric energy at Yoke and forced us to be supplied from their sources. In a monopoly position and pursuit of maximum profit, they made us pay the full price. They completely destroyed our hydro-electric installations instead of keeping them as emergency energy and got their hands on the assests of POWERCAM;
- They managed to pressure Anglophone companies and to keep the exclusive control of the businesses finance; they set the terms and the conditions of credit and control the access to the financial organizations, public as well as private. Consequently, renowned Anglophone companies, like Fomenky's Direct Suppliers, Niba Automobile, Nangah Compagny, Kilo Bros and Che Company; for lack of loans, disappeared;
- They closed our agro-industrial establishments like Santa Coffee Estate and later Wum Area Development Authority and the Obang Farm Settlement;
- They closed our ports and our airports. The current airport in Bamenda, poorly maintained, with its unfinished buildings and its inadequate equipment, could not compensate for the loss of our airports, Tiko international airport for one, those at Besongabang and Bali, the landing strip at Weh, the seaport of Victoria, the internal port of Mamfe or that marvelous one at Ndian. They closed Cameroon Air Transport (CAT), an airline company which wholly belonged to us. Respectful of the laws, the victims of these fixed prices remained impotent for lack of the existence of a legal framework to which to turn for redress;
- They dispossessed us outright from oversight of town planning and on the upholding of the high standards of public health which prevailed in our cities. They destroyed the system of local government and communal institutions which we had instituted in Anglophone Cameroon.

Today, our big cities (Mamfe, Kumba, Tiko, Nkambe, Wum, Victoria, etc), which once thrived with commercial activity, are reduced to ghost towns. However, no Francophone city faced a similar assault: they are in full expansion.

### **Road infrastructures**

The government of Anglophone Cameroon had as its policy to maintain practicable roads in all seasons. To this effect, it tarred particularly difficult segments like those of Supe and Sabga Hills, as well as the streets of the principal cities of each administrative division. The Francophone governments did not keep up these practices, and worse still, they demolished what we had done. Under the pretext of restructuring them (tarring roads was former to reunification), they destroyed them, tearing up the asphalt and leaving them EM the state, such as for example the Kumba-Mbonge or Kumba-Tombell roads. So that now, during the rainy season, the streets of Kumba, the economic capital of the South-west province, are covered only with mud, while, during the dry season, those of Nkambe and Kumbo, in the North-West, are covered by a coating of dust 30 cm thick. In thirty-two years of independence, the government has not increased the network which existed in Anglophone Cameroon before reunification.

The few kilometers which connect the Mungo Bridge to Tiko, Victoria to Idenau and Santa to Bamenda were built, in large measure, to serve the economic and commercial interests of the Francophones and for facilitating access to the facilities which Francophones exploit and direct for the greatest benefit of the Francophones. Ndian, whose offshore oilrigs produce the nation's oil, is deprived of roads. On two occasions, we attended grand ceremonies marking, in large pomp, the opening of a construction site on the Kumba-Mamfe road; as of today, this road is still not built; president Ahidjo never inaugurated a construction site on an untarred section. He did so for the first and the last time in Mamfe. More recently, it is Mr. Paul Biya who announced that he would *personally* follow-up the construction of the ring road in the North-West province: to date, we have seen no sign that work would begin.

The state of abandonment to which the roadways of Anglophone Cameroon have been left has had disastrous social and economic consequences for our people and for Wum and Nkambe through Kumba, Mamfe and Bamenda. Applying their policy of deliberate control of our people, our Francophone brothers have not ensured their maintenance; they have, on the spot, developed the Douala-Bafoussam connection so as to compel us to pass through their territory, to get from Bamenda to Buea or Victoria.

### **Road Blocks**

Francophones seem to find normal and acceptable the hundreds of roadblocks by police, gendarmerie or customs camping out on our roads. They make this country unfamiliar in the eyes of Anglophones. Between Bamenda and Victoria, there are approximately 35 checkpoints. This unnecessary obstacle to the free of goods and the people is not of no value because it is rare that road infractions go to court. What, in the beginning, undoubtedly was in response to a laudable purpose has been reduced to a system of tolls manned by the police force with the tacit accord of government.

### **Divide and Conquer**

We obtained independence and formed a union with the Republic of Cameroun as a single entity. The Francophone government divided our territory into the North-West and South-west Provinces, without, as a preliminary, consulting us. It now intends to take it to another level: the fusion of these two provinces, with, respectively, its Western Province and its Littoral Province, under the pretext of making them bilingual areas. These operations are in fact aimed at cultural

assimilation and the disappearance of Anglophone Cameroon, because they hope that this forced standardization would end up making Anglophone identity disappear and would in the long run ensure the control of our natural resources, to the benefit of France. This Machiavellian arrangement is scheming and unacceptable, the more so as its implementation can be made only if they encourage quarrels between the North-West and the South-West with the complicity of some egoistic Anglophones seeking to protect their interests.

### **Marginalization of Anglophones**

From the beginning of the Federation, Anglophones were confined to the role of a foil of their Francophone compatriots; starting with the first Prime Minister of West Cameroon which, by accepting the charge of vice-president of the federal Republic, inaugurated the general model of the role reserved since then for the Anglophone. They have been especially kept in subordinate positions, where they assist Francophones, even when the latter are less competent or unqualified.

During the 32 years which have passed since reunification, there has never been an Anglophone at the head of ministries like those of Interior, the Armed Forces, Education, Finance, Trade and Industry, Foreign Affairs, etc Whenever the Prime Minister is Francophone, there is no Secretary General at the presidency nor an assistant Prime Minister. He wields real power and authority. On the other hand, when the post goes to an Anglophone, he finds himself caught between a Secretary General at the presidency and another at the Prime Minister's cabinet. At the same time, not one, but two assistant Prime Ministers, who hold a great power, are imposed on him. In Foreign Affairs, one seldom names an Anglophone ambassador in London, Washington, New York, Lagos or Paris, these key posts are the exclusive turf of Francophones.

At the ministry for the Interior, the trend quickly escalates towards naming only Francophones to Anglophone Cameroon, in positions of authority such as governor, regional administrative director or area commander.

### **Human rights Violation**

Arbitrary detentions, imprisonments, unwarranted searches, seizures, torture by the brutal agents of the CENER which practices *la balancoire* (3), harassments by coarse gendarmes: these are some of the intolerable aspects of Cameroonian reality. Among the hundreds of cases of human rights violation perpetrated under a Francophone government, we can quote, inter alia atrocities committed these last weeks, the following facts: on November 1992, Che Ngwa Ghandi, a young manager at a company, was tortured and beaten to death by agents of the CENER and officers of the gendarmerie. On Thursday March 25, 1993, gendarmes fired with automatic weapons on a group of people who peacefully marched in Bamenda, causing three deaths and twenty wounded among the demonstrators. During a peaceful march, March 18 and 25, 1993, 46 Anglophone Cameroonians are arrested, beaten, tortured and imprisoned in Victoria. Two of the victims, both women, were admitted into hospital, suffering serious wounds.

### **Civil Liberties and Judicial procedure**

Before reunification, we were able to enjoy our civil and individual liberties which were guaranteed. No one could be arrested and thrown in prison without any charges. There was no known case of unwarranted searches in private residences. The police force did not carry arms everywhere. We knew nothing about nocturnal operations called *Kalé-Kalé*. Opponents to reunification had nonetheless warned us: these forms of repression were already in practice in the Republic of Cameroun. 32 years later, Anglophones regret not having paid attention to these warnings. In a true democracy, all the men are supposed to be equal before the law, and everyone is confident that justice will be served when the law has been mocked. In the Cameroun governed

by Francophones, the interference of the executive power in the procedure and the application of the court decisions are common currency. Judges are only reduced to agents of the Justice ministry, while the courts became services and departments attached to it. Among the thousands of examples of the contempt in which the executive holds the judiciary, this is one of the most dramatic and informing cases: on Monday December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1992, in its ruling N° HCB (CRM) 92, the Bamenda tribunal Court ordered the release of 173 people, who were held and tortured at the High Security Detention Facility (BMM). Overruling the decision of the court, the government arbitrarily decided that its ruling would 'not be applied'. On December 27, the prisoners were transferred to Yaoundé, under inhumane and degrading transport conditions, so that they would be judged there by a Francophone court. Such practices of interference and of meddling are unheard of to the rest of us Anglophones.

### **Discrimination in Education & Training**

Systematic discrimination is practiced against Anglophone student present themselves at the large trade schools and other institutes of higher education; as well as ENAM (National School of Administration and Magistracy), where the Anglophone section was eliminated as well as at ENS (Higher Teacher's Training College). Anglophone have been virtually barred, as early as the beginning, from institutions like *Ecole National Polytechnique* (4), *Institut international des assurances*, *Ecole des géomètres*, *l'Ecole de commerce et d'administration in Douala*, etc. there is little or no continuity between the education that Anglophone students receive in the primary and secondary schools and what is offered in our national schools higher education, all entire dominated by Francophones and with a French orientation. Large numbers of young Anglophones are therefore forced to go abroad, at the price of considerable financial sacrifice for themselves and their families, in order to pursue further studies quality, in line with their basic knowledge. When they come back to Cameroon, their diplomas and professional qualifications obtained abroad are subjected to evaluation and to a system of equivalencies, before all job applications are taken into consideration. The sometimes have to wait five years for this "equivalence" to be established. There are, at this moment, some 700 dossiers of Anglophone officials languishing at the public affairs ministry; some, seven years old, awaiting an eventual "reclassification" of the persons concerned. After so many years of disinterest, there no longer exists, a quality secondary technical education for Anglophones in Cameroon. What a contrast with the commercial and technical knowledge provided during the Federation, by famous establishments like the first-rate government technical Institute at Ombe!

### **Dominant and Overriding Position of Francophones on society**

Among the numerous examples will cite the following:

- According to the official classification, the university of Buea is "Anglo-Saxon". It is located in "Anglophone" territory, directed by Anglophones; this is an educational institution destined, principally, to Anglophones. Nevertheless, above and beyond all of that, the high ranking officials in Buea and Yaoundé have, arrogantly, given orders to the management of the university to forbidding them from welcoming the present Anglophone Congress. So that we are reduced to being beggars in our country, this clearly confirms that we have become an enslaved people; - after the reunification, all the movies in Victoria, Buea, Kumba, Bamenda, and of other Anglophone cities, were forced to only show French movies. When there is a soccer game in France, the whole of Cameroon is taken in hostage by CRTV (Cameroon National Radio Television), since the game is broadcast, and sometimes, live, on all the channels. CRTV has a completely different attitude when it comes to matches or others athletic events involving English teams

- The films and television programs, originally produced, in English, are only shown in Cameroon after they have been doubled in French, and only the French version is broadcast;.
- On radio as with television, programming slots are unequally allocated for programs in French and in English, while it does not require more time to inform, instruct or entertain in French than in English. In the final analysis, Anglophone who also equally finance Cameroonian Radio Television, find themselves allotted less than one quarter of the production from this public service;
- While all the petroleum resources of Cameroon are currently situated in the Anglophone region, the public enterprises of this sector (SHN, SONARA, SCDP, HYDRAC, etc.) employ a Francophone majority in their personnel;
- Although all the exploration, and processing of oil take place on Anglophone territory, oil revenue is paid directly to the state, in Yaoundé;
- It is a Francophone who showed up in Victoria to buy-up the assets of the national institute of commerce and development when it ceased its activities. It was a Francophone who arrived at Buea with an offer to purchase all the housing in the civil servants quarters. A francophone, again, for the government printing press, and a French man, at last, was appointed to Ndian, to put PAMOL into liquidation. For more than four years now, he's exploited the plantations to his personal benefit and to the benefit of his associates.
- Although bilingualism is an official policy, and despite the fact that the English is a language widely used around the world, and that it has great currency at the international level, in Cameroon, it is treated as a marginal language. Laws and official documents are almost exclusively written in French;
- The independence of the judiciary was beaten in gap under the different Francophone governments;
- With a widespread disdain for the special role that traditional authority played in the management of the public matters, a Francophone government arbitrarily decided on the abolition of the assembly of notable in Western Cameroon;
- We have had to suffer from the consequences of the association of the economy and the public finances of Cameroon to that of France, without drawing any of the corresponding benefits. In thirty-two years, there have hardly been development projects, businesses or investments of any social or economic importance, created in Anglophone Cameroon from sources of French financing;
- -We must be the only example in the world with a system of laws without legislation. There has had successively been conditions, provident clauses for the maintenance of a body of laws in force in western Cameroon before the advent of the union, but, since the abolition of the Federal Government of western Cameroon and of its legislative bodies , there no longer exists an institutional framework permitting amendment or reform of this body of laws. The Francophones, who, since 1972, have directed the legislative process, never worry about taking the measures necessary to assure their accordance with the modern times and with the aspirations of Cameroonian Anglophones, in the areas that are affected and governed by these laws.

### **International isolation of Anglophone Cameroon**

In the common parlance of Cameroonian diplomacy, the Gabonese people, the peoples of the Central African Republic, Chadians and Congolese are "our brothers". Each of these peoples is our neighbor and our "brother" to ALL. On the matter of Nigeria and Nigerians, however, the diplomatic lingo changes. Cameroonian Francophones hold this country responsible of almost all that happens in Cameroon. Consequently, the Mamfe-Ekok road,

one of the most used roads in the entire country, is also, the one of the less maintained, since it leads to Nigeria. It is Anglophone Cameroon which detached itself from Nigeria to form the Cameroon Federation; if, therefore, there was an any reason to feel animosity towards Nigeria or Nigerians, it would only be so, in common sense, that fault of Anglophone Cameroonians. Francophones forget that, just as the feeling of “brotherhood” which they hold towards the Gabonese and Chadians, is reinforced by their common Francophone heritage, similarly, Anglophone Cameroonians have a feeling of “fraternity” for Nigerians as a result of their common Anglophone heritage.

In reality, the attitude which Francophones have with regards to Nigeria is only one of the incarnations of a more general phenomenon, which is, the isolation of Anglophone Cameroon from the international scene. It is within this same design that one should attribute the little attention that the Francophone government puts towards fulfilling the conditions necessary for Cameroon’s entry into the Commonwealth, while its has been longstanding member of the Francophonie (5).

We bear in mind that before our territory arrived at independence in 1961, we lived in a parliamentary democracy in a pluralist society far more advanced than that which prevails these days in Cameroon, three decades later. For us, democracy was a way of life, at the same time an ideal towards which to strive. We were not saints, or angels, not by a long shot, but we believed then, as believe now that, when a government shows evidence of abuse, of intolerance and becomes repressive, the people has the democratic right to overturn it and to elect another. We have not come to that, in the Southern Cameroons, because of the relative integrity of our government from before and the effectiveness of our public accountability system. As we remember, the first government, directed by the Dr E. M. I. Endeley, of blessed memory, organized a general election which he lost to the benefit of the quite young opposition. In keeping with Anglophone democratic traditions, Dr Endeley conceded his defeat and transfer of power occurred in serenity.

At this point in the history of our Union, which is, exactly thirty-two years, one month and twenty-three days after our people voted in favor of the Federation with the Republic of Cameroun:

- Although the people of the Southern Cameroons, and they alone, did, in 1961, freely pronounce by referendum that independence should result in a union with the Republic of Cameroun, under the form of a decentralized Federal arrangement;
- Although the provisions of article 47 of the constitution guarantees the unity of the federal Republic of Cameroon, while prohibiting all amendment which would aim to offend the unity of the said Federation
- Although, by the unconstitutional referendum of May 20<sup>th</sup> 1972, a majority of the population of the Republic of Cameroon imposed a unitary State on Anglophone Cameroon, in contravention of article 47. But also in violation of the agreement jointly signed before any consultation by the Prime Minister John Ngu Foncha, for the Southern Cameroons and by the President Ahmadou Ahidjo, for the Republic of Cameroon, contained within “The two options”, which agreement stipulated that neither one of the two States would be allowed to impose its will or its interests on the other;
- Although, since May 1972, we have patiently endured injustices, frustrations and indignities, for which we have demanded reparations;
- Although, repeatedly, our numerous request and petitions for justice were cynically rejected, without serious examination, by the different Francophone governments;
- Although our territory, its natural resources, our environment and our cultural heritage are threatened with eminent destruction;

- Although, in our relations with the Republic of Cameroon, its government demonstrated, many and many occasions, bad faith, disloyalty, reluctance towards keeping promises and of propensity for malignancy, for corruption and for manipulation;
- But, nevertheless concerned with distinguishing from these political leaders the good people of the Republic of Cameroon, who desire, even still, to preserve a certain union with the people of Anglophone Cameroon
- In spite of it being expedient that such a union, if she must develop, prosper and continue, should be built on solid foundations and progress in an of atmosphere transparency, confidence and mutual respect, in which each recognizes itself;
- And in order to attain these objectives by establishing solid foundations for the union of the two constituent entities of the current Cameroon, we therefore solemnly declare the following:
  1. The imposition of a unitary State in Cameroon in 1972, was illegal, unlawful and unconstitutional,
  2. The only fitting way of repairing the wrongs inflicted on Anglophone Cameroon is the pure and simple return to the original form of reunified Cameroon government,
  3. To this effect, all Cameroonians of Anglophone culture are committing themselves towards the restoration the federal constitution and a federal government which takes into account the cultural duality of Cameroon and that protects citizens from violations enumerated above,
  4. It is necessary that all the Cameroonian patriots, Francophones as well as Anglophones, work tirelessly towards attaining this objective which, alone, will allow Cameroon to live in peace and harmony.

We, people of Anglophone Cameroon, convinced of the justice of our cause and confiding that almighty God protects us, are by the present undertaking, the joint pledge to engage our comfort, our careers, our property, our freedom, our lives, to support this declaration and to pursue the goals defined herein.

God blesses Anglophone Cameroon!  
God blesses the Federal Republic of Cameroon!

Done in Buea, this third day of April in the year one thousand nine hundred ninety-three.  
The Anglophone participants of the Congress .

## Mamfe: From crossroads to a Cul-de-Sac

Source:

<http://www.mgm.fr/PUB/Mappemonde/M298/Imageo.pdf>

Our colleagues the historians and geographers of Cameroon have just released the first edition of a new review whose name is loaded with significance, *Héritages des tropiques*, has much to be proud of. From this delivery, primarily historical, I find it quite useful to extract a highly instructive example of spatial impact, as studied by Eric Achankeng, showing the effects of a border change on a small Cameroon town<sup>1</sup>.

Mamfe was created in 1909 by the Germans to manage the west of the country, beyond the mountainous range. This region was handed over to the British after 1918. During the colonial period, Mamfe rapidly grew into a headquarters for services and especially trade, transaction point for conducting articles of trade towards Nigeria through the Cross river, and into the markets of Europe through the port at Calabar: 2,000 inhabitants in 1933, 5,000 in 1953, close to 10,000 in 1963. Its warehouses enjoy the advantage of proximity to Bamileke country, which straddled the border. Being at the periphery of Nigeria, she was well placed for business.

Independence of 1961 overturned everything. The region was integrated into the new, mostly Francophone Cameroon, which had chosen to be in the Franc zone and which quickly signaled its defiance towards its colossal neighbor. Westbound traffic declined, down to a fraction of trade, which included certain trade items. The warehouses in Mamfe closed down, companies left, some of the small traders left. The population even declined over several years. It has picked up since (13,800 in 1987), due to the general demographic growth; but much less than in other places.

Independence and reunification gave a boost to Bamileke country, and especially the small towns which were better placed to trade not with the West, but with the East this time, that is, with Douala and Yaoundé. The Yaounde-Baffoussam-Bamenda triangle became congested; the Douala-Nkongsamba-Bafoussam axis operates at full capacity. In the former West Cameroon, now divided into two provinces, the three towns of Bamenda, Kumba and Buea, once close to the former border, benefited directly. Bamenda became the headquarters of the North-West Province. Kumba overshadowed the Bakossi valley, the middle passage across the western hills. Buea, at the foot of mount Cameroon, is capital of the south-west province and benefits from its proximity to the small seaport at Limbe, or better yet, to Douala.

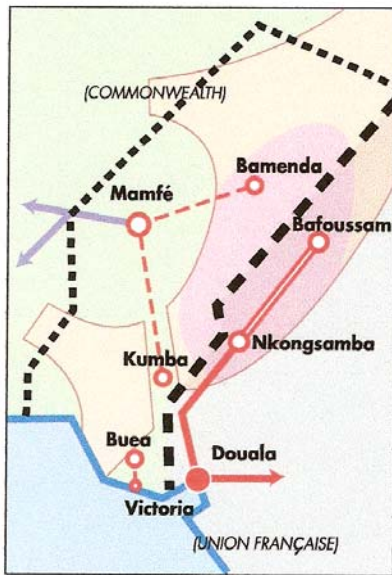
Mamfe finds itself with an outbound river which flows empty, and is poorly linked to the rest of Cameroon. An urbanization plan was prepared for her, but which remained political “window dressing” (E. Achankeng). [Once] the capital of a booming frontier, and a Cameroon’s portal westward, Mamfe became a cul-de-sac, a small town at the periphery of an outpost<sup>2</sup>. Only the economic and social development of the entire western Cameroon will afford it an appreciable baseline of services; it will probably need more time to recover a role as a viable junction with Nigeria. *-Roger Brunet*

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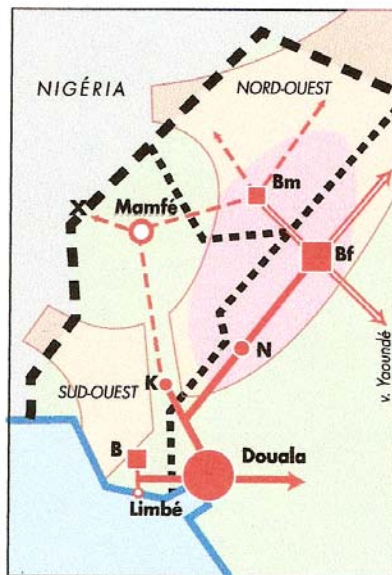
<sup>1</sup> *Héritages des Tropiques*. École Normale Supérieure, Département d’Histoire-Geographie, Université Yaoundé-I, B.P.47, Yaoundé, Cameroun. Fax (237)22.44.34. L’article d’Eric Achankeng est intitulé “Mamfe: a case study of inadequate growth strategies for a Cameroon frontier town” (p.107-130). Les cartes sont de *Mappemonde* (Roger Brunet et Christian Carrié)

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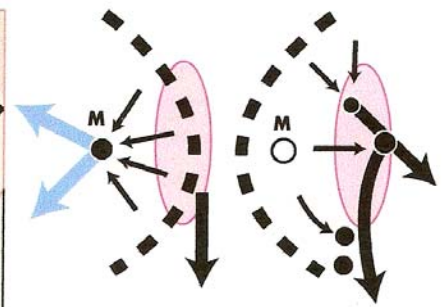
<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, it is highly likely that a brisk smuggling trade thrives in the region, given what we know about Nigeria’s borders. But the author does not tackle this issue.



1918-1961 Ère coloniale



Cameroun indépendant



PRINCIPES D'ORIENTATION DES RÉSEAUX

- Fortes densités du plateau Bamiléké
- Relief
- Étranger
- Frontière
- Trafics et voies selon l'importance
- Villes, id.

**Le changement de position de Mamfé**

