

Supervising Imperialism: Petitions to the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission, 1920-1939

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At the end of World War I the German colonies in Africa were divided among France, Great Britain, and Belgium and placed under their administration as mandates of the League of Nations. Great Britain occupied and was later formally placed in control of part of the former German colony of Togoland, a slice of the Cameroons, and German East Africa.¹ France took the rest of Togo and received most of the Cameroons. Neither power held official sovereignty over these (or any of their other) mandates. Their ability to administer them was limited by Article 22 of the League Covenant, and through the terms of each individual mandate.²

Britain and France, despite their original intention to divide and annex these territories, agreed to allow them to become mandates.³ The Permanent Mandates Commission (PMC) was created as the League's principal instrument for supervising these new creations. However, the role, scope, and authority of the PMC were not well defined. Article 22 envisaged a Mandates Commission with a high degree of influence over the administration and development of the African and Asian territories under its supervision. But despite their inability to annex the mandates outright, the mandatory powers were consistently opposed to any intrusive "meddling," especially in Africa.⁴ Only repeated interaction between the mandatory governments and the PMC over the course of the interwar period established the limits of the latter's authority.

The PMC planned to exert its influence primarily by requiring an annual report from the mandatory powers and questioning their representatives at annual meetings. However, almost immediately after the end of the war the inhabitants of several of the mandates sent appeals and suggestions to the League. At the same time French, British, and other organizations tried to inform and influence the League. As a result, from an early date the mandatory powers and the PMC developed a procedure to regulate these protests. Adapting the League's procedure for handling minority complaints, the PMC decided that all inhabitants of mandated territories could petition it.⁵ These petitions, which included issues or events omitted from the yearly reports, were a potential source of valuable information.⁶ They therefore had the potential to create another supervisory mechanism for the PMC.

This paper examines the implementation of the PMC's procedure on petitions from the French and British mandates in Africa. After briefly laying out the procedure, it examines two petition series, one from the Dualan community of the French Cameroons, and one from American writer M.J. Fortie. Each of these asked for serious alterations in mandate administration, and both were rejected.⁷ The final section presents conclusions regarding how these petitions affected the larger question of the League's influence over imperialism.⁸ There were serious difficulties inherent in reconciling the League's colonial responsibilities with the determination of the mandatory powers to maximize and perpetuate their control over the B mandates. The process of reviewing petitions represents one aspect of the larger, often unequal, relationship between the mandatory powers and the PMC.

Petitions Procedure

Under Article 22, the PMC was responsible for supervising the mandatory powers in their pursuit of the "material and moral well-being of the inhabitants" of the mandates. The nine original members (from the each of the colonial powers, Japan, and Sweden) based their petitions procedure on a 1922 British proposal.⁹ All petitions were to be submitted first to the mandatory power, which would transfer them no more than six months later, after making observations, to the Secretariat of the League.¹⁰ The PMC would return any petition sent directly to Geneva, with instructions that the petitioner must submit it through the mandatory power. The League would act as a gatekeeper by also turning back "petitions clearly of a trivial or purposely vexatious nature."¹¹ Petitions submitted correctly would be held until the next session of the PMC and then be discussed, after which the PMC would decide which (if any) would be communicated to the members of the League and transmitted to the Council for action.

This procedure generally conformed to the British plan, although members objected to the unlimited ability of the mandatory powers to control the petitions process.¹² Their main alteration involved petitions from outside organizations; the PMC would receive these directly, and its chairman would decide whether the commission would examine them.

The procedure limited the number of petitions and shielded the mandatory powers against publicity. By requiring that a petition go through the mandatory government, it maximized the ability of a mandatory power to retain control over the access of petitioners to the PMC. The delay between the submission of a petition and its discussion by the PMC also enabled the mandatory power to resolve a complaint before the League considered

it. In such circumstances, the PMC's ability to use petitions as a source of information was restricted.

The PMC also decided not to encourage petitions, for two reasons. First, most of its members considered themselves dispassionate "experts" without any "executive" power. Second, encouraging petitions would incur the resentment of the mandatory powers. Even if it considered and approved a petition (with the acquiescence of the British, French, and Belgian members), it could only submit the case to the Council, and could take no other action. The PMC procedure thus attempted to strike a balance between the mandatory powers' concern over outside interference and its responsibilities, although in doing so it left little room for African involvement.

The Dualan (1929-38) and Fortie (1932-35) Petitions

Over the course of the interwar mandate period (1920-1939) over fifty petitions were filed concerning the B mandates. Few were sent before 1925. Many more were filed between 1925-1929. By far the most active period for the submission of petitions was between 1930-1939. By the 1930s, many more Africans knew of the petitions procedure, but the main reason for the increase in petition traffic after 1930 was an increase in the volume of petitions from Africans who had petitioned the League before.

The subjects of B mandate petitions ranged considerably. Losers in court cases sometimes attempted to use the PMC as a court of appeal. Some petitions concerned rights to the usage of land or problems with the placement of the borders between the British and French mandates.¹³ With few exceptions, the local mandatory governments usually dealt successfully with such petitions before the PMC considered them. Petitions from settlers usually demanded the end of the mandate or the union of one of the mandates with neighboring colonies.¹⁴ Most, but not all, petitions demanding sweeping political changes or broad critiques of mandatory administration came from Africans.

Most "B" petitioners were African natives, although some white settlers in the mandates submitted petitions occasionally. By a wide margin the French B mandates, French Togo and the French Cameroons, generated the greatest number of B mandate appeals, while petitions from the British mandates were less common.¹⁵ Africans who submitted petitions were overwhelmingly from pre- and post-war elites; literate communities and ruling chiefs, especially in the French mandates, were the most common petitioners. In the case of Togo, these petitioners were very often displaced

groups prominent under German rule but replaced by rulers more loyal to the new French administration. In the French Cameroons, most petitions came from the Duala people of the southwestern coast, a community which had been commercially important before colonial rule, and which had provided educated officials for the German administration. Under the French, they retained some influence despite disputes over land in the town of Duala.¹⁶

Many petitions from the French Cameroons attempted to effect change by attacking the French administration. None reached the Council.¹⁷ Many involved the “Duala lands,” territory expropriated by the Germans and retained by the French administration.¹⁸ The French considered this land state property and consistently declined to return it. One from “Several Chiefs of the Duala” accused the French of enriching a few of their fellow nationals and “abusing the rights of the [indigenous] people.” Subsequent petitions provided details and argued that the Duala were protected by the treaties they had signed with the Germans as far back as 1884.

The Duala used the land dispute as a means of demanding political change. Chief Manga Bell, in September 1930, called the PMC’s attention to the petition filed in late 1929 by a “Grande Assemblée Populaire.”¹⁹ Signed by some fifty people and originally written in German, this seventeen-page document (with dozens of pages of supporting material) was complex, containing a substantial critique of French administration and of colonial administration in general. It asked the League to suppress the mandates system in French Cameroons and proclaim the territory a neutral independent country under the League’s protection.²⁰

The French refuted the petitioners’ right to make this request and denied that conditions in the Cameroons warranted any discontent.²¹ They informed the PMC that the German Reichstag had approved the expropriation in 1912, after which the Duala rejected compensation. Although their right to the land was legally unassailable, the French had offered generous compensation to the Dualan chiefs in order to woo this Germanophilic element.²² The French refused to deal with the points raised by the “Grande Assemblée Populaire” that attacked their administration. Théodore Marchand, the French Commissioner of the Cameroons, called the chiefs pretentious and arrogant and accused them of using the demand for self-determination to control other tribes. He then suggested that a German agent must have written it because the Duala were too lazy and unintelligent to have done so.²³ His comments were reduced to the stock phrase “aucun fait précis n’est signalé par les pétitionnaires” (“the petitioners indicate nothing specific”), and the French

government maintained that the petition “lay so far outside the scope of an acceptable petition that it was hardly worthy of a response.”²⁴

Leopoldo Palacios, rapporteur for the Dualan complaints and Spanish member of the PMC, concurred with the French. He judged the petition of the “Grande Assemblée Populaire” “. . . in the main non-receivable, in that it implies the complete remodeling of the political system and the public administration, and hence of the fundamental bases of the mandate.” He characterized the petition as

a programme for the reorganization of the whole country, and indeed of the whole race, under the authority of the League of Nations and with the cooperation of a number of states, including the United States of America. It would be contrary to all our principles and all our rules of procedure to discuss such demands. . . . [The petition] denounces the cupidity of all the colonial powers, which, enforcing identical systems, will not tolerate the idea of national autonomy among the lower races entrusted with their care.²⁵

The Dualan response was to try to use agents to gain direct access to the PMC. They hired Vincent Ganty, a former African clerk, as the “European Delegate of the Negro Citizens of Cameroons” in Paris to represent it before the French government and file petitions on their behalf.²⁶ Under Ganty’s cover, the Duala began sending petitions to French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand, the French Colonial Ministry, and the PMC. In a series of letters Ganty protested that the Duala who had been part of the “Grande Assemblée Populaire” were being harassed for supporting petitions.²⁷ He wrote that the “Negro Citizens of Cameroons” were attempting to protect legitimate human rights; they loved France, but could not abide the low and brutal local administrators who wanted to keep them in abject poverty and prevent their advancement. Repeating the request of that December petition, he asked for the end of the mandate and the creation of a new regime.

Between May 1931 and March 1933, Ganty sent several more petitions. The most important gave details of an incident in Duala in which several women had been shot by police during mass protests.²⁸ Many were “gravely wounded.”²⁹ According to French reports, the women, part of a group protesting a new poll tax, had been hit accidentally by a blast from a gendarme’s shotgun. Of the nine women hit by the seven-caliber shot, only one was seriously wounded, and she had suffered no ill-effects.³⁰ The

gendarme was only reprimanded for discharging his weapon into a crowd. The French insinuated, without any evidence, that foreigners had inspired the protest.³¹ They then speculated that Ganty was a communist.³²

Ganty made an additional protest against the high mortality rate in the construction of the railroad to the colonial capital at Yaoundé, the French deposition of Dualan kings, the poor food and brutal conditions on the plantations, the meager educational opportunities, the *prestation* [the French labor tax], and “several massacres.”³³ His thirty-page petition reproduced the manifesto of the “Grande Assemblée Populaire.” Complaining of abuses by both the Germans and the French since 1884, it cited unfair legislation, police corruption, public works that did not benefit the community, and the failure of the French to protect public health and eradicate the tsetse fly from the Cameroons. It concluded with a comprehensive proposal for an organic law, the protection of the Cameroons by the League, a draft constitution, and the end of the mandate.³⁴ The French government refuted some of Ganty’s allegations, but more generally complained that the vagueness of his complaints made it difficult to respond in any meaningful way.³⁵ It also insisted that no petition calling for the end of the mandate was admissible.

Several years later, in 1938, after Germany had left the League, another Dualan organization, now under the name of the “Union Camerounaise,” transmitted a similar petition to the PMC. Mandessi Bell, the author, again claimed that the French Cameroons could not advance or achieve the conditions of independence under a B mandate, but was also not interested in a Nazi German administration. He said that “a retrocession [to the Germans] would only be a change in administrative personnel, without being a change in the status of the population.”³⁶ He asked for an A mandate for the French Cameroons, perhaps tacitly acknowledging that independence was not possible through the League. The French called the petition, “manifestly irreceivable,” and the PMC denied the petition without further comment.³⁷

One of the most compelling of all the petitions came from M.J. Fortie, an American author. Fortie had owned a rubber plantation near Tanga before the war and returned to Tanganyika for safaris in 1933. He demonstrated considerable familiarity with local conditions and had clearly given a great deal of thought to his complaints. Fortie was also familiar with the PMC’s records and the reports of the mandatory powers. His three petitions constitute an incisive critique of not only the British administration in Tanganyika, but of the entire concept of the mandate.

Fortie criticized the PMC and the mandatory powers for interpreting the “moral and material welfare of the native population” solely in terms of economic development. The PMC, he felt, consistently failed to take into account the African need to avoid contamination by European imperialism. He construed most administrative schemes in this way, opposing any practice that involved deepening the exposure of Africans to Europeans. He wrote:

[Africans] talked to me as they never talk to an administrator calling to collect taxes or find fault with this and that, or to a missionary whose approach compels the village to hide in the woods the tribal shrines and medicines. . . . Last year and this year I visited villages not seen since 1904-06 and I will say right here that I found no changes, no improvements. . . . All those who spoke at your session wish to improve the native in terms of civilization, education, religion, law, and so on, as we whites understand those terms; all, more or less, wish to see the Native walk into the white man’s path, adopt as many as possible of the white man’s ways . . . when Mlle. Dannevig [the Norwegian member of the PMC] expresses surprise at the expenditure of 26 cents on the education of each native child, she is surprised because the amount is so small. She would have been pleased if the amount had been ten or twenty times bigger. . . . I consider that in the true interest of the Tanganyikan native, it is fortunate that the amount spent is only 26 cents per head – this means that native society is still largely intact.³⁸

Fortie believed that the taxation of Africans in Tanganyika was the greatest threat to the idea of the mandate as a new form of colonial government. Forcing the African to pay monetary taxes simply replicated the economy of other colonies and encouraged the same corrosive administrative practices. He advocated what he saw as more enlightened policy of general development. Africans needed time to adapt to the European presence, and so he condemned a recent tax increase as

another step in the process of forcing the Tanganyikan Native into an alien money economy that destroys the most valuable and unreplaceable [sic] elements of a native culture based on a non-competitive communal activity. Money economy is our product, and among us the evils of greed and of the love of money are greater today than ever . . . the White man is not

justified in forcing his money economy on the Tanganyikan native; forcing it on him so rapidly that there is no time for understanding, adjustment, assimilation. . . .³⁹

He went on to plead for the reversal of British tax policy in Tanganyika:

Instead of increasing the pressure of taxation to compel him to do work he does not like, and from which he derives no real benefit; instead of compelling him, under threats of fines, to raise cash crops and neglect his food crops and husbandry, he should be carefully helped to improve his methods in accordance with the conditions under which he lives . . . much of his land is taken away from him because, it is alleged, he makes no good use of it . . . too much revenue is expended to introduce foreign and cash crops . . . which at best, compel the native to work in order to obtain tax money, and make him compete unfairly with communities on higher standards of living . . . [he] becomes more and more a mere serf of the White Man and of the Hindu, a slave of money.⁴⁰

Fortie also complained that the British labor policy was extraordinarily destructive and constituted a major violation of the mandate principle:

Taxation is to many natives only an instrument to compel them to work for the white man, and it follows that the white community wants native taxes increased to compel the natives to work more. It is clear that we have here a camouflaged compulsory work which violates the spirit of Article 5(3) of the terms of the mandate. The spirit and also the letter of this article are violated all the time in Tanganyika under pretext of collecting taxes from the native.⁴¹

He explained that in his view labor migration was killing villages all over the territory. He also asserted that Africans had told him they were being fined if they did not grow cotton. He asked the PMC to place an impartial observer from a non-mandatory or non-colonial power in Tanganyika to see that the terms of the mandate were respected.

The British attacked each of Fortie's petitions virtually line by line, and responded to his attack on Europeanization:

The introduction of economic systems differing in some respects from those which preceded them is an inevitable result of the advent of civilization and the establishment of European rule in Africa, and the cultivation of valuable crops such as coffee and cotton . . . has inevitably placed on native labor and possessions a value which is measured by the peasant in terms of money. Whether he was happier under a system whereby he obtained his requirements by barter and rendered tribute to his chief in service and labor is a matter of opinion, and, in any case, an “alien money economy” cannot now be displaced in Tanganyika, or indeed, in any other part of Africa.⁴²

They went on to state that taxation in Tanganyika was fair and equitable and could not be considered onerous by any standard. Although the native was encouraged to plant cash crops where appropriate, he was never fined for planting adequate food crops instead of cash crops. Labor was not compulsory and was paid: “No doubt natives resident in the comparatively unfertile southern portions [of the Tabora district] who would otherwise find difficulty in obtaining their tax, have obtained work on the roads at the rate of wages current in the neighborhood.”

The British explanation appealed to the PMC rapporteur, the Baron van Asbeck (Dutch member of the PMC), who stated that “I think, after reading the admirable annual report for 1935 and hearing the accredited representative, the Commission will declare itself satisfied with the refutations contained in the mandatory power’s observations.”⁴³ The Fortie petitions were denied.

Analysis and Conclusion

While the PMC examined both of these series of petitions, it rejected both. The PMC accepted neither the idea that the African inhabitants were qualified to make decisions about the political administration of their country, nor that an outside petitioner could do so for them. In both cases, and in fact for every B mandate petition, the PMC rejected the concept that Africans were able to inspire the alteration of a mandate. In this sense, petitions to the PMC from Africans (and others) were rejected for two main reasons: assumptions of African backwardness, and legal reasons, although these often intertwined. The PMC was unwilling to sanction a complaint from Africans when the mandatory powers maintained the African petitioners

were incapable of understanding the nature of their own accusations. The PMC was also unwilling to accept petitions that in effect demanded that it attenuate the basis of colonial legitimacy.

In the case of the Dualan petitions, the strength of the French legal argument was used to undermine the more general complaints about their rule. Additionally, in order to destroy the credibility of “popular” petitions sent from the French Cameroons the French resorted to racial stereotypes when they did not accuse the Duala of being a community in the pay of German agents. The PMC, while it did not always comment on specific French accusations against the Duala, accepted the idea that they could not sanction their pretensions to self-determination without undermining the entire basis of colonial rule in the mandates. The French phrase “the petitioners indicate nothing specific” was used despite the fact that petitions were often very specific, if not written in a form acceptable to the PMC.

This pattern of rejection held true in the case of outside petitions like those sent by Fortie. Fortie’s own paternal ideas about the needs of Africans come out very clearly in his letters to the PMC, as do the entrenched justifications for imperial rule used in the official responses to his petitions. In his own way, Fortie was attempting to interpret the needs and desires of Africans in Tanganyika Territory, particularly the need to maintain community stability. He made specific complaints about taxation and labor, but the PMC refused to use them to examine the British administration. The British attitude, echoed by the PMC, was that bringing civilization to Africa had its price, which their administration was committed to paying.

The problem of B petitions highlights one of the greatest contradictions in the conception and execution of the League’s colonial mission. Supervision “for the material and moral well-being of the inhabitants” of Africa was a bold move toward the regulation and amelioration of colonial abuses, and in that way, toward the evolution of the imperial idea itself. The examination of petitions to the PMC, however, indicates that there was a great obstacle to its effective supervision of the mandates. This was the constant agreement between the members of the PMC and the mandatory powers. This ideological conformity made it difficult for the PMC to use petitions as a means of supervision. Because any petition that requested substantive alterations in the governance or status of the mandates was unacceptably broad, the mandatory powers had every reason to use that as a reason to reject most requests for change. Without broader authority or a procedure that encouraged action, the PMC was unwilling, and unable, to allow Africans a role in defining their well-being.

NOTES

1. Later Tanganyika Territory.
2. Article 22 of the Covenant defined the mandates system and laid out that the mandatory governments draft a formal written document stating their responsibilities under the League. The newest study of the mandates system and its limits in English is Michael Callahan, Mandates and Empire: The League of Nations and Africa, 1914-1931 (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1999). There are few other recent works on the mandates system. On the division of the German colonies after World War I, see Brian Digre, Imperialism's new Clothes: The Repartition of Tropical Africa, 1914-1919 (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), Andrew Crozier, "The Establishment of the Mandates System, 1919-1925: Some Problems Created by the Paris Peace Conference," Journal of Contemporary History, 14 (1979): 483-513; Peter Yearwood, "Great Britain and the Repartition of Africa, 1914-1919," Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 18 (1990): 314-341. See also both of the now-classic Gifford and Lewis volumes, particularly Ralph A. Austen, "Varieties of Trusteeship: African Territories under British and French Mandate, 1919-1939," France and Britain in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 515-542, and Britain and Germany in Africa (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969).
3. Digre, 141-167, Callahan, 14-25. There were three classes of mandate, A (former Ottoman territories, nearly prepared for independence in the estimation of the treaty-makers at Paris), B (the former German colonies except South West Africa), and C (South West Africa and the Pacific Islands, governed as "integral parts" of the mandatory power's territory because of low population or backwardness). The inhabitants of each type of mandate could submit petitions.
4. Callahan, *passim*. See also several of the older works on the PMC, including Quincy Wright, Mandates under the League of Nations (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930), 23-54, and Elizabeth van Maanen-Helmer, The Mandates System in Relation to Africa and the Pacific Islands (London: P. S. King & Son Ltd., 1929), 15-41.
5. Wright, 119. The right of petition and the annual report were colonial practices adapted for League use; the specific procedure was based on that used by the League's minorities commission. Neither was a direct innovation of the mandates system itself.
6. Wright, 169-171.
7. See particularly Wright, 172-173, Callahan, 117-119, 150-152, and Victor LeVine, The Cameroons from Mandate to Independence (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), 107-109.
8. This paper does not discuss the also numerous A mandate petitions. The A mandates contained literate, educated populations with sharply conflicting ideas about the desirability of mandate rule. All three territories contained sizeable groups intent on independence, and all three also contained communities aired their grievances through petitions. The mandatory powers were therefore concerned to limit the PMC's exposure to A mandate groups as well as literate African groups in the B mandates.
9. There were members from England, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Japan. In 1925 a Swiss member was appointed, and in 1927 a German member. The Mandates Section sent a British proposal to each member, who responded to its provisions by mail. The Mandates Section then correlated the responses and sent them to the members, noting points of consensus.

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10. Specifically to the Mandates Section.

11. Dixon (Colonial Office) to Villiers (Foreign Office), 13/6/22, British Foreign Office 371 (FO) W4918/1110/98.

12. "Procedure in Respect of Petitions Regarding Inhabitants of Mandated Territories," Permanent Mandates Commission Document (CPM) 37, CPM 38 (1922).

13. See "Petition dated July 3, 1928, from the Chief and inhabitants of Womé (French Togo)," CPM 826, 30/11/28, "Petition dated July 3, 1928, from the Chief and inhabitants of Womé, (French Togo) CPM 826, Observations, dated June 28, 1929, from the British Government," CPM 882, 1/7/29, and "Petition dated July 3, 1928, from the Chief and inhabitants of Womé, (French Togo) CPM 826, Observations, dated June 28, 1929, from the British government, Report by Palacios," CPM 896, 9/7/29.

14. The most common petitions filed by European inhabitants of the mandates came from Tanganyika, and often advocated the union of part or all of that territory with Kenya Colony. Like all petitions advocating an end to the mandates, these were first rejected on a case-by-case basis and later automatically as contrary to the interests of the African inhabitants or not in accordance with the terms of the mandates.

15. This does not necessarily indicate that French rule in Cameroons or in Togo was disliked more than British rule, although there is some evidence of this. See Ralph Austen, "Varieties of Trusteeship" pp. 531-537, and also Jean Suret-Canale, French Colonialism in Tropical Africa, (New York: Pica Press, 1971), *passim*.

16. The main issue of contention was the dispute over the Joss and Bali plateaus.

17. Callahan, 154.

18. See LeVine, 112-116, Callahan, 152-3. "Petition dated 11 Aug. 1929, signed by several chiefs... and petition dated 5 Sep. 1930 signed by Chief Manga Bell" CPM 1186, 15/6/31. The French did not transmit these petitions until 5 June, 1931. See also "Communication dated 10 October 1929 from the French government, on the subject of the petition of Joseph Bell," CPM 932, 14/10/29, and "Communication from the French government dated 10 October 1929, concerning Mr. Joseph Bell's complaint (CPM 932)" dated 5 November 1929, report by Rappard," CPM 937, 10/11/29, concerning petitions from Joseph Bell on the same subject.

19. "Petition dated 19 December 1929 from a group of people at Duala, French Cameroons," CPM 1045, 17/6/30.

20. Part of the manifesto against the rule of the French read that the mandate read: "une tutelle qui s'exerce sur un peuple qui ne l'accepte pas est une violence et deshonne ceux qui l'exercent; ceux-ci ne pourront être considérée comme des gens de ce siècle qui doivent être incapables de faire ce qui n'est parfaitement juste, honnête et humain."

21. "Observations dated 11 Oct. 1930," CPM 1082.

22. CPM 1186. See also League of Nations Document (LON) 6a.12517.3989, 6a.13039.3989, CPM 947, and LeVine, 112-114. The PMC agreed that the issue was outside of the PMC's competence because it related to events pre-dating the Treaty of Versailles. For the French view on the importance of the Duala land, see Marchand (Commissioner of the Cameroons) to French Colonial Ministry Political Affairs Directorate, (CMDAP), 19/12/25, French Colonial Archive (ANSOM), Geographical Series (SG), 31/288. While wanting to safeguard the land, in order to expand the port facilities of Duala, Marchand wanted to eliminate any lingering sympathy toward the Germans by building houses on the land used

for compensation.

23. Colonial Ministry to the Service Français de la SDN, transmitting letter from Marchand to the Colonial Ministry, 17/4/30, French Foreign Ministry (AE), Serié SDN, 622 No. 136.

24. LON 6a.17643.3989, 6a.13039.3989, and see also "Petition dated 19 Dec. 1929, from a group of persons at Duala, and observations of the French government dated May 26, 1930 (CPM 1045). Supplementary observations of the French Gov. dated Oct. 11, 1930 (CPM 1082), Report by Palacios," CPM 1120, 14/11/30.

25. CPM 1120.

26. See LeVine, 115.

27. "Letter of the French government, dated 4 June 1931, transmitting a petition dated 18 May 1931, emanating from the "delegate in Europe of the Negro citizens of Cameroun," CPM 1185, 15/6/31.

28. "Letter dated 2 Feb. 1932 of the French government transmitting petition dated 5 Aug. 1931" CPM 1279, 16/2/32.

29. CPM 1279, 16/2/32, "Petition dated Aug. 5, 1931 from the "Ligue de Defense de la race Negre" report by Dannevig," CPM 1357, 2/12/32.

30. LON 6a.30340.3989, see also CPM 1279, CPM 1357.

31. CPM 1279, CPM 1357. See also LON 6a.30340.3989, French government to Mandates Section, 2/2/32: "Rien ne pouvait donc justifier cette opposition au paiement de l'impôt, laquelle ne s'est recontrée qu'à Douala. Elle ne semble devoir s'expliquer que par l'action d'influences étrangères qui, pour ne pas avoir été encore exactement décelées, n'en sont pas moins certaines."

32. Colonial Ministry to the Service Français de la SDN, AE, Serié SDN, Dossier 622, No. 136.

33. See "Letter from the French government, dated 21 Dec. 1932, transmitting letter from M. Vincent Ganty dated 10 Nov. 1932, accompanied by a document dated 7 Sep. 1932, signed by certain chiefs and notables of Cameroun," CPM 1368, 4/1/33, "Petition dated 14 Aug. 1931, from V. Ganty, accompanied by a telegram transmitted on March 10, 1933, by the French government, with its observations" CPM 1377, 23/3/33, "Petition dated 21 Aug. 1931, from V. Ganty, accompanying a memorandum dated 12 December 1930, signed by notables of Akwa, Deido, and Bell, transmitted on 13 March 1933, with observations from the French government," CPM 1378, and "Petition, dated 19 June 1931, from V. Ganty, transmitted on 25 March by the French govt. with its observations," CPM 1379, 4/4/33.

34. CPM 1378.

35. CPM 1378. The French stated that Akwa *père et fille* were extremely corrupt and had tortured and killed several natives while chiefs of Akwa; the father had also attempted an uprising. They also pointed to the statistics in the mandate reports to argue that medical spending was rising.

36. "Petition dated 9 May 1938, from the "Union Camerounaise" transmitted on 27 July by the French government, with its observations." CPM 2088, 27/7/38. "Le maintien du Mandat B, significant le maintien du système colonial, autorise, par cela même l'Allemagne à réclamer

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la rétrocession de ce qu'elle appelle ses anciennes colonies; car une rétrocession, dans ces conditions, ne serait qu'un changement dans le personnel administratif, sans constituer un changement dans le statut des populations."

37. CPM 2088.

38. LON 6a.15100.722, letter of 10 Nov. 1934, Fortie to PMC.

39. "Petition dated June 9, 1935, from Mr. M.J. Fortie, Washington," CPM 1692, 23/7/35. The British law concerning the increase in the poll-tax is Tanganyika ordinance No.20 of 1934.

40. CPM 1692.

41. "Petition dated July 30, 1935, from Mr. M.J. Fortie, Washington," CPM 1695 20/8/35. Article 5(3) of the Mandate for Tanganyika reads: "The Mandatory shall prohibit all forms of forced or compulsory labor, except for essential public works and services, and then only in return for adequate remuneration."

42. "Petitions from Mr. M. J. Fortie, dated June 9, 1935 (CPM 1692), July 30, 1935 (CPM 1695), and Oct. 15, 1935 (CPM 1743) – Letter, dated Feb. 8, 1936, from the Government of the UK, transmitting its observations on the above petitions, together with two annexes on the activities of the petitioner," CPM 1754 13/2/36.

43. "Petitions dated June 9, July 30 and Oct. 15, 1935, from Mr. M. J. Fortie, Washington (CPM 1692, 1695, 1743, 1754) Report by van Asbeck," CPM 1794, 9/6/36. The Baron van Asbeck replaced Daniel van Rees as the Dutch member in 1935.