

UNION DES POPULATIONS DU CAMEROUN (U.P.C.)

A Study in Mass Mobilization

by

John O'Sullivan

The struggle for national liberation in Cameroun, led by the *Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC)*, is a proud chapter in the armed struggle in Africa. One of the first attempts in Africa at the mobilization of the masses for national liberation, the UPC was organized in 1948 and from 1955 to 1960 used considerable violence to try to expel the French. The UPC was not just the political machine of the westernized elite, the vehicle for the transfer of the symbols of modern statehood from the colonial administration as so often proved the case in Africa. Rather it was an attempt to mobilize the whole nation in the fight for liberation and development other than that specifically ordained by the colonial system.

In order to draw attention to this little known historical struggle, our study concentrates on the development of UPC and its attempt to mobilize the Camerounian masses in the post-World War II era. This study, then, is less a presentation of the details of the formation of the Republic of Cameroun than a highlight of the struggle for national liberation waged by the UPC.

I. EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

World War II disrupted the artificial tranquility and stability of the colonial world. Influenced by the world political climate, the French had been forced to allow the formation of the first legal Camerounian political party in 1938. This party, composed of both French settlers and a few educated Camerounians, was the *Jeunesse Camerounaise Francaise (Jeucafra)*. Shortly after the fall of France in June, 1940, French residents in Cameroun, with the aid of "Free French Forces," gained control of Cameroun. "On October 8, 1940, DeGaulle himself landed at Doula to symbolize Free French return to French soil."¹ Against the background of such a shift in the French colonial situation, a Conference was held in Brazzaville in 1944 by French colonial policy makers and administrators. Wide ranging political and social

reforms were suggested including the abolition of the *indigenat* and forced labor within the context of French control. (These reforms were not implemented, however.) The Conference emphasized that independence and self government were not goals of the French system. As the Conference Report read:

The goals of the work of civilization accomplished by France in the colonies lay outside any idea of autonomy, any idea of evolution outside the French Empire; eventual constitution even far in the future of self government in the colonies is to be laid aside.²

The turmoil of the reconstruction of the French political system after the liberation of France in 1944 had a direct bearing on developments in Africa. While the French Constitution of 1946 was not as liberal as had been hoped and created a centralized French Union rather than a federation of states, it nonetheless did allow representation in the French National Assembly by elected delegates (in the case of Cameroun, three deputies elected from a dual roll of voters, one representing Europeans and two representing Africans) and the creation of local assemblies though these were given few legislative powers. The door was thus open for modern political activity by Camerounians.

While Cameroun had been administered by France as a colony, it must be remembered that it was legally a League of Nations Trust Territory mandated to France. With the demise of the League of Nations as a result of World War II and the organization of a new international body, the United Nations, legal responsibility for Cameroun was passed to the United Nations. The guidelines of the United Nations Trusteeship system was diametrically opposed to the political philosophy propounded at the Brazzaville Conference and the French Constitution of 1946. The United Nations Charter went to considerable length to formulate the goals of the Trusteeship system. Article 76 of the Charter says:

The basic objectives of the Trusteeship system, in accordance with the Purposes of the United Nations laid down in Article 1 of the present Charter shall be: A. to promote international peace and security; B. to promote the political, economic, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories and their progressive development toward self-government or independence as may be appropriate

*to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned, and as may be provided by the terms of each Trusteeship Agreement.**

Thus there was a considerable difference in the goals of French administration in Africa and those of the body responsible for the administration in Cameroun, the United Nations.

Politically conscious elites in the Cameroun understood these changes in the system by which the Cameroun was administered. Cognizant of the weakness of the French as a result of World War II and aware of the significant changes in the immediate post war political situation in France and internationally, certain Camerounians decided to take advantage of the confusion in French colonial policy and splits between France and the U.N. Political activity of various sorts appeared spontaneously.

Shortly after trade union activity became legal in August, 1944, representatives of the French Communist labor union, the *Confederation General du Travail*, (CGT) organized the workers in the Cameroun into a union, the *Union des Syndicats Confederes du Cameroun*, (USCC). On September 21-30, 1945, strikes broke out, but they were put down by the militia. Nine people were killed and more than twenty were wounded. In 1946 and 1947 elections for the newly-created local assembly and for the deputy seats in France were held, but the USCC, the leftist labor movement, suffered setbacks at the polls as more moderate elements, such as the old *Jeucafra* and newly-formed parties such as the Socialists and the *Rassemblement du Peuple Francais* won the support of the limited franchise.

II. UNION DES POPULATIONS DU CAMEROUN

A labor oriented organization as the USCC, which might have been suggested in Europe by Marxian class analysis was not adequate for the Cameroun situation. Trade union members, a small fraction of the total population, were already far above the ordinary person in terms of per capita income, social benefits, such as health and education and political benefits. Additional difficulties for labor organization were the lack of skilled positions, the vast pool of unorganized unemployed, the absurd situation of necessarily cooperating with the labor force of colonizing France, and the inability of the trade unions to express their ideology to the rural populace.

* *Everyman's United Nations*, 8th edition, p. 568.

The Camerounian trade unionists involved in the USCC recognized these limitations and as a result formed the UPC, the *Union des Populations du Cameroun*, on April 10, 1948. Reuben Um Nyobe, an ex-government clerk who had been the Secretary General of the USCC, became the Secretary General of the UPC. Felix Moumie, who had just completed his medical studies in Dakar and returned to become a medical officer in Cameroun, became the President of the UPC. Ernest Ouandie and Abel Kingue were also among the early leaders.

The goals of the UPC were stated as:

To group and unite the inhabitants of the territory in order to permit the most rapid evolution of the peoples and the raising of the standard of living.... The program included the key political goals: (1) the suppression of the artificial boundaries created in 1916 between the two Cameroons; (2) abandonment by France of the policy of assimilation; (3) fixing of a time limit for trusteeship, after which Cameroun would achieve independence.³

This is the first statement of the UPC and it is the position for which the UPC would consistently fight throughout its existence. It could be argued that this position was not a radical movement because it did not propose the demolition of the old class stratified society and the construction of a new classless society. Because the means of production would remain in possession other than communistic, class formation would be inevitable.

However, we believe that the struggle for national liberation in the Cameroun situation was a progressive step in the historical development of the area. It would be difficult to argue that the struggle for national liberation did not ameliorate the political and social situation of the individuals living in the Cameroun. It can be argued that such a struggle was a significant step in the elimination of the colonial situation which did not allow for full Cameroun development. This is to suggest that the removal of the colonial impediment might have allowed class development which would have benefitted Cameroun or, in any case, would have liberated the Cameroun to develop in its own historical terms.

In defending his part in a struggle of national liberation, Amilcar Cabral asserts:

*We consider that when imperialism arrived in Guinea it made us leave history--our history. We agree that history is the result of class struggle, but we have our own class struggles in our own country, the moment colonialism arrived it made us leave our history and enter another history.*⁴

It might further be argued that given the level of economic development of Cameroun and the world economic control by powers interested in maintaining the status quo by force if necessary (e.g. Gabon, 1964; Chad, 1968-70; Congo, 1960-64, etc.) the possibilities of radical revolution were extremely remote.

The goal of the UPC was national liberation; the means to achieve this goal was the subject of various strategies, all of which proved ultimately fruitless for the men directly in the fight. We have seen the failure of the attempt to organize the trade unions (USSC) and the limitations such an ideological framework posed. What was recognized was that a large base of support would have to be developed in order to make the struggle for liberation truly national. This would involve the peasants because they made up such a large part of the national population.

A. Theories of Peasant Mobilization

The peasantry under colonialism displayed characteristics of Hobsbawm's first immigrants into the world of capitalism, "illiterate...normally inarticulate" and rarely understood." Moreover, they are a pre-political people who have not yet found the way to express political demands in modern terms. Hobsbawm observes that while they live in a "primitive society" where the important relationships were kinship or tribal, these relations were "no longer a man's primary defense against the vagaries of his social environment."⁵ That such a traditional or "primitive" society would react to new pressures in traditional terms is understandable. Hobsbawm suggests three types of traditional protest: social banditry, alternative society, and millenarian movements. He considers the first two to be dead-end in the sense that they cannot effectively respond to modern social situations. The third, however, could be utilized by a modern political movement to express modern political needs. While the

validity of Hobsbawm's theory is not the question here, it would seem that the UPC tried to develop the first two forms of social protest, that of social banditry in the Bamileke case and the alternative society via the secret societies among the Bassa. We could find no record of any contact with a millenarian movement.

While there is not a unanimity of opinion concerning the analysis and the peasantry in Africa, we can apply insights of various writers to the Camerounian situation. For instance, Franz Fanon, in his great panegyric on wars of national liberation, writes that:

*It is clear that in the colonial context the peasants alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose and everything to gain. The starving peasant, outside the class system, is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays.*⁶

While we find *Wretched of the Earth* an important contribution to the study of peasant participation in social conflict, Fanon's assertion is not born out by the historical developments in the Cameroun between 1948 and 1960. Consistently, the Camerounian peasant chose moderation and non-involvement.

Amilcar Cabral offers his means of involving the peasants in the struggle. He contends that people have to be trained to return to the villages as leaders of the new outlook and that one should

*Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children....*⁷

He argues that local issues must be used to involve the peasant in the struggle, otherwise the ideology becomes mere wordmongering. Such work of communication and organization must be based on correct analysis of the objective local and historical situation or it will fail.

The concrete way in which Cabral works with the peasant is an attempt to set up a dual power base which would leave the authorities stranded; as it were, rulers without anyone

to rule. This is the system of revolution analyzed by Karl Marx in the *Civil War in France* and by Leon Trotsky in his *History of the Russian Revolution*.⁸ Both advocate that a dual power base must exist on which a liberation struggle can be built.

We present these various theoreticians as indications that there was and is considerable controversy over the ways by which the various groups in African society could be involved in the struggle for national liberation. Because it is the largest group in the Cameroun, the question naturally revolves around the peasantry and the way by which it could transcend its localized limitations.

B. UPC Coalitions and its Consequences

As we observed, the UPC quickly realized that the way to such mobilization lay not in labor organizations, strikes and other labor political activity but in attempting to reach the peasant and win his active participation in the movement for national independence by various methods.

*On the organizational front, the UPC moved ahead just as rapidly. It began by building on the recognized RDA pattern a pyramidal structure, based on comites de village in the country and comities de quartier in the towns...Initially, almost half of the local committees were in the Sanaga Maritime Region, home of the Bassa people, of which the UPC's General Secretary, Ruben Um Nyobe, was one. Besides those in Bassa country, the largest and strongest locals were in and around the urban centers in which trade union activity flourished among the laborers and plantation workers, centers such as Douala, N'kongsamba, M'belmayo, Eseka, and later, Edea.*⁹

At the same time, alliances were made with several traditional organizations. The UPC gained the support of the *Ngondo*, a traditional organization among the Douala peoples which had existed since 1842 but which had been reawakened and democratized by Douala leaders such as Paul Sappo Priso and Chief Akwa. It is interesting to note here that there were several chiefs who entered actively in modern politics. A newspaper was printed and an attempt was made to transform traditional institutions to meet modern political needs, though on a local level.

Another organization, the *Kunze* or Bamilele Traditional Association, founded by Mathias Djuomessi, also supported the UPC. Soon splits developed between these groups and the UPC for two reasons: a divergence of opinion as to the social organization of an independent Cameroun, and the traditional groups wanted to advance their own political advantages in a coalition with the UPC while the UPC primarily advocated a social revolution for the Cameroun. By 1949 the *Ngondo* withdrew from the coalition as did the *Kunze* in 1950. Thereafter they both actively opposed the UPC.

Throughout this period the UPC founded numerous auxiliary and satellite associations. These included the *Union démocratique des femmes Camerounaises* (UDFC), *Jeunesse démocratique Camerounaise* (JDC), *Amis des Nations Unies*, and *Association des Anciens Combattants*. A significant development at this state was the organization of a party newspaper, *La Voix du Cameroun*, which was issued monthly.

This organizational activity was so effective that by the time of the First U.N. Visiting Mission in November, 1949, the UPC was the best organized party in Cameroun. It had a coherent program and a genuine desire to be a national party of all the Cameroun. Nonetheless there were underlying problems.

*The UPC had begun auspiciously by organizing itself on a broad geographic base and by launching a program designed to attract the widest possible support. However, its membership was largely limited to the southwestern part of the country and potentially irresistible as its program might be, the UPC was not in any sense a "national" Party.*¹⁰

Other parties and associations such as the *Evolution Sociale Camerounaise* (ESOCAM) developed often in direct opposition to the UPC. Also political figures organized their own parties for support in elections to the local assembly or the French Assembly. Louis Aujoulat organized the *Bloc Démocratique Camerounaise* (BDC) which Andre Mbida and Ahmadou Ahidio, the present President of the Cameroun, joined. Charles Assale organized the *Association traditionnelle Bantoue Efulo-Meyong*, which proved to be a successful base for his election to the Assembly in 1952. There is no evidence that these parties were other than coalitions of traditional leaders without ideological goals other than opposition to the UPC.

In subsequent elections which took place in June, 1951 and March 1952, the UPC lost. Ruben Um Nyobe was not even elected from his home constituency, while the moderates and leaders with traditional support gained a sweeping victory. Um Nyobe accused the French administration of stuffing the ballot boxes. J. M. Zang-Atangana claims

In the two instances, the UPC was the victim of a manifest electoral sabotage, the colonial administration making a barrier against it. All that must make us understand that Um Nyobe was several times the victim of administrative harassment.¹¹

It is an open question whether the reasons for the UPC's failure were administrative harassment or the failure of its program and organization to overcome traditional modes of political activity. Most probably, it is a combination of both. Whatever the reasons, the UPC made a strategic decision to shift its field of activity.

C. UPC and the U.N.

In 1952, the UPC asked to be able to present to the General Assembly an oral petition concerning the reunification of the Cameroun. Despite the opposition of France, this request was granted, and on December 17, 1952, Ruben Um Nyobe appeared with Charles Okala, a moderate Camerounian, sent by the French.

This petition (U.N. Document A/C.4/226/Add. 1) is a clear statement of the UPC's position. Um Nyobe presented his credentials as representative of the UPC, the party which he said was the only true representative of the Cameroun people. He called for genuine application of the principles underlying the Trusteeship System, that is, that the Cameroun should be administered for the good of the Cameroun people. He insisted on the reunification of Cameroun as a first step in this process and cited Britain's and France's refusal to comply as proof of their refusal to act in accordance with the stated goals of U.N. Charter. He said that Cameroun was a legally free country occupied by foreign military forces after the Germans were driven out in February, 1916. He further remarked that the Trusteeship system was not a continuation of the Mandate system and that the division of Cameroun was: 1) artificial, 2) arbitrarily enforced as a result of World War I, 3) benefiting only the colonial powers and oppressive to the Cameroun people. Reunification was a necessary precondition for the achievement of

independence in order to prevent the incorporation of Cameroun into a French Empire and in the hope that the two powers, Great Britain and France, could be effectively played off against each other.

In the same statement, he analyzed the support the UPC had in the Cameroun. He said that no indigenous peoples opposed the UPC but that the Paramount Chiefs resisted it from blind interest, ignorance and fear. Officials, traders, carriers and employees of the private sector admired the UPC but could not support it for fear of the administration.

The farmers and other elements of what might be called the rural proletariat, which merges with the lowest chiefs--known as village or quartier chiefs--regard the UPC as the sole authentic spokesman of the legitimate aspirations...¹²

Workers supported the UPC and were members of the USCC, the ally of the UPC in its struggle against the French.

It is the view of the UPC, and is agreed by trade unionists, that the economic emancipation of our own people is impossible without the political advances necessary for the economic, social and cultural progress of the inhabitants. It is therefore the duty of our organization to give all its support to any political, social or cultural group or persons doing effective work for the progress of Camerounians.¹³

This is the clearest statement we have at hand of the goals and objectives of the UPC under Ruben Um Nyobe. It would seem that Um Nyobe thought the United Nations would see the justice of his argument and redress the wrong. He consistently acted to bring U.N. attention to the Camerounian situation until his death. Under his leadership, the UPC sent literally thousands of petitions, letters and telegrams to the United Nations. The Party's acts of violence during this period seem to have been committed to force the United Nations to take over the situation which the French could not handle without violence. This would lead us to believe that he felt the fight for national liberation would be won in the international forum once it had been realized how Camerounians were opposed to the French. We believe that this was a fatal error of strategy on Um Nyobe's part. He

overestimated the morality and justice of the United Nations and underestimated the necessity of developing a dual power base within Cameroun. He himself had to fight the French; the United Nations would not help.

Moreover Um Nyobe apparently analyzed inadequately the problems of mobilizing the masses of Camerounians. He felt that without administration suppression, all classes would come flocking to the UPC flag. We have attempted to indicate that such was not the normal action of the peasant. The peasant's tendency to reject extreme violence and to accept moderation make it extremely difficult to mobilize the peasant for national liberation. At the same time, the ways by which the peasant deals with his social context in traditional and ethnic terms are actually impediments to modern mobilization.

III. EVOLUTION OF A CRISIS

At the same time the UPC's goals and objectives were being pre-empted by moderate parties which had at least the acquiescence of the French if not their support. At this time, Dr. Moumie reappeared on the scene after studying in Dakar where his political views were openly Marxist and pro-Chinese Communist.

In November, 1954, M. Roland Pre was appointed High Commissioner of the Cameroun. He immediately took active steps against the UPC. In March, 1955, he ordered that all UPC leaders who were civil servants be transferred to Douala where he could keep an eye on them. This proved to be a tactical error as it concentrated the leaders in the urban area where they could stir up trouble. At the same time the Catholic Bishops, all of whom were French, proclaimed on Easter Sunday, 1955:

We put all Christians on guard against the present tendencies of the political party known as the Union des Populations du Cameroun not because of the cause of independence which it defends but because of the spirit which animates it and inspires its methods: its hostile and vicious attitudes against the Catholic Mission and its bonds with atheistic Communism, condemned by the Sovereign Pontiff. 14 (Author's translation)

French troops were brought in to crush the revolt. In the election boycott and the ensuing chaos, hundreds of Bassa people were killed or wounded. The troops remained in the area, "pacifying it" until February, 1957. The fight was successful in the sense that only 12% of the electorate voted in the Sanaga Maritime Region, but the costs were very high.*

From this presentation of the organization and activities of the guerrilla bands operation in the Sanaga Maritime Region we can see several limitations which Um Nyobe imposed upon himself. Guerrilla bands based on kinship and membership in a secret society obviously are of very limited appeal and not in any way compatible with a national movement. In fact, this was an attempt to deal with a modern political problem, that of revolution, via an organization of a traditional type. We find such organizations as secret societies and guerrilla bands based on kinship to be a form of the alternative society of the Mafia type about which Hobsbawm writes in the *Primitive Rebels*. Such an organization cannot to any real extent transcend its parochial base or be called on to cause fundamental changes in society. They were not significant means to effect the modern political situation on a national level. It would seem that no attempt was made to set up liberated areas or to effectively challenge the French. The goals of the fight seem to have been the disruption of society via sabotage, terrorism and the disruption of the means of production and transportation, rather than the constructive attempt to set up another power base such as the Chinese Communists did in their liberated areas and as Cabral is doing in Guine Bissau. Um Nyobe himself said, "It is less a question of overthrowing legitimate authority than that of leading it imperceptibly to disinterest itself in Bassa problems which should be resolved among the Bassa."²⁰

A. Death of Um Nyobe and *rallie*-UPC

On September 13, 1958, Ruben Um Nyobe was killed by a French military patrol near his home village of Boumnyebel. Shortly after that, Mayi Matip and many of the guerrilla fighters surrendered and returned to legal life. They were the so-called *rallie*-UPC. It has been suggested that Um Nyobe was betrayed. He was becoming disenchanted at the time with the progress being made by the UPC and was thinking of a different strategy to accomplish his goals, but his death forestalled this issue and the whole guerrilla war in the Sanaga Maritime Region was effectively stopped by his death.²¹

* After clashes between UPC supporters and *agents provocateurs*, French authorities imprisoned 1500 and killed or wounded several hundred.

The continued struggle of the UPC became less a fight for national liberation than a demand to participate in the independence which was announced for January 1, 1960 and an effort to reap the rewards of being the first party to take up the struggle. To achieve this end, the UPC again resorted to violence. For instance, from 1958, it attempted to achieve its ends through the exploitation of the Bamileke situation. Although there had been various elements of the Bamileke peoples in the UPC, no real success had been achieved in mobilizing the Bamileke masses.

The Bamileke are a group of families with common cultural characteristics, but who do not, in the commonly understood term, constitute a nation. They speak 13 distinctive dialects and are divided among about 100 chiefs, *fon*, who play a very large role in the social, economic, political, and religious life of the region. This role was further augmented by the use of these chiefs by the French as local administrators.

The Bamileke problem developed over a long period of time because of the growth of population and considerable emigration. Many of these people settled in the nearby Munga Region where they were more numerous than the local inhabitants. This put considerable pressure on the system of land tenure which was controlled by the chiefs. Besides the emigration to the Mungo Region, there was a constant flow into the cities, especially Douala and Yaounde. Everywhere their number and willingness to work at any sort of job caused friction with the local inhabitants. This predicament of political mummification in the homeland and Bamileke competition for land and work in other areas finally exploded in 1958 in what can best be described as "social banditry." Uncoordinated and uncontrolled groups of guerrillas wandered through the area wreaking havoc. Some of these groups claimed UPC affiliation but this was never established and little aid filtered in from the UPC then residing in Conakry.

Destruction was caused less to gain wealth or to steal than to express political and social frustration. This type of social protest appears to be a pre-political phenomenon without organization or ideology. The Bamileke guerrillas did not claim to be a political organization.

The UPC tried to direct the uprising from outside the country, but without success. It called on the guerrilla bands to liberate areas, but all they did was intensify the violence and destruction. The UPC then attempted to use the Bamileke crisis to show the U.N. that the government of

moderates led by such men as M. Ahmadou Ahidjo was not representative nor could it handle the situation. It called for a referendum supervised by the U.N. and an election in which the UPC could participate.* Moumie and the other UPC leaders from their headquarter outside the country realized that this was the last chance to use international pressure to gain power. At the Cameroun Session of the U.N. in February and March, 1959, Ahidjo and the moderates won a clear vote of confidence and the UPC was left without the fruits of victory.

On January 1, 1960, Cameroun became independent and M. Ahmadou Ahidjo ascended to sovereign power. Ahidjo had been Prime Minister under the French High Commissioner since February, 1958. The Federal Republic of Cameroun is now a one-party state controlled by Ahidjo's political machine, the Cameroon National Union.**

B. External UPC

It will be remembered that when the UPC had been declared illegal in 1955 by the French Administration some prominent leaders of UPC had sought refuge and had set up headquarters in various African countries (Cairo, Ghana, Guinea...) to continue the struggle. It must be noted here that Um Nyombe remained in Cameroun organizing the *maquis*. After the death of Um Nyobe the *maquis* he had organized and the whole UPC organization in Cameroun deteriorated into chaos and political uncertainties, and the External UPC became the center of the organization.

The goals and objectives of the external UPC show a considerable development over the original proclamation of 1948. In two publications of the UPC, *L'Oppression française au Kamerun* and *Objectives and Goals of the Kamerun Revolution*, the call is for a social revolution on a Marxist platform. Land was to be distributed to the peasants, workers were to have increased salaries and all debts cancelled, land reform was to be initiated, and a revolutionary government which genuinely represented the people was to be established. Illiteracy would be obliterated and national pride would be instilled in the hearts of all. Foreign investment would be allowed, but it would be carefully controlled. The revolution

*The U.N. visiting Mission of 1958 had recommended that no referendum was necessary because it claimed to have found overwhelming popular support for independence.

**Founded in September, 1966.

would not oppose capitalism, only imperialism. From our viewpoint, the problem is that they would have allowed foreign investment and the inevitable class formation which would have accompanied it. In other words they would have chosen the capitalistic road to development while extolling the virtues of socialism.

After long years of trying to organize the UPC's struggle, the leader of the external UPC, Dr. Felix Moumie, was poisoned and died in Geneva on October 17, 1960, under circumstances indicating French complicity. With the country independent, Um Nyobe and Moumie dead, the UPC based in Cairo, Conakry and Accra had a difficult task at hand. What was needed was sound organization helped by solid international support. Unfortunately, what developed was a factional strife-ridden party caught in the Sino-Soviet dispute without real support in the Cameroun or control over the bands of rebels actually there. Committees, pro-Chinese (based in Conakry), pro-Soviet (based in Accra), and others clashed with one another and spent more time fighting each other than participating in the fight in Cameroun. The external UPC, in vying for a para-national base collapsed into intra-party strife which rendered impossible any realistic mobilization of the masses or any continued contact with the real problems of the Cameroun. Abel Kingue died in Cairo, in 1965. Ernest Ouandie, who was always involved in the struggle, both within Cameroun and outside, was captured by Camerounian military forces in Cameroun and executed by a firing squad on January 15, 1971. With the death of the main leaders, the UPC became less and less of an organization.

C. Conclusion

We reiterate that the theme which flows through this paper, the problem of mobilizing the masses, presents itself to any party attempting a genuine social revolution in Africa or elsewhere. The UPC attempted to politicalize and mobilize the peasants via urban disturbances, guerrilla warfare based on traditional secret societies and the exploitation of serious social disequilibrium among the Bamileke. The leaders of the external UPC tried terrorism, forced boycott of elections, and uncoordinated social disruption to block the policy of transfer of sovereignty worked out between France and Camerounian moderates. At the same time it fought within itself the Sino-Soviet split and gradually lost all effective contact with the main fight within the Cameroun.

While the UPC struggle from 1948 onward was one struggle with one goal, National Liberation; it can be divided into two phases. The First Phase was fought within the Cameroon with Ruben Um Nyobe as its effective leader. His efforts at mobilization were carried out within the country among the people. As such, the First Phase of the UPC's struggle was consistent with the best efforts of revolutionary professionalism, trying to meet from within, the various difficulties of mobilization which normally arise at the embryonic stage of any organization.

The Second Phase, that of the External UPC, is another matter. It suffered from "mountain topism". The failure of the external UPC would seem to us to offer various lessons: a) The External UPC lacked a firm revolutionary ideology and therefore failed to arouse a revolutionary trend in Cameroon, b) The External UPC case presents yet another classical example of the impossibility of organizing and directing a revolution from outside the country, c) Instead of relying on a correct evaluation of the situation within Cameroon, the external UPC proclaimed a propaganda line based on external factors, thus letting the situation drift aimlessly towards anarchy, to the detriment of the party, the masses and the revolution, d) the external UPC stands out as yet another example of leaders divorced from the people therefore exposing once again the impossibility of a genuine victory without full participation of the masses.

As suggested above, the patient work of the PAIGC in Bissau has shown another route to mobilization of the masses in Africa. Party-trained cadres contact the peasants, listen to their needs, explain the party's policy and involve the peasants in the creation of a new social order. This is the essential political preparation of a sound base from which the fight of liberation can grow. Such a base can be the center of guerrilla warfare against the colonial centers. Such a base can spread like a drop of oil, expanding and increasing the influence and power of the party. Such is the theory of the dual power base which as it spreads gradually leaves the government authority without a base of its own.

It is unfortunate that the UPC did not try this because of the importance of its early example which could have been a guiding light to other fighters following them in the struggle for the liberation of Africa; and because then the deaths of such men as Rueben Um Nyobe, Felix Moumie, Ernest Ouandie and Abel Kingue and the thousands who fought with them would not have been in vain.

Footnotes

1. Victor Levine, *The Cameroons, From Mandate to Independence*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1964, p. 132.
2. From La Conference Africaine Francaise, quoted by Claude Welch in *Dream of Unity, Pan-Africanism and Political Unity in West Africa*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1966, p. 8.
3. David Gardinier, *Cameroon, United Nations Challenge to French Policy*, London, Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 44-5.
4. Amilcar Cabral, *Revolution in Guinea, an African Peoples' Struggle*, London, Love and Malcomson, 1961, p. 56.
5. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels, Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movements in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, New York, Praeger, 1963, pp. 2-3.
6. Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York, Grove Press, 1963, p. 61.
7. Cabral, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
8. Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1932, Vol. 1, Chapter II.
9. Levine, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
11. Gardinier, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
12. Ruben Um Nyobe, Statement in U.N. Document A/C.4/226/Add.1.
13. *Ibid.*
14. David Gardinier, *Documents of Cameroonian History*, Bowling Green, Ohio, Bowling Green University Press, no date, p. 3.
15. Willard Johnson, *The Cameroon Federation, Political Integration in a Fragmentary Society*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 348.
16. While I was unable to locate the complete Administration report on the events of May entitled *Les Emeutes de Mai*, U.N. Document T/OBS.5/71 contains a considerable amount of information.
17. Willard Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 351.
18. U.N. Document T/OBS.5/71, pp. 10, 19.
19. Willard Johnson, "The Union des Populations du Cameroun in Rebellion: the Integrative Backlash of Insurgency," in Rotberg and Mazrui, *Protest and Power in Black Africa*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 674, footnote 1.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 682.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 682.

Two Apostles



Wood-cut

by Falaka Armide