

Dear Relatives and Dear Friends.

Meine Lieben.

Greeting from Quelle- Bamenda.

Die PCC hat letzte Woche eine ganze Liturgie für die Situation in der Kamerun und vor allem der Anglophone Teil betroffen ist, zusammengestellt; die Leute waren in den verschiedenen Kirchen, um für den Frieden zu beten, andere beteten in ihren Häusern, denn letzte Woche hatten wir von Montag bis Mittwoch *Ghosttown*. Wir als Pfarrfrauen beteten im vergangenen Monat täglich um Mitternacht. Ich sagte einem Mitglied in der Gruppe, dass es für mich nicht gut möglich ist um Mitternacht nach dem ersten Schlaf aufzustehen. Wieso soll es um Mitternacht sein? Er, der Mann einer Pfarrerin, erklärte mir, dass das Gebet contra produktiv sei gegenüber den Mächten der Dunkelheit, die um Mitternacht am stärksten sind.

Wir fühlen sehr mit den Flüchtlingen, die vom Militär aus ihren Dörfern vertrieben werden, weg von ihren Feldern, wo das Mais und die Erdnüsse gepflanzt wurden und nun im hohen Gras ersticken. Frauen und Kinder, die Unterschlupf suchen bei Verwandten oder einfach von einer Kirchgemeinde aufgenommen werden. Ob da nicht eine Hungersnot im Anschluss kommen wird? Unsere Verwandten in Bamessing klagen, dass sie noch so viel Mais hätten und das Neue bald geerntet wird. Kein Platz für das Neue!

Unsere Witwen sind teilweise auch Flüchtlinge geworden. Zu ihren täglichen Problemen sind nun noch Vertrieben sein und abgebrannte Häuser gekommen. Wo helfen? Wir müssen abwarten und jeden Augenblick bereit sein da zu helfen, wo es nötig ist.

Einer meiner Kameruner Freundinnen, die ein Geschäft haben, klagte mir, dass ihr Laden 95% weniger Einnahmen hatte in den letzten Monaten. In der Stadt bei meinem einmal wöchentlichen Einkaufen, spüre ich wie die Ladenbesitzer traurig und mutlos sind. Ich bin ihnen sehr dankbar, dass sie meine Bedürfnisse erfüllen können. Mein Vorrat muss auf einige Wochen hinaus gesichert sein.

Meiner treuen Haushaltshilfe, Solange, die drei Mal die Woche zum Waschen und putzen kommt, bin ich sehr zu Dank verpflichtet, denn sie nimmt einen langen Weg unter die Füße, teils mit Motorrad, teils mit Taxi und hat nicht immer sicher einen Transport.

We must admit that white man's witchcraft is stronger than ours. We are constantly fed with first hand news around us from America and Europe. Some new items are even accompanied by pictures. That was the case with killings that took place in Batibö, Belo, 5 Students in University of Bamenda-Bambili, abduction of a chief in Buea etc. Sometimes we are critical of some pictures because of the surroundings. Whatever the case, we wish you to know that we are limping along with the accompanying fears and uncertainties. We are not sure that the news sent to us by Cameroonians abroad is also circulated in their immediate environments. Who is interested in their riddles?

Mission 21 in Quelle

The curfew is still in from dusk to dawn in Bamenda. Ghost town has come to stay as a tradition. Loudspeakers of the main mosque at 5⁰⁰ a.m. went silent ever since, Church bells at 5³⁰ a.m. to wake up prayer-warriors also went dead for quite some time now. Combat troops continue to pour into a besieged Bamenda city. The population ignores them with their long guns and continue to grope their way forward. In the midst of all these, Ueli Knecht of Mission 21 found his way to us in Quelle on 19th July transported by a bike rider. He met with the Executive of some women concerned with the plight of widows and orphans in and around Bamenda. Through Ueli we got some first-hand information about on goings in Basel and Switzerland in general. As a bridge-builder he will surely brief you on what he has seen and heard from this end. We remain grateful for such visits and updates. Meanwhile we have to continue to cope with the chaos and bottlenecks around until an opportune time.

Theft from our car in broad day light

It was on 11th July that someone broke into our car. He made away with our drivers wallet containing his identity card, driving licence and CFA 26.00 frs. (twenty-six). My handbag went with a Swiss knife, church diary, some 23 of my various publications for sale and some loose money from sales of a few copies. One glass of the car was damaged to have access into the car. This happened in Babungo on an isolated spot where we often parked the car a distance away from our farming area. Everyone in the area concluded that we had been monitored for a long time. We reported the matter to the police who asked us to produce a suspect. Until the time of writing we have not yet found one since we stay in Bamenda, some 50 kilometres away and only go once a week to the farm. Some youths who idle around there are under observation. My prayer is that they read the books and not use them as toilet papers.

Why do they steal? Guesses: easy way to get rich; genes; instinct to attract women etc. Basic needs for all individuals are not satisfied. While our government sings the song of "Back to school" into the ears of the youth, there is no clear vision for those who have completed and awarded certificates. Imai and I are graded among those who have too much. That is why we go to our farm in a car when all villagers are on foot to their farms. How does one eliminate social inequality? When we employ some of the young people to do something on the farm, they start by complaining about low payment. Better to idle around. At the first sight of our shattered window of our car, everyone was enraged. Such hostile aggression was an intentional act that went beyond stealing to inflicting on us some physical and psychological pains. Did we deserve that? At the moment of writing we are still hoping that the thief will be reasonable enough to throw some of the items where someone might pick up and return to us.

The new terrorists

According to the post newspaper No. 01809 of April 03, 2017, a lecturer of history at the university of Bamenda-Bambili, stirred unrest among students as he likened Anglophone Cameroonians to Boko Haram terrorists in the North of the Country. He was lecturing on "Decolonisation and problems in post-colonial Africa". He made the remark based on the burning of the Cameroon flag by some Anglophones in protest against the government's handling of the Anglophone crisis. The class became unmanageable as many students

walked out, some using uncouth language. Terrorism is a sensitive word in the ears of many Anglophones these days. Not all are prepared any longer like moral sheep to be blindly going with the flow. No! They say.

To describe some persons as terrorists depends on one's world view. If peace reigns in a community, then violent acts can justly be qualified as terror; if the same community runs into crisis of rights and freedoms, then violent acts can be regarded as legitimate. The preacher says. "Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad..." (Eccl. 7:7 – King James version). This suggests that oppression calls for revenge. Many persons anywhere become outraged when they become aware that they are mistreated on the basis of their nationality, race or religion. Think of this confession by a detainee who said: "In the city where I lived, the police would come in, beat up people, and arrest them. I was arrested one morning for expressing my views about such police tactics. If I had to die to bring changes, I would not mind it", he concluded.

Some young people now generally known as "Ambas Boys" have fallen into bushes in the Northwest and Southwest regions. They strike without publicity for themselves. A few times in June and July they went through the city of Bamenda firing guns in the air and dispersing people away from the markets. Even the police ran into hiding away from them. Whether they are amateurs or professionals, we do not know. It would seem that the new communication's technology keeps them in touch with one another. We are told that whoever reveals their hide-out places is summarily executed. Some gangs of robbers have joined in the game as an easy way to enrich themselves. When such are discovered by the pure "Amba Boys", they are eliminated in their own way. In public eyes they are leaderless, but their resistance continues without fear of the professional army. Theirs is to chase out those whom they term colonialists supported by the armed forces.

Security checks at Sabga and Ndop

Close to two years the four security check points from Bamenda to Ndop have been reduced to two. This 40-kilometre distance has a permanent check point at Sabga and the other one at the entrance to Bamunka, Ndop that shifts position at will. At Sabga, all passengers must alight from the buses or taxis some thirty metres away and walk past at least 12 armed controlling officers who look at each one's identity card. While that is going on the drivers pull up to the rope that bars the way, surrendering their vehicle documents to another officer, then the rope is lowered for them to cross and park where they find space. Each driver gets out of the vehicle and walks back to collect his documents from the main officer. By unwritten tradition each driver glides CFA one thousand francs into his documents. If the controlling officer does not see any bank note, it can cost the driver more. Motor cycle riders pay half of the amount for vehicles. No argument! No receipt!

In principle, private cars are not subjected to such checks. But controlling officers may ask to see the car documents, driver's licence and the identity cards of occupants. All travellers without identity cards run the risk of paying up to CFA 30.000 frs. (thirty) to save themselves or be detained. We had an awkward experience at Sabga on 4th July 2018 when an officer asked our driver to open the boot of our car for control. He asked for the triangle, jack, fire extinguisher, car documents, and for our identity cards. He sought to know the contents of my farm-bag that contained various flower and planting seeds. He examined the travelling

bag of my niece and turned insider-out of a Lego-box not knowing what “bullets” they were. After finding nothing to charge our driver for any default, he simply walked away without a word. It reminded us of one of his colleagues who, some weeks earlier complained to me that they drink only water at that check-point. My driver gave him CFA 500 frs. (five hundreds) for which he was very grateful. Some young soldiers defected from there months earlier.

Our driver lives with his family in Bamessing Ndop. It is cheaper for him than renting in town and buying food. We need him once every week for about two days or more if necessary. He owns a motor-cycle for his own mobility. On his way back after bringing us to Bamenda a friend warned him at Sabga check point of a corpse of a security officer (in civil dress) lying by the roadside on descending to Bamessing. He continued his journey with another motor-cycle rider. As they completed the descent, a horde of combat soldiers stopped them. They sought to know from Nehemiah our driver whether “the boys” are still “up there”, and whether he saw any corps by the roadside. Nehemiah told them and the Chief of Bamessing that he saw no persons except a fat man lying somewhere “up there”. He did not stop to verify whether he was sleeping or dead, since it was not uncommon to see mad persons once in a while resting along that road. The soldiers looked visibly terrified to ascend to that isolated place to take away the corpse of their murdered colleague. However, they made way for Nehemiah to continue his journey that late afternoon. The story we got later on was that “the boys” stopped a commercial vehicle at that point to control and take away any voters’ cards. When they got to this man in civilian dresses he attempted to pull out his pistol from his waist. “The boys” shot him at once and ordered the driver to continue his journey with the rest of the passengers. The assassins then disappeared into thin air.

Taking a step back

In their book, “The criminalization of the State in Africa” (1999) Bayart-Ellis-Hibou used some expressions that caught my attention in the first few pages.

- The criminalization of politics in Africa
- The increasing importance of organized crime in countries south of the Sahara
- Governments in Africa ... taking vigorous counter-measures to halt the advance of democracy
- The radical privatization of the state
- The criminalization of the behaviour of power-holders
- A return to the heart of darkness
- The re-emergence of representations of the invisible world of spiritual power
- (Song of SPLA) Even your mother, give her a bullet!
Even your father, give him a bullet!
Your gun is your food;
Your gun is your wife (page 6) etc.

When we first read this book in 2001, the above expressions were applied to “the others”. Now as we write this letter in July 2018, the story is different. Since November 2016 Cameroonians of the Northwest and Southwest regions have been so radicalized to the extent that the state cannot be forgiven for the traumas through which some have gone or are still going. Ask anyone about any of the above expressions and you will have a world of

life experiences flowing at you. Democracy still has a long way to go in Cameroon. It is probably not for us.

Just imagine this revelation by the Governor of the Southwest region of Cameroon on May 8, 2017: "People don't even know that all their messages and phone calls are recorded and kept ... I have a blacklist of names already ... We are contemplating on arresting all those involved in the uprising ... remember that all what you send and receive is registered ... " (see The Post No. 01819 of May 12, 2017, page 2). This explains for some mysterious arrests that have been taking place of some family members to undisclosed destinations over the past two years.

In 2017 four major elections were announced for 2018 viz.: the senatorial, municipal, legislative and presidential. The senatorial elections took place last April. The presidential elections are scheduled for October. Municipal and legislative elections are postponed on the flimsy excuses of security and financial reasons. Based on that, parliament has extended its mandate for one year. That is Cameroon!

The Musonge Commission in Bamenda

At the close of May to beginning of June, the National Commission for the promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism in Cameroon was in Bamenda to listen to the people. The Commission needed information from the field on the basis of which to make proposals for a way forward out of the crisis in the Anglophone Regions. Some 800 people were present to vomit out their grievances against the Cameroon government. The areas of meeting were heavily guarded by armed security personnel. Some people told the leader, Mafany Musonge, that they are tired of Commissions. Others went ahead to restate the problems including those tabooed by government like looking into the form of government. In the final communiqué, the following proposals among others were forwarded to government for examination and action:

1. Examine issues concerning federalism in our country;
2. Organise frank, sincere and inclusive dialogue between the government and the Anglophones including those of the diaspora for long-lasting solutions to the current crisis;
3. Speed up infrastructural development in the Region;
4. Repeal the law on terrorism;
5. Grant general amnesty to those people within and out of the country jailed or in exile in connection with the crisis;
6. Instruct Public Corporations and Establishments to conduct and transact business in the two official languages;
7. Bring back to the country all Cameroonians who are refugees in Nigeria;
8. Give the possibility to Cameroonians abroad to have double nationality;
9. Make sure that the unity of the country is based on equity and fairness;
10. Revisit the history of Cameroon;
11. Instil change of attitude in the management of public affairs;
12. Provide an enabling environment for internally displaced persons to return to their homes etc. (For more see The Post No. 01919, Friday June 08, 2018, p.12)

Dual citizenship is a problem in Cameroon. A law of June 1968 laid it down that any Cameroonian with a foreign passport automatically becomes a foreigner to Cameroon.

Foreign women married to Cameroonians can acquire Cameroonian citizenship but not the reverse for the men. In 2014 the main opposition party- the Social Democratic Front (SDF)- called for a review of that law but it was rejected. Some members of the ruling party who saw with the SDF feared for their positions and kept quiet. They know of many Cameroonian intellectuals , engineers, medical personnel, journalists, footballers, artists etc. who have acquired foreign nationalities. According to "The Guardian Post No. 1037 of 20th October 2016, page 4, three Cameroonian Ministers had American passports, four had French passports and one had a Canadian passport. Who is deceiving who? If top government personalities have dual nationalities, what prevents them from granting the same to Cameroonians in the diaspora? That is the background to point 8 above.

Quarrel in the Juju house

Prime Minister Philemon Yang, minister of defence Beti Assomo, minister of justice, secretary of state for Gendarmerie, minister of finances, minister of territorial administration and some other top elites have been engaged in bitter exchange of words blaming each other for fuelling, or failing to stop the ongoing crisis.

The Lrc (La Republique du Cameroun) minister for defence accused Atanga Nji of making things worse since the beginning of the crisis, and all he Atanga Nji wants is more money.

Atanga Nji on his part was accusing the elites of failing to deliver what they have been asked (set confusion in their different localities) of which the money was given them. Philemon Yang and Musonge, were accused by the French Ambassador to Lrc, stating that, Mafany, and Yang were not doing enough, and have failed in their different missions. The Ambassador went up to claiming that Yang, Mafany and some South Cameroon elites seem to lack the will, but not the means to stop the ongoing revolution.

Yang, in his turn accused the minister of defence, the delegate for security and the secretary in charge of the Gendarmerie for the poor discipline of their troops to the population that has led to the radicalization of more youths, and making the population to support and protect armed groups.

The minister of defence insisted that he and the secretary for Gendarmerie and delegate for national security were mostly acting on instructions from France.

The quarrel degenerated when the ministers started accusing each other for using the crisis to make money, than to stop it.

There were more fingers pointed at Atanga Nji, minister of defence and the Governors of northern and southern zones for using the crisis to make more money while armed groups are gaining more grounds.

There's also another big trouble at the ministry of defence. Soldiers of Lrc want the full list of all soldiers killed to be made public. This is because women und family members of military men keep complaining that they have **Not** seen or heard from their loved ones for more than four months.

IF YOU HAVE NAMES OF MISSING MILITARY MEN OR WOMEN, SEND IT TO THE MINISTER. THANKS. (From Whats App 28/6/ 2018 at 21.25 p.m.)

Some citizens are praying that more of such in-house war of words may continue so that crooks are thrown out. But how? The same people continue to use the apparatus of the

state to keep themselves in power especially as they all belong to the ruling party. No one is prepared to lose his or her privileges no matter how corrupt or incompetent some may be. According to the Guardian Post Daily newspaper of June 27, 2018, Paul Atanga Nji, minister of territorial administration, and who doubles as secretary of the national Security council, insists that:

1. Anglophones are not marginalised;
2. Ambazonian leaders are living better in detention than they were in Nigeria;
3. Anglophones with only 16% of the population hold 40% of public offices;
4. Ambazonia leaders are detained for fear that they can be killed by irrational Anglophones;
5. Calm reigns in most areas in the Northwest region due to the 27 visits he has made to the area since the beginning of the crisis in November 2016.
6. Government cannot dialogue with those who killed, raped kidnapped and burnt schools;
7. Government has an emergency humanitarian plan to compensate victims of the crisis.

Atanga Nji seen as “an Anglophone problem”, made these statements as guest on a programme on state TV, CRTV on June 25, 2018. The programme is known as *Presidence Actu*. He was interviewed in French by Yves Marc Medzo. Crazy!

Counsel of the wise on deaf ears

“The Cameroon government seems to be deaf to the several calls for dialogue made by various parties concerning the Anglophone crisis and instead resorted to strong arm tactics” (Joe Dinga Pefok, Journalist of the Post Newspaper).

The following selection confirms the observation of the journalist quoted above. An adage of our people states that a dog that is going to die does not listen to advice.

If to stay in power, you do not hesitate to buy weapons from foreigners to kill your fellow citizens, are you humans? (Donald Trump).

1. African Union

On February 15, 2017, Mr. Kwasi on behalf of the African Union wrote to President Paul Biya:

We have noted with concern the deteriorating human rights situation of the people and residents of the two Anglophone regions ... Cameroon is a member of the African Union which expects all its members to uphold, encourage and ensure the respect, protection and enforcement of the rights of all citizens of the Union ... We call for genuine and open dialogue as a way of resolving the current crisis ... only genuine and open dialogue can lead to a satisfactory solution to the current stalemate. (The Post No. 1809 of March 27, 2017, Page 6).

2. Canadian Ambassador

The Canadian High Commissioner proposed genuine dialogue to resolve the Anglophone crisis. He said the Cameroon government could borrow from the Canadian experience how, through frank political dialogue, his country was able to address the grievances raised by the minority French-speaking population of Quebec. According to the Guardian Post No. 1115 of February 22, 2017, some 25.000 Cameroonians were in Canada, and that Cameroon remained the biggest of Canada’s economic partners in the Central African sub-region. Ambassador Cromenese traced Canada-Cameroon relations back to 1962.

3. United Nation (UN)

Since April 2017, UN showed concern about on-goings in Cameroon. In a meeting with the Prime Minister, Minister of External Relations and other government officials, Françoise Loulenceny fall, Representative of the UN Secretary General for Central Africa, called on the government to build confidence in the citizens through a sincere and constructive dialogue. He requested government to release all those detained in relation to the ongoing Anglophone crisis. This call was followed up with a communiqué from the Secretary General Antonio Guterres, in October in which he reiterated the need for government to engage in inclusive and honest dialogue with the Anglophones and restrain the forces of law and order from using bullets on the unarmed citizens. (See The Post No. 01812 of April 14, 2017 and No. 1858 of October 09, 2017).

4. Commonwealth Secretary

On December 18 – 22, 2017, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations, Patricia Scotland, was in Cameroon with a high-powered delegation. She met with the Prime Minister, Minister of External Relations, the Senate President, National Assembly President, the National Anticorruption Commission, Elections Cameroon President, Civil Society Organisations and some Business operators. Everywhere she recommended a frank and inclusive dialogue as the only way by which Cameroon can come out of the impasse in which it has found itself. Earlier in July, the British High Commissioner to Cameroon, Brian Olley, had expressed the concern of the British government over the prevailing socio-political and economic situation rocking Cameroon. (see The Post No. 01832 of July 03, 2017, page 9).

5. French Ambassador

The French Ambassador to Cameroon, Gilles Thibault, told the press that the wish of France is to see all Cameroonians living in peace and harmony. He said: “France works with Cameroon on daily basis through the instruments of corporation ...” He was in Buea on June 3, 2018 to meet with Mafany Musonge, head of the National commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism. Musonge, who was just back from Switzerland, was invited to visit France and see how the system functions there. While no African country is powerful enough to impose peace on Cameroon, we hope that France will not try it in the name of “humanitarian mission”.

Meanwhile, the French president, Emmanuel Macron told students in Burkina Faso on November 28, 2017 that Paris would not attempt to intrude in African local politics. He said: “I haven’t come here to tell you what France’s African policy is, because it no longer exist; there is only a continent that we need to look straight in the face and admit that the crimes of European colonisation are unquestionable, it’s a past that needs to pass ... I am from a generation that hails Nelson Mandela’s victory over apartheid as one of its fondest political memories ...” (see The Post No. 1873 of December 1, 2017, page 7). While on a state visit to Nigeria on July 4, 2018, Macro reiterated that “Cameroon’s current political and social stability can only be achieved if its leaders acknowledge the various existing views concerning pluralism, the form of government, and clear form of regional governance”. (See The Post No. 01927, of July 06, 2018, p.9). “He who has ears to hear let him hear”.

6. Amnesty International (AI) Report of 2018

According to The Guardian Post No. 1438 of June 27, 2018, AI sounded the alarm that “People in Anglophone Cameroon regions are in the grip of a deadly cycle of violence.

Security forces have indiscriminately killed, arrested and tortured people during military operations which have also displaced thousands of civilians”. The report observed that “the government’s heavy-handed response will do nothing to calm the violence Rather Authorities must ensure accountability for crimes committed by the security forces as well as by the armed separatists ... create a commission of inquiry to undertake an independent investigation ... The report of such an enquiry should be made public and culprits be made to face the law.”

On June 14th Cameroon’s Minister of communication and Governments Spokesperson told the press that “The government strongly refutes the so-called report by Amnesty International on the pretext of protection of human rights. These allegations are a means to ruin the efforts of peace and ssecurity building by the government and her defence forces.... All the allegations made are unjustified ... terrorist gangs receive support from abroad from people who have decided to upset the efforts made by the Head of State to dialogue and restore peace in the regions concerned. This reaction of Minister Tchiroma came some 72 hours after the publication of the Report of Amnesty International. (See The Post No. 1922 of 18th June 2018, page 2).

7. US Ambassador

July 3rd, 2018 addressing guests at a party celebrating 242nd anniversary of American Independence, the US Ambassador to Cameroon, Peter Henry Barlerin, called on the government to give peace a chance. Concerning the Anglophone crisis, he said the conflicting parties don’t need to have the same opinion in order to sit down at a round table to sort out their differences. He revealed that there were 123 Peace Corps volunteers in six Regions of Cameroon working in the areas of Health, Education and Agriculture. He also pointed out that there were 1.200 Cameroonians studying in the USA in the academic year of 2016/2017. He recalled that the US Consulate was established in Yaoundé on July 4, 1957. He described the military cooperation between Cameroon and the US as fruitful. On the basis of all the above he said “Dialoguing alone builds confidence and credibility among partners”. (See The Post No. 01927 of July 06, 2018, page 2)

Greetings, Jonas