

# Stages and changing *Modus Operandi* of Anglophone Separatists in Cameroon since 1984

Joseph Lon Nfi\*


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## Introduction

One of the topics that have provoked extensive research and debates in Cameroon's history is the Anglophone Problem. There have been substantive publication on this subject especially by sociologists, anthropologists, historians, political scientists, lawyers and journalists.<sup>1</sup> The focal point of most of these studies has always revolved around the origins, causes, manifestations and impact of the Anglophone Problem. This study probes into the evolution of the problem with emphasis on the stages, tactics, strategies and weapons used by the extremists to push through their idea of separation.

The Anglophone problem can be traced back to the colonial period. In 1884 Cameroon was annexed by Germany. In 1916, Britain and France defeated Germany in Cameroon during the First World War and partitioned the German Protectorate of Kamerun into two unequal halves. The British occupied a fifth constituted as British Cameroon and the French assumed four-fifths referred to as French Cameroun. When the war ended, the international community recognised the partition and requested Britain and France to administer their respective portions as mandate territories of the League of Nations. The new international boundary came to be called the Oliphant-Picot line in honour of Lancelot Oliphant, a British diplomat, and George Picot, a French diplomat who in a meeting in London in February 1916 initiated the partition by drawing a line on the map of Cameroon from Lake Chad to the Mungo River. The partition was finalised by the Milner-Simon Agreement of July 10, 1919.

Britain further partitioned British Cameroons into British Northern Cameroons and British Southern Cameroons and integrated the two portions into Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria respectively. In fact from 1922, the Oliphant-Picot line, with some cosmetic modifications, became the boundary between British Nigeria and French Cameroun because British Southern and British Northern Cameroons were integral parts of the British colony

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\* **University of Bamenda, Cameroon.**

<sup>1</sup> There are several articles, books and chapters on the Anglophone Problem. Ndiva Kofele-Kale (ed.), (1980), *An African Experiment in Nation Building: The Bilingual Cameroon Republic since Reunification*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, Paul Nchoji NKwi and Francis B. Nyamnjoh (1995), *Regional Balance and National Integration in Cameroon: Lessons Learned and the Uncertain Future*, Yaounde, ICASSRT 1995, Victor Julius Ngoh (ed.), (2004), *Cameroon: From a Federal to a Unitary State, 1961-1972, A Critical Study* Limbe, Design House, Francis B. Nyamnjoh (1995), *The GCE Crisis: A Test of Anglophone Solidarity*, Bamenda, Newslink Printing, Piet Konings and Francis B. Nyamnjoh, "The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon" in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 35, N° 2, pp. 207-229, D. Abwa, (2011), "Le Problème Anglophone et le Renouveau de Paul Biya", *Annals of the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences*, vol. 1, n.º 12.

of Nigeria. During this period, the people adopted some aspects of the British system of education, the common law judicial system and the Anglo-Saxon culture (Ndi, 2005). This greatly alienated them from their “brothers” in French Cameroun who were introduced to the Napoleonic code and the highly centralised French system of administration.

It was with this background that some Southern Cameroon nationalists wanted independence with Nigeria. This was the case with E. M. L. Endeley and N. N. Mbile who merged their political parties in 1960 to create the Cameroon People’s National Convention (CPNC), a pro-Nigerian political party (Nfi, 2014: 238). Others led by John Ngu Foncha advocated separation from Nigeria and eventual reunification with French Cameroon. They founded the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) in 1955 to champion the course of reunification. That same year, 1955, the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (UPC), a staunch pro-reunification party in French Cameroun, moved its headquarters to Kumba in the Southern Cameroon following a ban placed on the party by the French authorities in July 1955 (Nfi, 2014: 323). The KNDP and the UPC were therefore the political forces in favour of reunification in the Southern Cameroons. When the UPC was banned in 1957, its Southern Cameroon followers founded One Kamerun (OK) under Ndeh Ntumazah to continue with the struggle for reunification.

Another group led by PM Kale wanted a separate Cameroon state without links to either French Cameroons or Nigeria. It was due to this division among the nationalists that the United Nations organised a plebiscite in the British Southern Cameroons in February 1961. The electorates were to choose between independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria or independence by reunification with the independent Republic of Cameroun. Out of 332,665 votes cast, 233,571 voted for reunification with the Republic of Cameroun and 97,741 voted for union with Nigeria (Ebune, 1992: 102). The majority under the leadership of J N Foncha therefore opted for reunification with Cameroun. The reunified Cameroon was styled the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

## Conceptual issues

Within the Cameroon federation, the Anglophones complained of marginalisation, exploitation, assimilation and denigration. This was through appointments, closure of their economic institutions and constitutional reforms that violated the 1961 Fouban agreement that established a union of two equal federated states. This Anglophone problem has therefore been defined as a struggle by the ethnic Anglophones (former Southern Cameroon Anglophones) to rescue their cultural identity especially the education and judiciary systems and the English Language threatened by the assimilation policies of the majority Francophones.

In Cameroon, an Anglophone is not just someone who speaks English; not just someone whose parents lived in the former British Southern Cameroons; not just someone who has acquired Anglophone education or culture but precisely someone whose ancestry is Southern Cameroonian. Bobda (2001) clearly indicates that the term Anglophone, as it is understood in Cameroon, has mostly an ethnic connotation. It has very little to do with knowledge of the English language as an Anglophone in the Cameroonian sense does not need to know a word of English. This definition is more relevant because in Cameroon the concept Anglophone is more ethnic, cultural and regional than linguistic. In this study therefore, Anglophones are those Cameroonians whose ancestral origins and ethnic bases are in the former British territory of the Southern Cameroons whether they spoke the English Language or not. The term is therefore exclusionary and limited to people of a defined territory, culture and history. These were the people who fought to preserve

their cultural identity and their right to exist like citizens of Cameroon. Some of them believed that their identity and survival as a people could better be achieved through the “restoration” of the state of Southern Cameroon, Ambazonia. They have variously been called separatists, secessionists, restorationists, terrorists and Amba boys. Their strategies and weapons have also varied since 1984.

## **I. Pre-1984 Modus operandi**

The Anglophone struggle started as early as 1961 because the Founban Constitution did not satisfy the aspirations of the Anglophones who wanted a decentralised federation or confederation. President Ahmadou Ahidjo is believed to have imposed a highly centralised federation on the Anglophones. All decisions and appointments came from Yaounde. In order to obscure the federal structure and make it ineffective, he signed a presidential decree in 1962 dividing the federation into six administrative units and each placed under a federal inspector (Fanso, 2010: 10). West Cameroon constituted one of the administrative units. The federal inspector was directly accountable to Ahidjo and this undermined the powers of the Prime Minister and authority of the federated states especially that of West Cameroon. The federalists led by Albert Mukong, Augustine Ngom Jua and Bernard Fonlon did not hide their dissatisfaction. The following were their weapons:

### **1.1. Petitions and Protest Literature**

Due to the laws of subversion and the reign of terror in Cameroon many of Ahidjo’s opponents could not publicly criticise him. The federalists in West Cameroon could not therefore be vocal. They resorted to petitions and anti-government literature. Albert Mukong who spearheaded these petitions and pro-Anglophone literature was arrested several times and jailed especially after the abolition of the federation and the introduction of a unitary state in 1972. He was very much against the unitary state which to him was a breach of the 1961 “contract”. Dr Bernard Fonlon in August 1964 in an article titled “Will we make or mar” questioned the excessive centralisation in Cameroon calling for democracy, liberties, equality and the rule of law (Ngoh, 1996: 320). This publication indicated the frustration that the KNDP reunificationists suffered due to multiple acts and decisions taken by Ahidjo in the 1960s against freedom of expression, liberties and equality between the citizens of the two federated states. A. N. Jua, the Prime Minister of West Cameroon and a convinced federalist, also adopted an attitude of rebellion. He opposed the Federal Inspector and maintained his autonomy vis-a-vis the central government at several instances. This could be seen in his management of the Bamileke-Bakossi war 1965-1966. He was also seen as the most important obstacle to Ahidjo’s single party scheme as he is alleged to have wanted to preserve as much political clout for the West Cameroonians as possible (Ngoh, 1987: 257). It was his reluctance to surrender the administration of West Cameroon to Ahidjo that led to his dismissal in 1968 in favour of a centralist S. T. Muna. So far in the 1960s and 1970s there was no violence in the struggle for Anglophone autonomy.

### **1.2. Street Protest**

In 1983, the first protest against the marginalisation of the Anglophones was carried by university and secondary school students and their parents. This was against a ministerial circular that attempted to convert the Cameroon GCE examination into a group certificate examination as was the case with the Francophone exams. The French system

of education was not touched by the reform. In fact this was the first public resistance to the francophonisation of the Anglo-Saxon education system inherited from British colonial rule. This was treated as assimilation or attempts to eradicate the English culture and the weapon was street protests in Buea, Yaounde, Bamenda, Kumba etc in October 1983 (Ngoh, 1996: 302). It should however be made clear that these demonstrations were possible because President Biya who succeeded Ahidjo in 1982 promised rigour, moralisation and democracy.

## **2. The 1984 Reform and the rise of Anglophone Extremism**

In 1984, President Biya signed a decree changing the name of the country from the United Republic of Cameroon to the Republic of Cameroon. This angered the Anglophones because this was the name French Cameroon adopted during independence. The Anglophone pressure groups accused the leadership of annexing them (Nkwi, 2005: 189). Others claimed that the Republic of Cameroon had seceded from the union and the Southern Cameroons had no other alternative than to regain its independence. This change of name or the revival of the Republic of Cameroon was insulting to the Anglophones. The outcome was political extremism amongst some Anglophones who advocated outright separation and the use of violence. The strategies and weapons consequently evolved from petitions and protests to creation of pressure groups for better coordination, boycotts, violence and the internationalisation of the question.

### **2.1. Protest Petitions**

In 1985, a prominent Anglophone lawyer and traditional ruler, Fon Gorji Dinka, was arrested for distributing pamphlets to Anglophones which declared the Biya government unconstitutional and asked the former Southern Cameroons, the Republic of Ambazonia, to secede from the Republic of Cameroon. This was the first reaction against Biya's change of the country's name in 1984 (Nkwi, 2005: 189) Gorji Dinka was therefore the first secessionist or separatist who wanted the creation of Ambazonia in what he called the "Zero Option" (Ngoh, 1996: 320).

The second protest was in the form of memoranda. In 1985 during the Bamenda congress of the Cameroon National Union that gave birth to the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), two memoranda were presented to the congress by Anglophone elite from Douala on the frustrations of the Anglophones (Ngoh, 1996: 32). These protest letters were in favour of separation.

### **2.2. Creation of Pressure Groups**

The aftermath of the 1984 reform was the radicalisation of the Anglophone federalists. Few years after 1984, Albert Mukong founded the Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM), the first organisation to vocally advocate separation. Although this was an illegal association, Mukong was able to win the sympathy of some Anglophone elites and in 1989 he collected more than 5000 signatures from them to legitimize CAM push for Anglophone right to self-determination (Dinka, 1985: 24). In May 1990 and benefiting from the wind of change in favour of democracy in Cameroon, he and other leaders like John Fru Ndi founded a political party, the Social Democratic Front (SDF), which by his estimation was to serve as the mouthpiece of the disgruntled Anglophones (Mbah, 2018: 7). Unfortunately for Mukong, the SDF under John Fru Ndi gained national recognition and

Fru Ndi, the chairman, ignored the original objectives of this pro-Anglophone party. However, in June 1990 John Ngu Foncha resigned from the CPDM party claiming that the Anglophones he brought into the union had been ridiculed and insulted as *les Biafrais, les ennemis dans la maison* (Abwa, 2011: 206). This resignation was welcomed by many activists who were also encouraged to forge ahead in the search for freedom.

In April 1993, CAM organised a gathering of an All Anglophones Conference (AAC1) in Buea to call for the restoration of the federal system of government. This was followed by another All Anglophone Conference (AAC2) in Bamenda in 1994 during which another pressure group, the Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC), was formed. From 1994, the SCNC became the mouthpiece of Anglophone extremists and advocate of the state of Ambazonia. Its military wing was called Southern Cameroons Peoples' Organisation (SCAPO). The spokespersons of the SCNC, such as Barrister Sam Ekontang Elad, Dr Martin Ngeka Luma, Ambassador Henry Fossung, Prince Ndoki Mukete, Peter Forchu Che Sam, Akwanga Ebenezer, Chief Ayamba and Nfor Ngala Nfor operated most often from neighbouring Nigeria (Ayim, 2010: 457).

### 2.3. Protest Literature

This second phase of the Anglophone search for self-government was also characterised by the publication of many pro-Anglophone literature. Prominent amongst these authors and *philosophes* of this revolution were Bole Butake who wrote "And Palm-wine will Flow" in 1990, "Shoes and Few Men in Arms" in 1992 and "Dance of the Vampire" in 1995 (Ashutantang, 2016). In these plays he preached revolution in favour of the oppressed, castigated the regime especially the domination of the Anglophones. Bate Besong wrote "Beast of no Nation" in 1990 and "Requiem of the Last Kaiser" in 1991 calling for the liberation of the Anglophones from dictatorship (Ekpebisong *et al.*, 2017). In 1992 Victor Epie Ngome came up with "What God has put Asunder", a play that demonstrated the incompatibility of the couple in the marriage between Southern (Anglophone) Cameroons and Francophone Cameroon (Besong, 2005). In fact this drama directly advocated divorce in this couple relationship. John Ngongong Ngengasong in 2004 published "Across the Mongolo" in which he castigated the horizontal colonisation of Anglophone Cameroon by Francophone Cameroon (Forbang-Looh, 2018). The historian Ndi Anthony also published what he called the "Golden Age of Southern (West) Cameroon" in 2005 presenting the Anglo-Saxon culture and the perfections of the Anglophone state as ideal. These were the *philosophes* of the Anglophone revolution whose writings attracted the attention of the Anglophone elites who in Yaounde, Buea and Bamenda massively attended the launching of these books.

Apart from protest literature, there was also some protest journalism amongst the Anglophones both in the official and private media houses. Charlie Ndichia, Boh Herbert, Julius Wamey, Paddy Mbawa, Francis Wache, Ntenfack Ofeye, Lary Eyong Echaw and Sam Nuvala Fonkem used their various press organs to call for change in favour of the Anglophone minorities (Nyamnjoh, 2017). Their TV and Radio programs especially "Cameroon Calling" and "Minute by Minute" on the official Cameroon Radio and Television and their columns in the newspapers were the most popular in the 1990s. This press activism contributed to the internationalisation of the struggle.

## 2.4. The Internationalisation of the Anglophone Case

Another strategy or weapon at the disposal of the SCNC was to carry the struggle to the international community. Early in the 1990s Gorji Dinka filed an application for membership of Ambazonia to the United Nations and in 1994 John Ngu Foncha and Solomon Tandeng Muna, both actors of reunification in the 1960s, returned to the United Nations and demanded separate independence for the Southern Cameroons (Ngoh, 1996: 322). This dream was not realised and in August 1995, the SCNC petitioned the UN to intervene and mediate between them and the government of Cameroon warning that a lack of intervention would create “another Somalia”. The SCNC also sent delegations to the meetings of the Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Nations and when the Secretary General of the organisation was visiting Cameroon in June 1993, the SCNC failed to convince him to admit Anglophone Cameroon as full member of the Commonwealth (Ngoh, 1996: 323). In 1995 and during the Commonwealth conference in Auckland, New Zealand, the Southern Cameroon was again denied Commonwealth membership.

With continuous harassment at home, many SCNC activists went into exile and opened many international offices and branches. In 2001 a group of exiled SCNC members founded a so-called Southern Cameroon Embassy in the German city of Frankfurt. From these offices abroad they circulated literature on the Anglophone problems in Cameroon and organised conferences. The most popular conferences were the Minnesota Affirmation of the Statehood and Independence of the Federal Republic of Southern Cameroon, September 26-28, 2003, and the Southern Cameroons Liberation Conference in Dallas, USA, on April 22, 2007 (Ayim, 2010: 192). Apart from appealing for the recognition of Ambazonia, they also carried out anti-Republic of Cameroon acts such as the burning of the Republic’s flag. These activities abroad attracted the attention of international institutions like the UN, African Union, Commonwealth and European Union.

## 2.5. Lawsuits in foreign Courts

From the offices abroad, they intensified their struggle for autonomy by constantly suing the government of Cameroon for their right to self-determination. In 2002, SCAPO sued the Republic of Cameroon in the Abuja (Nigeria) high court arguing that the 1984 change of name in Cameroon was an act of secession of the Republic of Cameroon from the union. In January 2003, a group of Southern Cameroonians acting on behalf of the SCNC and SCAPO sued the government of Cameroon in the African Commission of Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) in Banjul (Ayim, 2010: 147). In October 2005, the SCNC petitioned the UK government on the incomplete decolonisation of the Southern Cameroons. In 2006 the SCNC became part of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation. In 2009 the group attempted to penetrate the African Union but the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights rejected the SCNC petition. The difficulties encountered abroad and the weaknesses of their legal actions probably convinced the SCNC to use violence at home.

## 2.6. The Use of Violence

Although the motto of the SCNC was “The force of argument, not the argument of force”, the movement resorted to violence at several instances. The first protest was on February 11, 1992, when the activists celebrated “federation day” in Bamenda and Buea. This was followed by attempts on every February 11th and October 1st to protest. When

the Foncha-Muna led delegation to the UN failed to convince the UN officials in 1994, they returned home for the AAC2 in Bamenda determined to change strategy. In this connection, SCNC members attacked security forces in Bamenda in 1997 and 200 of them were arrested. On December 31, 1999, Chief Ayamba, Frederick Alobwede, James Sabum and some determined members of the Southern Cameroons Youth League (SCYL) seized Radio Buea and declared the independence of the former Southern Cameroons (Ayim, 2010: 643). The first session of the Constitutional Assembly of the Federal Republic of Southern Cameroon met in Bamenda on May 1st-2rd, 2000 (Ayim, 2010: 127). The SCNC boycotted the Municipal elections of 2002 and the presidential elections of 2004 propagating violence as the way out. On August 9, 2003, the Southern Cameroon Defence Force (SOCADEF) was formed in Abuja, Nigeria (Ayim, 2010: 457). This was a signal that the future was to be more violent.

## 2.7. Cyber Nationalism

Perhaps the best weapon of the post-1984 Anglophone struggle was the internet. Activists abroad used the internet to denigrate the Republic of Cameroon and propagate the Southern Cameroon identity. The most popular forum was camnet internet forum where the literature on the righteousness of the Southern Cameroon course and the abuses of “Francophone colonisation” were posted. It was animated by bloggers like Dibussi Tande who also used [www.dibussi.com](http://www.dibussi.com) to propagate Southern Cameroons activities (Anyefru, 2008). The SCYL led by Ebenezer Akwanga also established blogging sites. Other examples of sites included [www.gobata.com](http://www.gobata.com), [www.fonlon.org](http://www.fonlon.org), [www.gagwane.org](http://www.gagwane.org), [www.martinjumbam.com](http://www.martinjumbam.com). The contents of the websites of these movements vary but nonetheless there are several commonalities: code of independence, flag, history, the UN and the Southern Cameroons, national songs and the international boundary between Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroon (Elong, 2011: 15). This was just the beginning because the internet became the most powerful weapon of the next stage of the struggle.

## 3. The 2016 Lawyers/Teachers Strikes and the Escalation of the Crisis

Another stage in the Anglophone war of independence started in 2016 when lawyers and teachers in the Anglophone regions went on strike or peaceful protest for what appeared to be legitimate grievances. While the lawyers were against the francophonisation of common law practices and the use of French in judicial institutions in Anglophone Cameroon, the teachers were against the marginalisation of the English language and the Anglophone subsystem of education. Apart from lawyers and teachers, there was also a “Coffin Revolution” led by Mancho Bibixy against poor social infrastructure in Bamenda (Tembon, 2018:6). Also on 13 December, 2016 Hon. Joseph Wirba, an opposition MP from Anglophone Cameroon, stormed parliament with a protest speech “When injustices becomes law, resistance becomes a duty” (Tembon, 2018: 7). By January 2017, when the Consortium of Anglophone Civil Societies was banned, the conflict escalated and the “restoration” of Ambazonia became the song for all extremists. This new phase of the crisis had new actors, new strategies and war as the most cherished weapon.

### 3.1. Civil Disobedience

The first strategy of this radical phase of the revolution was to render the Anglophone regions ungovernable through civil disobedience, boycotts, urban terrorism, mass protests

etc. National days such as February 11 celebrated as youth's day and May 20 celebrated as national day were boycotted and/or sabotaged. Mass protests were regular and the most popular was on 22 September, 2017 when men, women, children came out in all the villages in Anglophone Cameroon and in all the major cities in the world including the UN headquarters, New York, to clamour for the independence of the Southern Cameroons (Okereke, 2018: 10). On 1 October, 2017 they celebrated the independence of the Southern Cameroon thereby violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cameroon (Ayim, 2010: 312). The extremists also declared every Monday a civil disobedience day with no work or no activity especially government related activities. Since then ghost towns, lock-ups etc became common methods of fighting the enemy republic.

### 3.2. War and Urban Terrorism

The new *modus operandi* this time was the use of arms or warfare to liberate the Southern Cameroons. Several armed groups were created by the various factions of the Anglophone liberation struggle. The most prominent were the Southern Cameroons Defense Force (SOCADEF) of Ebenezer Akwanga, the Ambazonia Defense Force (ADF) of Ayaba Cho, the Lebialem Red Dragons controlled by Chris Anu, Ambazonia Self-Defense Council, Ambazonia Restoration Army led by Paxson Agbor, Southern Cameroon Defense Forces (SCDF) controlled by Nso Foncha and Manyu Ghost Warriors (World Bank, 2019). These groups acquired weapons through and from Nigeria and even used young men and women from the Cross River State of Nigeria as machineries (Sombaye, 2018: 36). From the use of Dane guns, knives, cutlasses at the beginning of this phase of the war, the "Amba Boys" as they are called later in 2018 acquired AK47s and the deadly M21 which they used against the soldiers and civilians.

Their mission was simple; enforce civil disobedience, attack and kill civil and military authorities, burn schools and promote school boycott, control the movement of citizens in and out of the two Anglophone regions and take over the administration of "their" land. The outcome was atrocities and exaggerated violation of human rights. Civilians like soldiers were murdered, butchered and in some instances buried alive. To enforce school boycott considered to be their best strategy, these armed groups burned schools, threatened teachers, students and parents and kidnapped school heads. In 2016 and 2017, a majority of the schools closed down and as of May 2018, 42 500 children were still out of schools according to the UN office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (World Bank, 2019). UNESCO also reported that by June 2018, 58 schools had been damaged since the crisis started. Apart from the soldiers of the Cameroon army who were targeted, the armed groups also beheaded, tortured and killed civilians considered as traitors or "black legs". The most condemned of their assassinations was that of Florence Ayafor in Pinyin on September 22, 2019 (Cameroon Tribune, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019: 5). Even humanitarian workers were victims of these atrocities intended to force the Yaounde regime to surrender. This was the case with Pascal Ngwayi, a UN worker killed in Nkambe on November 30, 2019 (Baiocchi, 2019).

### 3.3. Cyber Nationalism, Disinformation and Hate Speech

The internet, especially social media platforms like Facebook were used to mobilise Anglophones and incite or instigate riots in the two regions so as to intensify the conflict. The platforms were used to promote disinformation and hate speech against the Yaounde



regime with diaspora activists like Ayaba Cho, Ebenezer Akwanga, Mark Baretta and Tapang Ivo animating<sup>2</sup>. People picked pictures of issues that were happening elsewhere and pasted on the internet making others to believe that it was happening in the Northwest and Southwest villages (Sombaye, 2018: 54). Videos from Rwanda and Cote d'Ivoire were shown as videos from Cameroon. The most popular Ambazonia Facebook groups by November 2018 were Southern Cameroon-Ambazonia resistant front with 74 255 members, SCNC with 38 429 members, Southern Cameroon Peoples Organisation with 17 670 members and Southern Cameroon Teachers Forum with 17 705 members (Sombaye, 2018: 61). These groups propagated fake news and increased the number of those who did not see any reason for Anglophones to remain in a “one and indivisible Cameroon” whether as a decentralised state or a federation.

## Conclusion

This study has traced the main phases of the Anglophone struggle for autonomy in Cameroon indicating the changing strategies and actors. It can be seen that what started in the 1970s with peaceful petitions and protests calling for a return to the 1961 federation developed into a well organised rebellion led by the SCNC in the 1980s and 1990s. A rebellion that benefitted from the liberalisation laws of the 1990s and the literature against the marginalisation of minorities. From 2016, the separatists adopted terrorist methods using the social media as their main propaganda vehicle. The Anglophone problem therefore became the Anglophone war of liberation with armed groups using very unconventional methods to free Ambazonia and or discredit the Yaounde regime in the eyes of the international community. There are fears that apart from the AK47 and M21, the separatist forces may soon have access to more sophisticated weapons. It is therefore clear that if this conflict is not immediately given adequate attention, the casualties from the increasing use of unorthodox war methods may be above those recorded in Rwanda in 1994.

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