



WALTER & FLORENCE GROB - Missionary in Cameroon

FEBRUARY 2017

Dear Family and Friends,

Cameroon is the only other country in the world besides Canada that holds French and English as its official languages. Just as in Canada, things have not always been smooth between the French and English cultures, so too the relations between the French and English sectors of Cameroon have had sour moments. The last 3 months the English-speaking minority in Cameroon has expressed and experienced much frustration at the assessed marginalization of its legal and education systems.

The two English regions (formerly called provinces) in legal matters follow an English Common Law system to resolve matters in court. However, the Government has pervasively appointed French magistrates, familiar rather with a French Civil Law system, to preside in these English Common Law courts. Hence, the English lawyers have been on strike for quite a few months now since the Government has not adequately responded to this complaint.

In schooling, the English education system is modeled after the British system. It is admired by many French Cameroon parents who send their children to these schools. Yet when administrative and teaching appointments are given, it is common for those of a French Cameroon background to be favoured by Government, even to the point of having Francophones teaching English rather than more appropriately qualified Anglophones. Realizing that such circumstances were eroding the English educational system, the English teachers' trade union has been out on strike since mid-November. Pupils of nursery, primary schools, and students of secondary and post-secondary schools have been out of classes since then and their educational year is in jeopardy.

In December, there were several days of protesting and rioting in our city of Bamenda regarding these issues and the Government's reaction. On two days, Florence, upon driving home from the dental clinic, encountered makeshift road barricades set up by protestors and had a difficult time getting home. On two other days, when it was unsafe to drive on the streets because of protests, she had to leave the car at the clinic and walk home (about 4.5 km or 3 miles). On December 8, Walter was taking part in a Finance and Development Board meeting of the Cameroon Baptist Convention at the Nkwen Baptist Centre rest house hall, when tear gas came wafting in from the open windows. The meeting had to be halted for teary eyes, parched throats, and running noses, but stubbornly those in the meeting refused to quit and the agenda was completed.

The Christmas–New Year period was relatively peaceful, but January and this early February have been marked by rotating general strikes in the two English regions, usually for two days of each workweek. On such days, all businesses are closed; there is no banking services and no public transportation. The town is very quiet; in fact, the days are coined as "ghost town days." Obviously, they have adversely affected all aspects of our economy here, and making ends meet for so many is becoming more and more difficult. On January 18, the Government cut off all conventional internet services in

PRAISES

- Thankful for safety and protection during times of unrest in Bamenda
• Thankful for progress so far in the accounting software and system transitions and in end of year work so far
• Thankful for God's hope and presence in uncertain times.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Wisdom and understanding of Government leaders in dealing with the unresolved issues in the English education and legal systems
• Needed Missionary Workers – specifically a seminary librarian, a national missionary facilitator, and seminary teachers
• For the transitions in the CBC accounting system and accounting software to proceed, helping the stewardship ministry.

"And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."
Ephesians 2:22 (NIV)



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the two English regions and we have been without these services up to the time of writing his newsletter.

We are living among a frustrated people and we too are feeling the frustration. But when we turn our eyes to the LORD, we have hope; in fact, we have tremendous hope! Our God has centuries and millenniums of experience seeing frustrated people through their situations. He is the almighty one and we look forward to His bringing us through this crisis. The Church in Cameroon has the challenge of pursuing God's righteousness while not becoming too attached to any manmade political agendas. Please pray for the Church in this regard.

Walter and the staff of the Finance and Development Department continue to go through the process of changing the accounting system and continue to go through the year-end accounting work. The accounting software change that started in November has gone well but is not yet fully completed. We are thankful for the progress so far, but eagerly desire to see these projects completed. Florence continues with her dental practice when it is not interrupted by the general strikes.

We continue to remain thankful and humbled by the churches and individuals who support, pray, and encourage. Without your partnership, we would not have this privilege of serving the Lord in this unique situation in Cameroon. Thank you and keep on striving for the Lord. God bless.

In Christ,

Walter & Florence