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OBJET:

VISIT OF NDAWARA RANCH  
PROJECT ON 14/03/86 AS  
OBSERVERS  
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Up on the escapment that is limited to the North by the Sabga and Babungo cliffs and to the South by the Belo and Mbingo cliffs is vast pasture land whose pastoral value is not terribly appreciable because the main grasses are invaders sporobulus Africanus and Braken Fern. The situation is aggravated by seasonal burning and over grazing. However if well managed it can carry thousands of head of cattle as small streams provide the area with water all year round.

This is exactly the site of a ranch project called Ndawara Ranch belonging to one Alhadji Baba and a project which is said to be about to move away 45 other graziers and an alleged six thousand head of cattle.

On March 14th, 1986 the Delegate assigned the Chief of Division for Pasture Development for Mezam and myself to attend a pillar planting mission on the Ndawara Ranch to hold from 8.00 a.m. following letter of invitation. At 7.30 a.m. that day we were already at Belo junction to wait for the Fundong team. The team came at 11.30 a.m. In between waiting, we visited the Belo market and the site projected for future MINEPIA infrastructure.

We were finally joined by the Sub-Prefect for Fundong and the Lands team from Menchum. We got to the headquarters of Ndawara ranch at 12.30 p. and the team was further joined by the Fons of Kom and Babungo.

It turned out that instead of pillar planting, the threatened graziers and farmers were being questioned on how they could prove ownership to the land. We heard as the three Ardos representing the threatened owners of an alleged six thousand head of cattle said their land had been fenced in and that if they must leave, they will not move peacefully. The Lands Service took over the questioning, asking for grazing permits dating back 53 years, the age of one Ardo claiming ownership of the disputed land.

The representative of Alhadji Baba started off answering questions as to the ownership of the land. When his answers began to move in favour of the complainants, he was advised and he abruptly refused to stand for Alhadji Baba. The Lands Service quickly saw with him and the meeting was postponed to 01/04/86 when it is expected that Alhadji Baba will be present.

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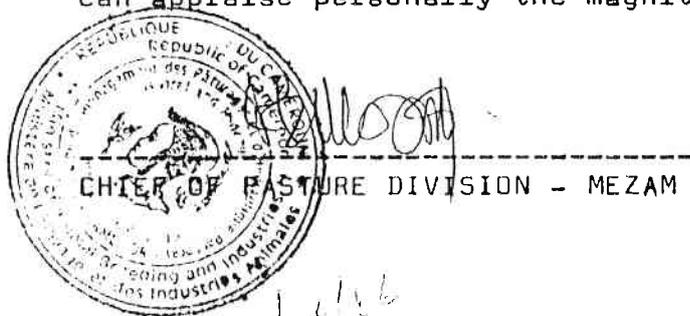
Whatever will eventually happen in Ndawara is only a matter of time. This because what should have been done before now i.e. ascertaining the ownership of land was not done and intervention now is in the middle. Miles of fencing were being carried out and road tracing completed. Two dips are under construction and the place smells of mass exodus for the other graziers. The atmosphere is tense. Our suggestion that developments on the land be halted while the dispute is being looked into were given very deaf ears. The project does not seem to have a limit in terms of land. If organized the place can hold all the cattle that is in place. The fence is taking in all pasture land while to the West is farm land and residential area.

SUGGESTIONS:

We suggest that the project be redefined by our competent services and the land needed be demarcated commensurate with the animal units expected to be kept on the area on a permanent basis. We also find the idea that Alhadji Baba should move people and compensate or reallocate them land frivolous and impracticable. We do not hate the introduction of this exemplary project but all graziers have a right to our national land as Cameroonians. If they must be displaced, the competent authorities must show them where to go.

Officially, the service hears he had an authorisation to move 700 head to the place, he instead move 1.730 head. Where are his papers for creation and opening of a ranch? We don't know. As far as we are concerned, a ranch has not been authorized in Ndawara. It is alleged that Alhadji Baba treats from above, so let us have copies of his dealings so that we can do the part of the service.

We suggest that the Delegate attend the next meeting so that he can appraise personally the magnitude of the problems in Ndawara.



Seen 26/06/86

*Provincial Chief of Service*  
 CHIEF OF ANIMAL HEALTH PROTECTION & VETERINARY SANITARY INSPECTION  
 15.03.86