

NATIONS UNIES

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PETITIONS CONCERNING TOGOLAND UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

Observations of the French Government as Administering Authority

Note by the Secretariat: These observations refer to the following petitions:

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1. Petition from the General Chairman of the Comité de l'Unité Togolaise
(T/PET.7/312)

(1) In his letter of 23 September 1952 the Commissaire de la République at Lomé informed the Chairman of the Visiting Mission that the local authorities had closed the airport proper (installations, tarmac, and runways) to the public solely in the interest of law and order and in compliance with the regulations in force. The public continued to have free access to the areas set aside for it.

(2) The Administering Authority is in a position to state that no special steps were taken to alter the system of frontier control during the Mission's stay in Lomé. In order to prevent any breach of law and order, a straight-forward check was made at the customs and police post at the entrance to Lomé. That step was taken in accordance with the regulations in force (Decree of 10 September 1952 laying down the conditions of entry to and residence in Togoland for French nationals and foreigners, with the exception of Togolese). The local administration gave the reasons for its action in its letter of 22 September to the Chairman of the Visiting Mission.

(3) No pressure was exercised on the chiefs and notables of distant centres to prevent them from coming to Lomé. At least 1,200 persons were lined up along the Mission's route upon its arrival and, as the Commissaire de la République emphasized in his letter 677/DS/AP of 26 September to the Chairman of the Visiting Mission, the crowd obviously included supporters of unification.

(4) The General Chairman of the C.U.T. is incorrect in describing the festival of Yekeyeke as a political demonstration. The invitation of the Prince Regent of Anecho related to a purely customary demonstration held in connexion with a traditional festival - the annual festival of Mina. The members of the Mission who were present saw for themselves that no political problems were raised in the course of the Prince Regent's reception.

The Prince Regent himself is in no way a responsible politician, but a traditional chief recognized by custom - the chef supérieur of the town of Anecho.

(5) Allegations that petitions submitted to the Visiting Mission by members of the Parti du Progrès were drafted or inspired by the Administration are absolutely untrue and were refuted by the French representative in his letter of 24 September to the Chairman of the Visiting Mission.

2. Petition from the General Chairman of the Comité de l'Unité Togolaise
(T/PET.7/313)

(1) The Administering Authority can state that no reprisals whatsoever were taken against anyone after the departure of the Visiting Mission. No schools were closed nor was any construction halted for any reason.

(2) As regards the "new petitions disowning those already submitted", several persons, particularly at Sokodé, have lodged complaints of forgery and the use of forgery with the courts, protesting against the appending of their names and titles to C.U.T. petitions and dissociating themselves from statements they had not personally signed. The Visiting Mission witnessed these protests and has dealt with the incident in paragraph 413, page 126, of its report (T/1034).

(3) Firmin Abalo, customs clerk, was arrested in the act of rebellion and the wilful infliction of blows and injuries and was committed to the courts.

(4) No CUT contributions have been confiscated at Tsevie.

3. Petition from Mr. Ben Apaloo, President of the Juvento (T/PET.7/314)

(1) The Administering Authority points out that only one arrest, that of Firmin Abalo, took place at the public meeting of the Juvento at Togoville on 19 October 1952. Abalo was arrested in the act of rebellion and the wilful infliction of blows and injuries.

(2) The incident is dealt with in paragraph 3 of the observations on petition T/PET.7/313.^{1/}

^{1/} Note by Secretariat: See Section 2 of this document.
