

Marketing Board, so that cocoa from British Togoland could be marketed independently and the revenue would not go to projects in the Gold Coast.

Chapman's trajectory in the further development of the unification campaign is more than ironic when gauged from a security-focused point of view: though his role was somewhat foundational for the post-war Ewe unification movement, upon his return to the Gold Coast he decamped from the AEC to Nkrumah's *Convention People's Party* (CPP), which advocated for the integration of British Togoland into the Gold Coast. After Ghana's independence, Chapman himself would assume the Chairmanship of Ghana's highest intelligence body, the Local Intelligence Committee (LIC), gathering intelligence for example on the Togoland Congress while his brother, Charles H. Chapman, would become Regional Commissioner in Trans-Volta-Togoland (TVT) and enforce the Avoidance of Discrimination Act and the Preventive Detention Act to quell Ewe and Western Togoland unrest.<sup>60</sup>

## 6.2.2 Establishment of the Petition Procedure

Before the start of the Trusteeship Council's 1<sup>st</sup> Session (1946), the unpleasant petitions from the AEC were again subject of an Anglo-French inter-ministerial meeting at Whitehall in March 1947. There, the possibility of the British offering Gambia or British Cameroon in exchange for the French parts of Togoland was discussed, but this was rejected on the grounds that it would be heavily criticised by the United Nations and would not appeal to the populations concerned.<sup>61</sup> In any case, the prestige of the colonial powers would be tarnished if they allowed themselves to be driven by the aspirations of a 'minor' nationalist movement and it was feared that giving in on this point would set a precedent for other nationalist movements, which could lead to the 'balkanisation' of the African continent.

At the end of the month, the Trusteeship Council was ready to start its work in New York. In admonitory words, UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie recapped during the inauguration of the Trusteeship Council that the debates in San Francisco and London...

"... may have raised the question in people's minds whether the interests of the nations or the interests of the inhabitants of the prospective Trust Territories were the paramount consideration. The Administering Authorities may have wondered on occasion whether they or the Trust Territories most needed United Nations protection."<sup>62</sup>

It was a sharp reminder that the Soviet Union boycotted the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the Trusteeship Council. That's why, during the 1<sup>st</sup> Session, the non-administering Council members

60 The Prevention of Discrimination Act (1957) had a progressive veneer in name, but ultimately banned all parties based on ethnic, regional, or religious grounds. Parties like the Togoland Congress or the Ewe Associations became illegal groups practically overnight. The Preventive Detention Act (1958) gave the Ghanaian government the power to detain an individual for up to five years without the right of appeal.

61 TNA (London), FO 371/67718, *Problem of the unification of the EWE ethnic group in Togoland (under British and French trusteeship)*, 1947, Minutes "The Ewe Problem", William Blanch, 21 March 1947.

62 TCOR, "1<sup>st</sup> Session" (1947), p. 1.

were outnumbered by 4:5.<sup>63</sup> This allowed the colonial powers, whose primary concern was preserving their prerogatives by limiting the *rules of procedure* for the examination of petitions to the minimum requirements of the Charter. The history of the Trusteeship System could have been much different had the Soviet Union simply assumed its membership during the Trusteeship Council's first session and used its voting power with respect to the *rules of procedure*. The Council spent much more time and drafted more rules of procedure for petitions than for annual reports and Visiting Missions combined. Most of the rules of procedure were proposed on the initiative of the Administering Authorities, while the non-Administering Authorities mitigated excessive restrictions.<sup>64</sup>

Already in the 1<sup>st</sup> Session (1947), disagreements on the petition procedure arose between the representatives of the colonial powers and non-Administering powers. With the AEC petitions in mind and concerned with a potential compromise of their positions, the French and British representative insisted that, if petitions could not already be "solved on the spot,"<sup>65</sup> they should – like the provisions of the Mandates System – be submitted exclusively through Administering Authorities. The Iraqi Council representative, Awni Khalidy, strongly objected:

"If you want to accuse Mr. X, you do not submit the accusation to Mr. X. That is to say, petitions are mostly, if not always, some sort of accusation, and if the inhabitants are to present accusations against the Administering Authorities to the Administering Authorities, then why have the Trusteeship Council at all? In fact, when it comes to that, why have the United Nations?"<sup>66</sup>

For the Administering Authorities, security was a pivotal aspect during the petition debate: The representative of New Zealand, Carl Berendsen, defused Khalidy's objection via the argument of security: "There is great validity in that point of view. But may I suggest that Mr. X in this case is a very peculiar and particular Mr. X? Mr. X is the Authority responsible for the peace and the order and the good government of the Territory."<sup>67</sup> Similarly, the Australian representative, Norman Makin, raised security considerations to express his concern about the publicity that would result if petitions were circulated immediately in the Trusteeship Council or the Secretariat, or if public access to the petition register were established.<sup>68</sup> The Mexican delegate, Luis Padilla Nervo, countered:

"I do not think the fact that the members of the Council knew of petitions would present any danger to the Administering Authority. We already know of some petitions that have been addressed to us. We know also that in the Security Council complaints of one State against another have been sent in and have been circulated

63 As the United States did not yet bring any territories under the Trusteeship System, administering members were Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and France. Non-administering members were Iraq, Mexico, China, the United States, and the Soviet Union.

64 TCOR, "1<sup>st</sup> Session" (1947), 83, 87–89, 139, 145.

65 TCOR, "1<sup>st</sup> Session" (1947), p. 83.

66 TCOR, "1<sup>st</sup> Session" (1947), p. 90.

67 TCOR, "1<sup>st</sup> Session" (1947), p. 116.

68 TCOR, "1<sup>st</sup> Session" (1947), p. 94, pp. 174–175.

among the members long before the defendant State could have had an opportunity to answer or to send its comments. And those are matters relating to the maintenance of peace and security.”<sup>69</sup>

Finally, the Council’s President, the American representative Francis B. Sayre, put his foot down: “We must not delude ourselves into thinking that surrounding with restrictions the formalities of sending the petition through the Administering Authority will give adequate security to that Authority so far as concerns publicity and the danger of prejudicing the public because it has not heard the other side.”<sup>70</sup>

The Administering Authorities believed their position would be compromised if the petitions were forwarded to Council members before the official comments from the trusteeship territories were available. The most extreme position on this issue was taken by the chairman of the French delegation, Roger Garreau, who believed that no petition should be submitted before the Administering Authority’s views had also been communicated to the Council members. In any case, he insisted that a special representative of the Administering Authority be present when the Council discusses a petition so that always “both sides of the problem”<sup>71</sup> should be presented at the same time, that is, a colonial officer in persona on one side and the paper petition on the other.

Finally, it was agreed that petitions had to be submitted at least two months before the date of the next following regular session, to allow the Administering Authorities enough time for an official response to a petition. It was resolved that petitions could be sent to the UN in three ways: via the Administering Authority, the Secretary-General, or a UN Visiting Mission. The Belgian representative, Pierre Ryckmans, insisted that the UN Secretariat “should never take the initiative of adding any comment whatsoever, which in any case might be misinterpreted. The rules of procedure should not even mention the possibility.”<sup>72</sup>

The French delegation proposed an *ad hoc* Committee, almost identical to the Mandates System, which would have been empowered to discriminate between admissible and non-admissible petitions.<sup>73</sup> The proposal provoked concern from non-Administering Authorities about public criticism if petitions, especially anonymous ones, would be excluded from examination.<sup>74</sup> Ultimately, the Council agreed on the *ad hoc* Committee, which, however, had no power to “throw out” petitions,<sup>75</sup> except if local courts were com-

69 TCOR, “1<sup>st</sup> Session” (1947), p. 96.

70 TCOR, “1<sup>st</sup> Session” (1947), p. 98.

71 TCOR, “1<sup>st</sup> Session” (1947), p. 123.

72 TCOR, “1<sup>st</sup> Session” (1947), p. 126.

73 T/15, *Amendment proposed concerning chapter XIV of the draft provisional rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council / Delegation of France* (31 March 1947) available from [digitallibrary.un.org/record/675417](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/675417).

74 TCOR, “1<sup>st</sup> Session” (1947), pp. 133–43.

75 TCOR, “1<sup>st</sup> Session” (1947), p. 141.

petent to deal with the issue raised in them.<sup>76</sup> The *ad hoc* Committee was supposed to pre-examine petitions regarding their admissibility and possible order of consideration, but any appraisal of the substance was strictly prohibited – this was solely the prerogative of the Administering Authorities, through their comments, and the Council during its debates. Oral hearings of petitioners would only be granted in support of previously submitted written petitions.

In sum, the Council decided upon a procedure like under the Permanent Mandates Commission: the appointment of an *ad hoc* Committee to examine petitions, followed by a general discussion of the petitions by the Council itself including the questioning of a special representative, whereafter the *ad hoc* Committee formulated a resolution based upon the Council's discussion.

### First Written Petitions

Since the Trusteeship System's establishment, Ewe petitioners addressed the Council. Even before the start of the Council's 2<sup>nd</sup> Session (1947), the Secretariat had received seven petitions by the AEC requesting the unification of the Ewe people.

When the French were informed about these petitions, at first they considered them a ploy by the British to appropriate all of Togoland rather than a genuine anti-colonial challenge.<sup>77</sup> Thus, another inter-ministerial Anglo-French meeting was convened at Rue Oudinot in May 1947 to coordinate official observations on the Ewe petitions before the Council's 2<sup>nd</sup> Session (1947).<sup>78</sup> The French and British ministerial representatives agreed that a joint Anglo-French memorandum should be submitted to the Trusteeship Council. The memorandum virtually securitised the demand voiced in the Ewe petitions as a danger of 'balkanizing' the African continent. Accordingly, the memorandum stated that "the proper policy in West Africa is not to create a large number of small, isolated units. [...] It would seem to be a mistaken policy if the powers responsible for West Africa [...] should embark upon a policy which would result in dividing the Continent into a mosaic of rival countries."<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, it was stated that in the long run, a political entity consisting only of the Ewe would be too small and would not have the economic and other foundations necessary for an independent state.<sup>80</sup> The memorandum furthermore attempted to depoliticize the demand of the petitions by presenting the Ewes' claim as a demand

76 The Administering Authorities were concerned to convert the Council into a court of appeal. The concern seemed justified as in 1955 the issue was raised before the Fourth Committee question whether petitioners could be represented by lawyers (United Nations, "Art. 85," in United Nations (UN) *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*, Vol. Vol. II.

77 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, *Affaires politiques*, Confidential Letter to Minister of Overseas France, N° 49, APA, 2 May 1947, p. 9; also see Michel, "The Independence of Togo," p. 298; Ansprenger, *Politik im Schwarzen Afrika*, p. 210; Amenumey, *The Ewe Unification Movement*, p. 49.

78 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3284/1, *Affaire Ewe*, Réunion Franco-Britannique au sujet du problème Éwe.

79 TCOR, "Memorandum on the Petition of the All Ewe Conference to the United Nations" T/58 (1947), p. 12.

80 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3284/1, *Affaire Ewe*, Aecret Letter to Laurentie, 25 July 1947.

that merely appealed to the economic hardships caused by the frontier, rather than considering the petitions as a political movement with nationalist ambitions. Therefore, the memorandum proposed to conduct a study on the possible creation of a conventional zone, which would function as a single customs regime, and to create a Consultative Commission where elected African representatives could advise the administration to mitigate cultural and economic hardships which the border causes. However, a general debate on the course of the border as such was ruled out.

The Commission's name *Consultative Commission on Togoland Affairs* said it all: "Consultative" meant that the Commission had no say, and "on Togoland affairs" had been agreed upon at the instigation of the French because they were very anxious that the Commission should indeed be a Togoland and not a purely Ewe affair.<sup>81</sup> The Consultative Commission had to deal not only with the border running through Ewe territory, but with the whole of Togoland. This was advantageous for the Administrative Authorities, as they could point out the difficulty of making arrangements for the entire border.<sup>82</sup>

The minutes of the inter-ministerial meeting of May 1947 show that the French in particular hoped to silence the Ewe petitions by questioning their admissibility.<sup>83</sup> During the meeting the French and British representatives agreed that the submission of the memorandum should be as late as Article 86 of the Council's rules of procedure allow in order to keep the window of opportunity for the Trusteeship Council and room for manoeuvre for the petitioners as small as possible<sup>84</sup> – a strategy that was to shape the next decade of petition examinations. During the Trusteeship Council's examination of the petitions Thomas Mead and Henri Laurentie were selected to act as special representatives of Britain and France respectively.

The Administering Authorities pursued a dual strategy: on the one hand, by employing the Balkanization argument, they sought to securitize the Ewe demands. On the other hand, they attempted to depoliticize these demands by framing the call for Ewe unification as an economic issue rather than a political one.

### First Oral Hearing

One of the seven Ewe petitions was a request for an oral hearing by Sylvanus Olympio. In retrospect, the Ghanaian diplomat, Alex Quaison-Sackey, noted that none of the Council members had expected such an early request for an oral hearing. The American Council president, Francis B. Sayre, was apprehensive: "hearing of oral petitions is a matter of favour and not of right [...] it is for the Trusteeship Council to decide whether it shall consider a petition, and not for the petitioner."<sup>85</sup> Yet, following the expression of concern

81 PRAAD (Accra), ADM 39/1/676, *Standing Consultative Commission for Togoland*, Anglo-French Consultative Commission for Togoland, L.H. Gorsuch, 2 December 1948, p. 2.

82 PRAAD (Accra), ADM 39/1/677, *Agenda notes and minutes of the Standing Consultative Commission for Togoland*

83 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3284/2, *Affaire Ewe*, Projet de mémorandum sur la pétition de la "All Ewe Conference" aux Nations Unies.

84 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3284/1, *Affaire Ewe*, Annex II, Joint Memorandum: Concerning the attitude to be adopted on the Ewe question at the Trusteeship Council by the French and British Delegations, p. 1.

85 TCOR, "2<sup>nd</sup> Session" (1947), p. 34.

from anti-colonial Council members,<sup>86</sup> the request was ultimately granted. An anonymous observer recalled the prejudice and suspense of the eagerly awaited first oral hearing before the UN:

“we had heard that there was a petitioner coming from Africa and didn’t know quite what to expect. None of the delegates knew much about Africa, and I sincerely believe many of them expected someone to come rushing into the Council in a leopard skin and accompanied by a rumble of drums.”<sup>87</sup>

Yet, addressing the Council in impeccable English and French, it was rather Olympio’s westernized demeanour that caused a sensation. Olympio brought the necessary Bordieuan habitus into the play: Olympio belonged to the Afro-Brazilian merchant elite of Togoland. After completing a business degree at the London School of Economics in the mid-1920s, he worked as a representative of the United Africa Company – a branch of Unilever’s West Africa operations. In the late 1930s, he was appointed director-general for West Africa and almost simultaneously became vice-president of French Togoland’s first political party, the *Comité de l’Unité Togolaise* (CUT). Without question, Olympio provided the Western habitus and cultural capital needed to voice the demand of Ewe unification in such a colonial forum as the UN Trusteeship Council.

Meticulously listing previous petitions sent to the League of Nations and British Government (some of which had been written by his uncle Octaviano), Olympio did not appeal for straightforward independence, but merely for the unification of “his people,” the Ewe, under a single and preferably British administration. He pointed out that for no apparent reason the French administration had banned a meeting between the Ewes living in the French zone and those living in the British zone just before the Council’s current session.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore he criticised the Anglo-French memorandum’s proposal to establish a Consultative Commission for Togoland because its terms of reference were limited to economic and cultural matters, the manner in which the two representatives of the inhabitants were to be chosen was not defined and the proposed permanent secretariat, which was to co-ordinate the efforts of the two Administrations, would be composed solely of men nominated by France and Britain, without any reference whatsoever to the wishes of the Ewe people.<sup>89</sup>

Yet, even despite his eloquent appearance, during the questioning Olympio faced the racist stereotypes. For example, the representative New Zealand asked:

“This is not the first occasion upon which the matter of consultation with Africans has been brought before the United Nations. We actually had such a consultation in connexion with the inhabitants of South-West Africa, and the General Assembly saw fit to decide, rightly or wrongly, that the inhabitants of South-West Africa were so back-

86 TCOR, “2<sup>nd</sup> Session” (1947), p. 33.

87 Alex Quaison-Sackey, *Africa unbound: Reflections of an African statesman* (New York: Praeger, 1963), pp. 129–30.

88 TCOR, “2<sup>nd</sup> Session” (1947), p. 348.

89 TCOR, “2<sup>nd</sup> Session” (1947), pp. 327–28.

ward that they really were not able to express their views as to what should happen to them. Is there any such risk with regard to the Ewe people?”<sup>90</sup>

This comment stands out as one of the few unequivocal illustrations that highlight compellingly silencing by *illocutionary disablement*. This instance is particularly noteworthy as it directly addresses the notion of the ability to express oneself.

*Photo 3: Sylvanus Olympio & Ralph Bunche, Lake Success (8 December 1947)*



Source: UN Photo.

But it played into Olympio's favour that he could keep his composure, putting France on the spot, especially since the joint administration of Nauru by Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain did not rule out a possible joint administration of Eweland. The Anglo-French attempt to depoliticise the Ewe movement by portraying it as a movement for economic grievances backfired. In fact, the French Special Representative, Henri Laurentie, was now virtually forced to argue that the proposed Consultative Commission was 'political enough' and represented "really a political commission, for no commission which was not political could hold such power."<sup>91</sup> Furthermore he downplayed the importance,

90 TCOR, "2<sup>nd</sup> Session" (1947), pp. 348–49.

91 TCOR, "2<sup>nd</sup> Session" (1947), p. 358.

which Olympio attached to petitions that had been send previously to the League's Permanent Mandates Commission:

"The fact that there was a series of written statements – though there were not really many of them – does not imply that partition had given rise to any difficulty whatsoever. In principle, it was perhaps a matter for regret that tribal unity had not been preserved in the delimitation of the frontier. In the territory itself, however, no open crisis was created by this frontier separating the two parts of the tribe."<sup>92</sup>

Laurentie underlined the Anglo-French position before the Trusteeship Council by echoing the securitising argument of a dangerous balkanization, arguing that...

"...if we were to allow ourselves to be carried away by the [Ewe] movement, [...] Africa would return to that condition of disintegration in which it was found by the European colonizers when they penetrated into the continent. Thus, we would be promoting a spirit of rivalry and of disunity which would certainly be contrary to the general interest of Africa. [...] Togoland is not alone in being divided between the United Kingdom and France; the whole of West Africa is divided between those two Powers. [...] To unify Togoland as if Togoland were not part of West Africa would be to upset the equilibrium of the whole of that part of the continent, to ignore one of the facts of the present political situation in Africa. This partitioning of the territories between British and French Administrations is, I repeat, an important factor, one of the most important factors, to be taken into consideration in an examination of the state of present-day West Africa. [...] If we are in a transitional period, we should take transitional measures; measures which might create precedents and might unduly prejudice the future seem to me to be rather dangerous for the welfare of all sections of the population."<sup>93</sup>

The British special representative, Thomas Mead, furthermore, argued that the Ewe cannot even be considered a single nation because they are too fragmented. He concluded that some sub-grouping, such as the Mina or the Awatime, although speaking an Ewe-dialect, cannot be considered Ewe because they do not share the Notsé myth.<sup>94</sup> With regard to the prohibition of the meeting between Ewe from French and British Togoland, Laurentie replied that...

"...the French Authorities considered that on the very eve of the Trusteeship Council's consideration of this matter it was quite useless, and probably improper, to hold a large conference which would have added only *useless noise* to a situation that had been perfectly well defined by previous Conferences [...] Indeed, it was even out of respect, so to speak, for the Trusteeship Council that the French Government thought it inopportune for a manifestation of this kind to take place on the eve of the debate on these questions by our Council."<sup>95</sup>

92 TCOR, "2<sup>nd</sup> Session" (1947), p. 353.

93 TCOR, "2<sup>nd</sup> Session" (1947), pp. 355–57.

94 TCOR, "2<sup>nd</sup> Session" (1947), pp. 361–63.

95 Emphasis added, TCOR, "2<sup>nd</sup> Session" (1947), p. 380.

By seeking to pre-empt *illocutionary disablement* through the prevention of ‘useless noise,’ Laurentie ironically ended up silencing the Ewe conference through *illocutionary frustration*. That was a highly adventurous line of argumentation, which did not go unnoticed: The American representative, Francis B. Sayre, expressed concern about the banning of the meeting, whereupon Laurentie assured him that freedom of assembly not only existed but was even guaranteed in the French constitution (unless, apparently, it constitutes ‘useless noise’). Yet again he repeated that “the French Authorities thought it inadvisable to allow discussion in the public square of what was about to become the business of the Council.”<sup>96</sup> Finally, the Council recommended that the proposed Anglo-French Consultative Commission be set up as soon as possible on the terms proposed in the Anglo-French Memorandum, so that the Visiting Mission scheduled for 1949 could examine the Commission’s work. Although Olympio’s petition was factually rejected, the Council’s president, Francis B. Sayre, judged Olympio to have “set a record-breaking international precedent” and a “‘live example of implementing’ the goals of independence as set out in the UN Charter.”<sup>97</sup>

### Olympio’s return and the Consultative Commission on Togoland Affairs

After the media spectacle in New York, Olympio was celebrated on his return to Lomé, where he gave a lively account of his hearing before the Trusteeship Council to some 5000 CUT and AEC supporters.

Photo 4: Olympio addressing a crowd at Hotel Tonyeviadiji, Lomé (4 January 1948)<sup>98</sup>



Source: ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, Affaires politiques.

96 TCOR, “2<sup>nd</sup> Session” (1947), p. 384.

97 “The Trust Territory of Togoland: An International Precedent,” *The International Law Quarterly* 2, no. 2 (1948): 257; Editorial Notes, available from [www.jstor.org/stable/763176](https://www.jstor.org/stable/763176).

98 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, *Affaires politiques*

Photo 5: CUT Meeting after Olympio's return, Lomé (4 January 1948)<sup>99</sup>



Source: ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, *Affaires politiques*.

Photo 6a & 6b: AEC Meeting after Olympio's return, Ho (11 January 1948)



Source: ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, *Affaires politiques*, "Retour S. Olympio de New York à Ho. Conference." 11 January 1948. Photo by Alex A. Acolatsé.

The French, who intended to integrate Togoland into the French Union eventually, felt reaffirmed that Olympio and the unification-demanding petitions were a ploy by the British to appropriate all of Togoland. Especially the French Governor, Jean Noutary, was firmly convinced that the whole Ewe affair was a British ruse, and that Sylvanus Olympio was an Anglo-American agent.<sup>100</sup>

99 At centre: Augustino de Souza (left) and Sylvanus Olympio (right).

100 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, *Affaires politiques*, Comité Unité Togolaise, N° 49 /APA, 2 May 1947.

As for the situation in New York, there was little concern, by March 1948, the deputy chief to the French delegation, Henri Laurentie, concluded (with a little exaggeration) that the Trusteeship Council has “established itself once for all in the most authentic colonialism.”<sup>101</sup> However, the perspective on how to deal with it on-site appeared quite different:

“The tactic, therefore, is to limit ourselves, for the time being, to the maneuver that is perfectly expressed by the sending of the petition requesting unification. [...] It is up to us to make this maneuver fail [yet] a success before the Trusteeship Council will not solve the issue at the local level.”<sup>102</sup>

The French clearly tried to silence the movement and repress it locally. Accordingly, the French administration began to ostracize the unification movement, especially Olympio's party, the CUT. The French planned to replace the *Conseils de Notables*, established in 1922, with the *Conseils de Circonscription* (District Councils). As purely advisory bodies, they had no executive power, but especially in the rural areas, the French administration saw them as a way of giving small peasant producers a voice vis-à-vis the southern Ewe chiefs and merchant houses, likely breaking the hold of the CUT.<sup>103</sup>

Through secret funds, the government also provided financial support to the newly formed pro-French *Parti Togolais du Progrès* (PTP),<sup>104</sup> which under the leadership of Nicholas Grunitzky also petitioned the Trusteeship Council. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session (1948), the French delegation tried to stress the importance of the PTP petition, albeit with moderate success,<sup>105</sup> since the French representatives themselves had insisted that consideration of all present and future Ewe petitions to be postponed until the report of the 1949 Visiting Mission to West Africa would shed new light on the matter.<sup>106</sup>

The French administration surveilled Olympio and the CUT via the *Service de Sûreté*,<sup>107</sup> which had already been introduced after the Lomé riots of 1933. Its informants, the so-called “fils invisible,” infiltrated a meeting held on 5 April 1948 at the de Souza estate. Since the CUT dominated the *Assemblée Représentative du Togo* (ART) since 1947, it had unsurprisingly elected Olympio as the African representative to the Consultative Commission on Togoland Affairs. The *Service de Sûreté* reported that after the AEC planned to adopt a resolution calling for the abolition on the border between British and French Togoland during another mammoth meeting at Kpalimé on 16 May 1948, that is, ten

101 ANF (Pierrefitte-sur-Seine), 72A]/537, *Henri Laurentie*, Laurentie to Labonne, 13 March 1948.

102 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, *Affaires politiques*, Note pour le Ministre, 19 September 1947, p. 1, translation.

103 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, *Affaires politiques*, Note pour le Ministre, 19 September 1947, p. 3.

104 Alexander Keese, “Rigged Elections?,” in *The French Colonial Mind: Mental Maps of Empire and Colonial Encounters*, ed. Martin Thomas, 2 vols., France Overseas: Studies in Empire and Decolonization Series 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), p. 335.

105 TCOR, “3<sup>rd</sup> Session” (1948), p. 226.

106 TCOR, “3<sup>rd</sup> Session” (1948), pp. 130–31.

107 ANOM (Aix-en-Provence), 1AFFPOL/3297/1, *Affaires politiques*, Service de la Sûreté N° 36: Réunion du CUT

days before the first meeting of the Consultative Commission. Cédile informed his counterpart, the British Governor, Charles Arden-Clarke, that...

"[...] As far as I can see, there are no reasons at the moment which would cause me to forbid the holding of this Congress which does not seem, so far as my present information goes, likely to lead to a breach of the peace. Nevertheless, I propose to take, in due course, all steps necessary for keeping it under surveillance, and I am at once issuing orders for the maximum of information."<sup>108</sup>

Thus, although the AEC resolution was not welcomed by the two Governors, they were not surprised when at the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Consultative Commission in May 1948 Olympio and the other African representatives presented their resolution.<sup>109</sup> At the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Commission in December 1948, the question arose whether the work of the Commission related only to Eweland or to the two Togolands. Of course, the British and the French insisted that the Commission should deal with all of Togoland as a whole. At the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Commission in October 1949, Olympio called for a review of the area covered by the Commission, demanded that more African members be part of the Commission and that the mandate for the African representatives from British Togoland should last longer.<sup>110</sup> Olympio threatened to boycott the Consultative Commission and since the arrival of the UN Visiting Mission was near the British were trying to convince the French to extend the terms of reference of the Consultative Commission so that the unificationist representatives would not boycott the Commission altogether.<sup>111</sup>

Cédile's decision to share information on the unificationists marked the slowly occurring turning point in the Anglo-French cooperation in intelligence and security policy in colonial Africa, which was virtually non-existent up to this point in time. Although France and Britain were allies in World War II, French Togoland was controlled by the Vichy regime, virtually freezing Anglo-French security cooperation across the Togoland border.<sup>112</sup>

Two factors were to unfreeze Anglo-French cooperation in colonial security and intelligence matters: First, the Ewe unification movement was a trans-territorial problem and the French as well as the British relied on mutual intelligence to know what was happening on the other side of the border. The second factor was the general strike and rumours of approaching protests in the Ivory Coast, which began shortly after the Accra Riots of 1948. Both colonial powers saw these events as a threat to the colonial order, resulting from a lack of political intelligence. Although France and Britain reacted differently to

108 PRAAD (Ho), VRG/AD/250, *Standing Consultative Commission for Togoland*, 1948, Governor Cédile to Governor Arden-Clarke No. 82/Cab [Translation], 12 April 1948.

109 PRAAD (Ho), VRG/AD/250, *Standing Consultative Commission for Togoland*, Minutes of the 1st Session of the Standing Consultative Commission for Togoland, p. 2.

110 PRAAD (Accra), ADM 39/1/677, *Agenda notes and minutes of the Standing Consultative Commission for Togoland*, Standing Consultative Commission, 4th Session. Supplementary agenda [71].

111 PRAAD (Ho), VRG/AD/1027, *Standing Consultative Commission for Togoland*

112 Only after France deposed the Vichy regime, there was a French Security Liaison Officer in Accra with whom there was constant exchange.

their respective troubles, they agreed (albeit somewhat half-heartedly) to cooperate on security issues.

## 6.3 Security Matters: Trouble in Accra & Abidjan (1948–1951)

### 6.3.1 The Accra Riots & the Special Branch

During World War II, thousands of troops from across Africa fought for the British Empire. The British's Gold Coast Regiment was sent via India to Burma to fight the Japanese. Many African servicemen were affected by the experience of the war and during their time in India particularly by the exposure to Gandhi's leading voice in the struggle for independence from the British. For the part they played in the War, the African servicemen were promised pensions and jobs, yet upon their return, they faced the deteriorating social and economic situation after World War II, which led to an increased social discontent. The Swollen Shoot Virus certainly exacerbated the general economic situation, which affected particularly cocoa farmers in Southern Togoland, where cocoa was the main source of the entire territory's revenue.

In January 1948, boycotts of imported European goods were coordinated in protest of exorbitant pricing and the control of trade cartels such as the all-powerful Cocoa Marketing Board holding the cocoa price down.<sup>113</sup> On 28 February 1948, the veterans of the Gold Coast Regiment organized a protest march in coordination with the colonial authorities. The ex-servicemen intended to present a petition to Governor Gerald Creasy as a reminder to keep the promises, which were made during the war.<sup>114</sup> Yet, the approved procession diverted from its prescribed route and headed for the governor's seat at Christiansborg Castle, where the police stopped it. While the local police officers refused to open fire on the crowd of 2,000 people, the commanding Superintendent of Police, Colin Imray, panicked as he was facing...

"[...] a vast milling crowd of very excited shouting men, filling the road and even now starting to envelop our flanks. Two thoughts dominated: 'They must not pass' and 'Minimum force'. Many were in fact waving sticks, cudgels, and anything else that came to hand [...] baton charges were clearly out of the question. Again, I shouted, but this time it was 'Disperse or I fire'. More and more stones and yells of derision. Desperately I tore the rifle and bandolier from the nearest man, stuffed six rounds into the magazine, levelled on the man with the horn – now very close – and fired. He went down in a heap."<sup>115</sup>

113 Alence Rod discusses the emergence of cocoa marketing boards in the Gold Coast in the context of tensions between the interests of the colonial state and the peasant population. Rod Alence, "Colonial Government, Social Conflict and State Involvement in Africa's Open Economies," *The Journal of African History* 42, no. 3 (2001)

114 His/Her Majesty's Stationery Office, "Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast," Colonial Reports 231, pp. 96–97.

115 Colin Imray, *Policeman in Africa* (Lewes: Book Guild, 1997), pp. 124–26.