

Republic of Togo

INDEPENDENCE DAY

THE Republic of Togo has recently become the twelfth independent African state. After the First World War, the former German colony of Togoland was divided in two. The western region, which now forms part of the independent state of Ghana, was administered by the United Kingdom, first under a League of Nations mandate and then under the United Nations Trusteeship system. The eastern part was administered by France, and it was with the full consent and co-operation of the French Government that it achieved its independence under the name of the Republic of Togo on April 27, 1960.

To mark this event, the Government of Togo planned extensive celebrations and invited all members of the United Nations to attend them. The Canadian Government was represented at the ceremonies by Mr. Thomas LeM. Carter, Canadian Commissioner to Nigeria.

The Republic of Togo, the population of which is about one million, consists of a long, narrow strip of land stretching 400 miles north from the Bight of Benin between Ghana and Dahomey. A fine beach runs along the coast, where the country is only 30 miles wide. The capital city of Lomé (pop. 70,000) which is clean and pleasant in appearance and has several handsome modern buildings, avoids the squalor and slums that often deface larger cities. The Togolese population dress in gayly coloured African prints and present a general air of cheerfulness, in spite of the fact that Togo is one of the poorest areas of West Africa. Togo hopes to develop as a tourist country. With its fine beaches and abundant sunshine, it has, indeed, some of the characteristics of Florida or the Mediterranean Riviera; sunshine, however, is not rare in Africa, and the Togolese will need to develop something more to attract tourists.

Fifty-six countries and territories were represented at the ceremonies. All of the French-speaking African territories attended in force, their delegations including several prime ministers. Other African states were also well represented, with the exception of Ethiopia, Tunisia, Morocco and South Africa. There were five delegations from Communist countries, in comparison with eight such delegations at independence-day ceremonies in the Republic of Cameroun earlier in the year. The delegations from the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany were particularly strong; both these countries have announced their intention of opening embassies in Togo.

One of the first events was the presentation of letters of credence and ceremonial gifts to Prime Minister Sylvanus Olympio on April 25. The passage into the Prime Minister's office was lined by a guard of honour, wearing balloon trousers and red capes and armed with scimitars, that might have come straight