

From Cameroon to Germany and Back via Moscow and Paris: The Career of Joseph Bilé (1892-1959). Exchange and Knowledge Transfer within Networks of Anti-Colonialism

What I would like to do today is perhaps slightly different to the other presentations in this panel. Primarily I am going to look at some of the political activities of Cameroonians based in Germany during the late 1920s and early 1930s. This means that I am moving away from the missionary context of exchange and interaction to focus instead on metropolitan encounters between not just Africans and Europeans, but also between differing groups of Africans within the wider context of European anti-colonialism and black internationalism. I am going to focus on the political career of Joseph Ekwe Bilé from Bonamikengue, Douala the most prominent of these German based Cameroonian activists. Bilé's biography demonstrates the importance of the German metropolitan setting in articulations of Duala, and by extension, Cameroonian anti-colonialism and nationalism. In particular I want to highlight the development of transnational networks of African anti-colonialism which facilitated the transfer of ideas amongst groups of Africans based in Europe, exchange between the metropole and the colony, and the creation of space for African voices within the European anti-colonial movement.

In Berlin on the 27th of September 1929 six men from Douala, Cameroon, including Bilé formed the political group the *Liga zur Verteidigung der Negerrasse (LzVN)*.¹ The creation of the *LzVN* was symbolic of a tradition of anti-colonial protest amongst Africans living in Germany which had developed out of personal experiences of actual German colonialism as well as the lived experience of the German metropole.² The metropolitan setting, where many of these African men were educated and spent much of their adolescence and adult life, awakened their political consciousness. It functioned as a 'contact zone' in which members of

¹ Concerning the *Liga zur Verteidigung der Negerrasse* see: Landesarchiv Berlin (Hereafter LAB), Rep. 42, Acc. 1743, no. 9054 (Akten des Amtsgerichts Charlottenburg betr. Auflösung der Liga).

² Whilst there is an increasing literature on African and in particular Duala anti-colonial activity in Germany in the aftermath of World War One Adolf Rüger's article on the Cameroonian Martin Dibobe remains the starting point for any further investigations. See: Adolf Rüger, 'Imperialismus, Sozialreformismus und antikoloniale demokratische Alternative. Zielvorstellungen von Afrikanern in Deutschland im Jahre 1919', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 23 (1975), pp. 1293-1308. See also: Peter Martin, 'Anfänge politischer Selbstorganisation der deutschen Schwarzen bis 1933', in Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst, Reinhard Klein-Arendt (eds), *Die (koloniale) Begegnung* (Frankfurt a.M: Peter Lang, 2003), pp. 193-206 and: Robbie Aitken and Eve Rosenhaft, 'Politik und Performance. Deutsch-Kameruner in der Anti-Kolonialbewegung der zwanziger und dreißiger Jahre', in Ulrich van der Heyden and Joachim Zeller (eds), *„...Macht und Anteil an der Weltherrschaft.“ Berlin und der deutsche Kolonialismus* (Münster: Unrast, 2005), pp. 270-277.

the African diaspora were exposed to the ideas of socialism and communism and the concepts of freedom and democracy as well as being brought into contact with German political agents. Such contact often occurred in connection with the Communist International. This influenced the form of, and gave a language to, their protest. Similarly the metropolitan contact zone allowed for unique collaborations and exchanges amongst heterogeneous groups of Africans and colonized people who were otherwise geographically separated.³ Thus, Africans from the former German colonies, primarily Cameroon and Togo, were brought into contact with other colonized Africans and those of African descent from further a field. Alliances developed out of a conviction of common interest such as the shared experiences of colonialism and racism, as well as the difficulties of economic and social survival in the German metropole.⁴ This led to the formation of formal and informal organizations of social and political support. The men involved in these organizations claimed the role of spokesmen for African interests in debates about the fate of Germany's colonies. Equally, they defended the interests of former colonial subjects in Germany itself.

The *LzVN* was formed against a backdrop of economic crisis and rising racial prejudice which had rendered many Africans in Germany unemployed and reliant upon state financial support in order to survive. Bilé, a qualified technical engineer from the technical school in Hildburghausen and a World War One veteran, was one of this number. Part of the function of the *LzVN* was to provide a moral and financial support network for its members. It was conceived of as a Pan-African organization and whilst men from Duala made up the majority of the 30 or so members, membership also included a number of Togolese, at least one member from Melanesia and five women.⁵ Bilé, who later secret French police reports described as the central figure in the group, was chosen to be Secretary.⁶ The Pan-African basis and radical anti-colonial nature of the *LzVN* was further underlined in its stated aims. Paragraph 3 of the Statutes read:

The aim of the Association is:

³ Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001) p.223.

⁴ Concerning transnational collaborations and alliances formed amongst African groups and individuals see: Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2003). In Particular chapter 5: Inventing the Black International: George Padmore and Tiemoko Garan Kouyaté. Also: Immanuel Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement* (London: Methuen, 1974).

⁵ The *LzVN* originally comprised of around 20 members but later increased to over thirty. See: Philippe Dewitte, *Les Mouvements Nègres en France 1919-1939* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985) p.193; Short Report on the Work of the *LzVN*, Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (Hereafter RGASPI), 495/155/87 pp. 404-408.

⁶ Note Lawless on Joseph Bilé, 30.11.1938, Archives Nationales du Cameroun (Hereafter ANC) APA 11201/K Joseph Ekwe Bilé.

1. From International Standpoint:

The liberation of the Negro Race in all respects and through all means with the genuine solidarity of manual workers and the intelligentsia of the whole world.

2. From National Point of View:

a) To seize the national independence of the Negro people of Africa and to establish a large modern state.⁷

The focus was on the international dimensions of what was depicted as a global struggle against colonialism and white oppression. In line with this support was expressed for exploited populations in the Antilles and the United States as well as for the continued independence of Liberia and Abyssinia. A new radicalism amongst Germany's African population was expressed in the language of the *LzVN*'s statutes. This was underpinned by links to International Communism and transnational networks of African anti-colonialism and black internationalism.

The *LzVN* was formed in the presence of the French Sudanese radical Tiemoko Garan Kouyaté, who was Secretary of the similarly named *Ligue de Défense de la Race Nègre* based in Paris.⁸ Several months prior to the creation of the *LzVN* Kouyaté had sought to distribute copies of his group's mouthpiece the journal *La Race Nègre* to Africans in Germany through Communist intermediaries.⁹ In particular the circulation of literature was crucial to the establishment of contact to other African groups as well as the creation of a common sense of struggle. It is conceivable that this was the first step in establishing contact with the likes of Bilé. The *LzVN* in Berlin aligned itself behind Kouyaté's organization and was officially known as the German section. As such it was linked into a tentative transnational network of African activists that Kouyaté and others were striving to establish. This included further groups in France, a group of Congolese in Brussels and a short term affiliate in London headed by the future Kenyan President, Jomo Kenyatta.¹⁰ Equally, Kouyaté exchanged correspondence with leading African-American activists and intellectuals, such as W.E.B. Du Bois. Links were also established to the African colonies and Kouyaté's organization in Paris

⁷ Statutes of the *LzVN*, LAB Rep. 42, Acc. 1743, no. 9054, Bl. 4-5.

⁸ The ANC has an almost complete set of French intelligence reports on anti-colonial groups in Paris. This allows an invaluable insight into the workings of Kouyaté's *Ligue de Défense de la Race Nègre*. See the file APA 10367 Propagande Révolutionnaire and the file APA 11705. Here APA 10367 Propagande Révolutionnaire 31. Octobre 1929. Regarding Kouyaté see in particular: Dewitte and Hayes Edwards. Kouyaté stopped in Berlin on his way back to Paris from the worldwide conference of the *Liga gegen den Imperialismus* that had been held in Frankfurt.

⁹ ANC APA 10367 Propagande Révolutionnaire 31. Mars 1929.

¹⁰ ANC APA 10367 Propagande Révolutionnaire 31. Décembre 1929.

received funding from Senegal and Cameroon. In Berlin, Bilé and members of the *LzVN* were actively engaged in the exchange of information between the metropole and the colony, smuggling propaganda material and copies of the *LzVN*'s statutes in private letters being sent to friends and relatives living on the west coast of Africa.¹¹ In return they received replies from Cameroon suggesting that there, in particular, the opportunity was ripe to organize the masses. Political publications such as *Die Rote Fahne* and *La Race Nègre* were smuggled into Douala and distributed further afield.¹² One of the main responsibilities of the members of the *LzVN* was to maintain personal connections to activists in Cameroon. Similarly '*La Race Nègre*' announced to activists worldwide the establishment of its German section, giving details about Bilé and the other members of its committee.

As well as being connected to this burgeoning transnational network of black internationalism the *LzVN* was also linked to the larger Comintern sponsored anti-colonial and anti-racism movement in Germany. The address of the *LzVN* was Friedrichstrasse 24 home to the much larger organization the *Liga gegen den Imperialismus* (League against Imperialism, *LgI*): A front organization for the Comintern, which was run by the gifted German Communist and publicist Willi Münzenberg. Münzenberg's organization was helping to turn Berlin into a hotbed of anti-colonialism and it strove to establish contact with colonized foreign nationals in Germany, including Africans from the former German colonies.¹³ This was in keeping with the Comintern's commitment to reach out to the masses of oppressed workers throughout the world as well as attempts to establish links between colonial subjects in the metropole and in the colonies. The link between the *LgI* and the *LzVN* lent an authentic African voice to the anti-colonial protest of the *LgI* and at the same time the address in the Friedrichstrasse formed a meeting center for a wide range of German and foreign nationals, bringing diverse groups into contact and fostering collaboration and exchange. Aside from the members of the *LzVN* who were to meet once monthly, this included a circle of Indian students, a pan-Islamist group and a group of Asian intellectuals.¹⁴ Under the guidance of the *LgI* demonstrations were organized and educational courses were planned for would be activists. Alongside Victor Bell

¹¹ Short Report on the Work of the *LzVN*, German Section, 30 September 1930, Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI) 495/155/87 pp. 404-408

¹² Letter L'Administrateur en Chef des Colonies to the Chef de la Circonscription de Yaoundé, 28.08.1931, ANC APA 10226 Agissements Allemands. Those caught in possession of such literature faced being fined or even imprisoned. Tayadigui Michel was sentenced to six months prison and a fine in 1933 for pro-communist activity, including the possession of the journal *Race Nègre*. Telegram Commissaire République to the Chef Circonscription Dschang, 22.11.1933, ANC APA 11223/B.

¹³ Peter Martin, 'Die "Liga gegen koloniale Unterdrückung"', in Ulrich van der Heyden and Joachim Zeller (eds), ..., *Macht und Anteil an der Weltherrschaft*", pp.216-269.

¹⁴ Robbie Aitken and Eve Rosenhaft, 'Politik und Performance', pp. 270-277.

and a further Duala man named Ngange, Bilé was selected for such propaganda training. He attended courses held at the *Deutsche Hochschule für Politik* and the *Marxistische Arbeiterschule* in Berlin which were also attended by foreign nationals from Asia, Africa and the Middle East, again promoting the creation of alliances and the transfer of ideas.¹⁵

Bilé's increasing prominence within transnational networks of Comintern and African anti-colonialism was evidenced by his role in helping to organize the First International Congress for Negro Workers alongside the likes of the African-American James Ford and the Trinidadian George Padmore.¹⁶ Staged in Hamburg in July of 1930 the three day congress attracted some of the most prominent African activists in the anti-colonial movement, including Padmore, Ford, and Kenyatta. Central to the aims of the congress was the promotion of closer ties between trade unions in Europe with those developing in the colonies as well as an improvement in the organization of the anti-colonial movement in Africa. The resulting formal establishment of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers (ITUCNW) signaled the institutionalization of Comintern efforts aimed at organizing African colonial subjects in Europe.¹⁷ This was to be led by Padmore and based in Hamburg which was envisaged as a strategic link between centers of European revolutionary activity and colonial centers. That Bilé was involved in the congress not simply as an organizer but also as the delegate for Africans based in Germany as well as the representative for Cameroon, underlined his growing importance. Similarly it signaled an interest in Cameroonian and African-German affairs. He and the other delegates were invited to Moscow to attend the Fifth Congress of the International Trade Union (the Profintern) and to celebrate the creation of the ITUCNW.¹⁸

Upon his return to Berlin Bilé was increasingly active as a political agitator and speaker. The onset of the Comintern's Scottsboro campaign marked the highpoint of Comintern mobilization against colonialism and racism in Germany in the early 1930s.¹⁹ By this time

¹⁵ Courses for colonial students, 5.11.1930, Russian State Archive for Social and Political History (Hereafter RGASPI), Moscow, 542/1/40.

¹⁶ For more information on the Congress see; C. Schmidt "“Die kolonialen Sklaven sind erwacht...”: Der “Kongress der Negerarbeiter” in Hamburg’, in Heiko Möhle (eds), *Branntwein, Bibeln und Bananen: Der deutsche Kolonialismus in Afrika – Eine Spurensuche* (Hamburg: Verlag Libertäre Assoziation, 1999), pp. 93-97. Initially the Congress was to be held in London, but it was moved to Hamburg following the Labour government's decision to ban the Congress from taking place there.

¹⁷ Edward T. Wilson, *Russia and Black Africa before World War Two* (London: Holmes & Meier, 1974), p.175.

¹⁸ Wilson, p.185.

¹⁹ For further information on the international Scottsboro campaign see: James A. Miller, Susan Pennybacker, Eve Rosenhaft, 'Mother Ada Wright and the International Campaign to Free the Scottsboro Boys', in *American Historical Review* 106 (2001), pp. 387-403.

Bilé had become a fully fledged member of the Communist Part (KPD) and he, alongside another Duala man Wilhelm Munumé, was increasingly integrated into the campaign as it toured Germany.²⁰ He featured as a key speaker at a number of organized demonstrations frequently speaking to audiences of up to almost two thousand people. During the campaign the political message that Bilé was to present was twofold. As a former German colonial subject and German speaker he related his personal experience of colonial oppression to his German audience. At the same time as a black political speaker he functioned as a marker of authenticity for the campaign, representing a general image of Africans and Africa. This lent the campaign and Bilé authority to speak on the situation of African-Americans in the United States and the system of lynch justice. Bilé was quick to draw comparisons between the plight of African-Americans with that of colonized Africans arguing that Africans worldwide were subjected to white exploitation and racism.²¹ This was symbolic of a sense of commonality in the struggle of colonized Africans and African-Americans against a worldwide racism.

This political platform offered the likes of Bilé the chance to contest existing stereotypes of the Black prevailing in Germany. It also enabled him to give voice to the grievances of Cameroonians, both in Germany and in Cameroon. In his speeches Bilé always returned to the issue of German colonial brutality.²² As an example he cited the punishment expedition of 1894 carried out by the infamous Lieutenant Hans Dominik against the Abo living to the north of Douala.²³ This was a particularly topical subject as German colonial enthusiasts were keen to erect in Germany two statues to Dominik which had been brought from Cameroon around 1930. The Christian missions were also criticized because of their failure to act against such brutality. Whilst German colonial rule over Cameroon had ended more than a decade and a half ago for Cameroonian immigrants in the German metropole the German colonial experience remained current in the form of the lack of recognition and discrimination they faced. Similarly they must have been aware of nationalist hopes that Germany's former colonies be returned to her. Bilé's public condemnation of German colonial rule, therefore, represented a rejection and protest against this eventuality. At the same time the German colonial experience provided a frame of reference with which to criticize French mandate rule. Bilé and his contemporaries had little or no direct personal experience of French rule

²⁰ Concerning Munumé see: Aitken and Rosenhaft.

²¹ Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin Dahlem (Hereafter GehStA), Rep 219, Landeskriminalpolizeiamt Berlin, Nr. 19, Bl. 45-48.

²² Newspaper Report, „Politik' mit der Zigarette im Mund“, Lokal-Anzeiger, 15.12.1929, BArch R1001 4457/7 Bl.229

²³ GehStA, Rep 219, Landeskriminalpolizeiamt Berlin, Nr. 19, Bl. 45-48.

aside from information provided in letters from family and friends. Bilé claimed that whilst the French were less violent than the Germans they were more devious.²⁴ By integrating handpicked Cameroonians into the mandate structure of authority at local level, he believed this put the French in a better position to abuse their power. Bilé's critique was not simply of French and German colonial rule, but instead of all forms of outside control and he echoed demands coming from Cameroon itself that Cameroon be granted her independence.

Bilé's political work brought both him and the *LzVN* into closer cooperation with George Padmore. With Padmore's blessing and that of the KPD he was sent to attend the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in Moscow for further training in the summer of 1932.²⁵ Padmore recommended that Bilé be trained in order to later be sent to work in Africa, with the aim of promoting communist ideals and setting up communist organizations. At the University Bilé was enrolled in Section 9, an English speaking section devoted to Africans and which ran courses in "American Imperialism" and in the "Negro Question."²⁶ He also attended taught courses at the Lenin School dealing with subjects such as Leninism and Party Building. This eighteen month stay reacquainted Bilé with Jomo Kenyatta and brought him into contact with a number of influential Africans and African-Americans, all of whom were similarly mobile within this transnational network of African political activity. Unfortunately, little is known about Bilé's stay in Moscow. Only a letter of January 1933 gives a small insight into his experiences. His signature, signing under his alias of Charles Morris, appears beside that of Kenyatta and thirteen others.²⁷ In the letter the African students protested about offensive depictions of Africans which were being produced on the Moscow stage and in Russian school textbooks.

Upon the completion of his training Bilé would leave Moscow only to find that the context of Pan-African and anti-colonial politics in Europe and Cameroon had changed. In the spring of 1934 Bilé arrived in Paris, penniless and with no hope of returning to National Socialist Germany. The Comintern's anti-colonial movement had been crushed and the *LgI* had been shut down. The *LzVN* had also all but ceased functioning. Indeed, with the ascendancy of the

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Peter Martin, 'Schwarze Sowjets an Elbe und Spree?', in Peter Martin und Christine Alonzo (eds), *Zwischen Charleston und Stehschritt. Schwarze im Nationalsozialismus* (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz, 2004), pp. 178-193, here note 23, p.191-191.

²⁶ I am indebted to Woodford McClellan for sending me an edited copy of his forthcoming article 'Black Hajj to "Red Mecca": Africans and Afro-Americans at KUTV, 1925-1938', in Maxim Matusевич, (ed), *Africa in Russia, Russia in Africa* (United States: Africa Research & Publications, 2007).

²⁷ Letter reprinted in: Woodford McClellan, 'Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools, 1925-1934', in *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 26, no. 2 (1993), pp. 389-390.

National Socialists many Africans had fled Germany, with a large number returning to Africa. In Douala organized anti-colonial resistance had also been brought to a temporary halt as many within the Duala hierarchy had made their peace with the French authorities.²⁸ In France the French section of the *LzVN* had long since ousted Kouyaté and after a two year period of inactivity had reformed after having purged itself of all communist members.²⁹ Perhaps more significantly the rise of fascism led to a shift in soviet policy towards closer collaboration with the Western Powers in order to combat the threat of National Socialism. As a consequence the Comintern's commitment to supporting African and Asian revolutionary movements was quietly abandoned.³⁰ The ITUCNW in Hamburg was disbanded much to the anger of Padmore who resigned from the Comintern in August 1933. Bilé, the political activist, fresh from training in Moscow, found himself without an immediate audience to preach to. With the help of contacts, his plight would be publicized in a number of African-American newspapers in the United States as an example of the conditions under which Africans were suffering in Germany. Readers were asked to provide financial help to aid to help the 'refugee' Bilé to return to Cameroon.³¹ After renouncing Communism Bilé would indeed be allowed to return to Cameroon.

This brief sketch of Joseph Bilé's political biography suggests that the German metropolitan setting provided an arena in which an increasingly organized and radical Cameroonian anti-colonialism developed. Men like Bilé and the members of the *LzVN* in Berlin were actively involved in defending and promoting Cameroonian interests abroad during the interwar period. Through their involvement in popular protest they sought to inform their audiences of the brutality of colonialism as well as to challenge nationalist calls for Germany's colonies to be restored to her. This political activity did not occur in isolation. Instead contacts which were established with Anglophone and Francophone Africans based in Europe were part of the workings of a complex network of black internationalism. Often such contact occurred in connection with the Comintern. The nature of this often fractious relationship was clear: African activists received training, (some) financial aid and a platform on which to voice their protests. At the same time their involvement in Comintern sponsored organizations provided

²⁸ Jonathan Derrick, 'Colonial Elitism: The Duala in the 1930s', in Martin Njeuma (ed), *Introduction to the History of Cameroon* (London: Macmillan, 1989).

²⁹ J.Ayo Langley, 'Pan-Africanism in Paris, 1924-36', in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 71 (1969), pp.69-94, here pp.89-91. See also, M.Steins, 'Les Mouvements nègres à Paris, 1919-1939', in *Bulletin des séances de l'Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer*, 29 (1983), pp.267-277.

³⁰ Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement*, p.337

³¹ See: 'The Hand of Hilter', in *Opportunity. Journal of Negro Life*, (March 1935), p.71. See also: Clarence Lusane, *Hitler's Black Victims. The Historical Experiences of Afro-Germans, European Blacks, Africans, and African Americans in the Nazi Era* (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp.115-117.

European political agents with knowledge about the political situation in African colonies and mandate states, connections to further African groups in the colony and the metropole, and lent authenticity to anti-colonial initiatives. This also enabled a transnational transfer of ideas and facilitated a two-way exchange between the metropole and the colony. What remains to be established are the extent of the links between this active anti-colonialism in the metropole with similar endeavors and the development of a proto-nationalism in Douala and Cameroon itself.

In the final couple of minutes that I (hopefully have), I would like to return to the theme of our panel: the missionary context of transfer and knowledge production in order to make a few preliminary suggestions. In Douala specifically and Cameroon in general the European missions, both voluntarily and involuntarily, played a central role in promoting emancipation and anti-colonialism. Much as the ideas of socialism and communism influenced the protest of Africans in the metropole, the missions' teachings of Christianity, the idea of equality, the promotion of the vernacular and spread of literacy all helped "create a group of Africans with an altered perception of their own possible achievements."³² It is worth pointing out that a number of the members of the *LzVN* were mission educated, before they embarked for Germany. In Cameroon, the growth of the Native Baptist Church (NBC) and its split from the European missions made it a focus for Douala discontent and proto-nationalism. It too, at least temporarily, was connected to the growing network of black internationalism with links to the Garveyite movement. There are also apparent links between the NBC and the *LzVN*. The *LzVN*'s president Victor Bell attended the general assembly of the NBC in Douala in 1920 at the time when African ministers once more asserted their independence from the European missions. Further, the head of the NBC, Lotin Same, was a cousin of Bilé and it is not unthinkable that the two might have been aware of each others activities.³³ As anti-colonial protests reached a high point in Douala in the early 1930s so too did Bilé and the *LzVN*'s activities in Germany. Austen and Derrick have suggested that a branch of the *LzVN* was established in Douala by Vincent Ganty in 1930.³⁴ The Nazi seizure of power effectively signaled an end to Douala and African anti-colonialism in Germany and increasingly Cameroonian anti-colonialism would be directed from inside Cameroon itself. Bilé himself

³² Arie J. van der Ploeg, 'Education in Colonial Africa: The German Experience', in *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 21 (1977), pp. 91-109, here pp. 94-95.

³³ Interview with Guillaume Dina Ekwe Bilé, Douala, 17.3.2006

³⁴ Ralph A. Austen and Jonathan Derrick, *Middlemen of the Cameroon Rivers: The Douala and their Hinterland, c. 1600- c. 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 150

largely withdrew from politics upon his return to Douala.³⁵ It would be left to a younger generation of Cameroonians to continue the fight against colonialism that would eventually result in Cameroonian independence. Bilé, who died in 1959, would not live to experience this.

³⁵ Interview with Guillaume Dina Ekwe Bilé, Douala, 17.3.2006 It is unclear as to whether Bilé continued to have contact with either Kouyaté or Padmore, both of whom were in France at this time, whilst in Paris. Both Kouyaté and Padmore renounced Communism prior to Bilé's departure for Douala.