

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

IMW-14
Uhuru

P.O.Box 5113
Nairobi, Kenya
January 29, 1962

Mr. Richard H. Nolte
Institute of Current World Affairs
366 Madison Avenue
New York 17, New York

Dear Mr. Nolte:

The Duke of Edinburgh left Dar es Salaam in his small, bright-red Heron aircraft after a three-day whirlwind visit. He wasn't idle! Dar es Salaam is now a city, the new National Assembly has been officially convened and, most important of all, Tanganyika is now a sovereign independent state. Not bad for three days.

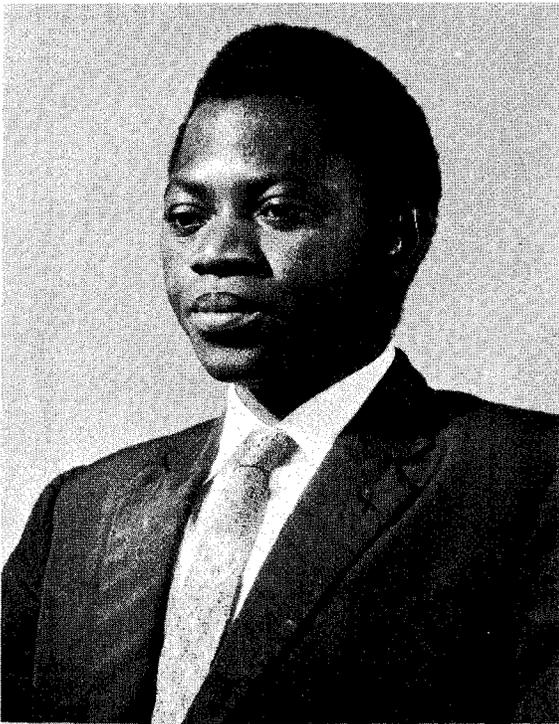
Especially those three days! The short rains had largely stopped, and with it the temperature had risen uncomfortably. Rarely did it go below eighty-five; nor did the humidity for that matter. Outside of Government House and the American Consulate air conditioning is rare, and so the numerous official functions, garden parties, receptions and entertainments fairly swam by. It was worse than a heat wave in New York.

Nobody seemed to mind much though. It was uhuru! What was more, Tanganyika was leading the way. It is the first British multi-racial territory in Africa to achieve independence under a democratic government. Tanganyikans are proud that their quiet approach to race relations has avoided most of the tension found in neighboring Kenya and Northern Rhodesia. After the recent experiences of another neighbor, Congo, African political leaders have taken uhuru very seriously. Special teams have been touring the districts telling the people exactly what uhuru will mean to them. The teams also warned that Government would take stern measures against hooliganism. Those who thought uhuru meant private property was to be shared were in for a great shock, they told their listeners.

The campaign appears to have borne fruit. Throughout the country there wasn't a single untoward incident to mar the quiet and dignified independence celebrations. There was rejoicing and celebrating everywhere, but high spirits never got out of hand. In Dar es Salaam, at least, there wasn't even very much pombe drinking.

We arrived in Dar es Salaam a day before the main events. Having been there only three weeks earlier, we were struck by the tremendous job that must have been done cleaning up and putting out decorations. Flags were flying, buildings were newly painted, stores had uhuru displays, and even the dilapidated old Splendid Hotel (where we had last stayed) had managed to whitewash its ground floor. Nyerere's photograph was everywhere.

Meanwhile, guests were pouring in, greatly taxing Dar es Salaam's inadequate hotel system. The Government took most of the rooms, and

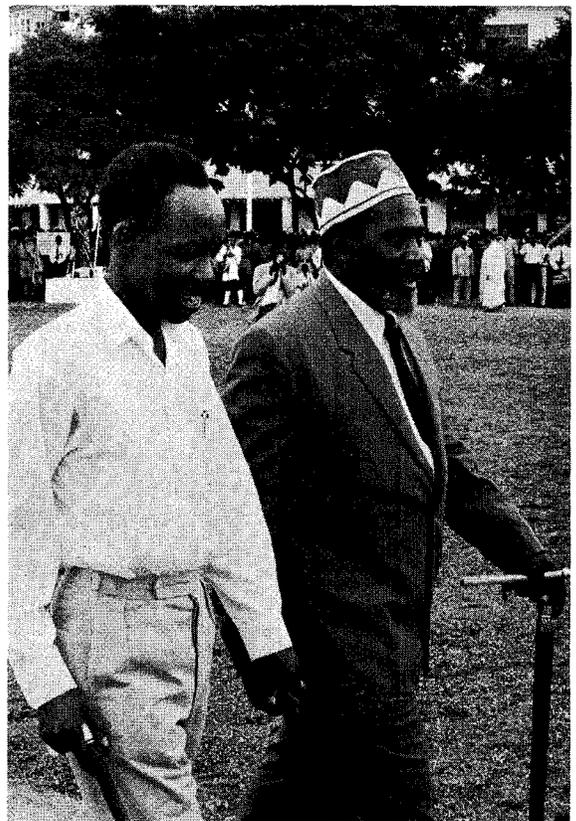
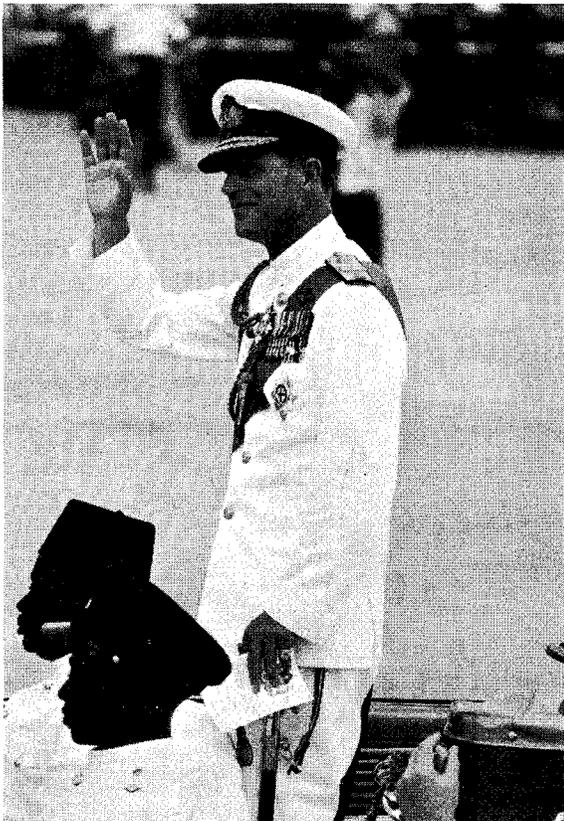


Leading Personalities Present
During the Uhuru Celebrations

(above l.) Rashidi Kawawa, then Minister Without Portfolio, now Prime Minister (portrait courtesy T.I.S.).

(below l.) H.R.H. The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

(below r.) Julius Nyerere and Jomo Kenyatta.



many residents were asked if they could accommodate official guests. Happily for us, the Katanga crisis called many reporters to Elisabethville, and so we ensconced ourselves in one of Dar es Salaam's finest, the New Africa. Among the better-known delegates and guests were Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., Cheddi Jagan of British Guiana, Sir Grantley Adams of the Federation of West Indies, Sylvanus Olympio of Togo, Ralph Bunche from the United Nations and the Aga Khan. Clearly we were in for an exciting time.

The first official function we attended was the Prime Minister's press conference Thursday afternoon. Responding to questions, Mr. Nyerere said Tanganyika was entering independence both jubilant and anxious: jubilant because it had always wanted its independence and anxious because it knew independence would bring fresh responsibilities. He said Tanganyika's aim was to develop and become a happier country. The big problem is development. Can the pace of development keep up with the people's aspirations? Unfortunately, "Mangoes won't grow faster in order to help Julius out of a serious problem."

One correspondent asked why, as the Central African Federation had not been invited to the celebrations, its flag was flying at the Dar es Salaam airport. Nyerere roared with laughter. "Good heavens. That is a very good question. I am going to find out. If it is there, it may have to come down." It did! Nyerere has a delightful sense of humor, a refreshing quality in any politician.

That night we were entertained at the Goan Institute by the shy and retiring Minister Without Portfolio, Rashidi Kawawa. There was a formidable array of African dancers and drummers who kept going until quite late in spite of the great heat. Here we met Colonel Hereford, a retired British Army colonel, whose job it is to plan and arrange uhuru celebrations. He has done those of Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tanganyika and seems to be in line for Uganda's next October. He told us that ideally he needs six months to do a good job but that it can be done in four, as in Sierra Leone. The determining factor is the number of steel stands, automobiles and other accessories that must be ordered from abroad. He enjoys his profession, but it appears he doesn't have much longer to practice it.

The first important public event was the unveiling of the Independence Monument at Mnazi Mmoja (One Coconut Tree) in the center of Dar es Salaam on Friday morning. This is a simple stone obelisk surmounted by a torch, with no name inscribed upon it, only the words "Uhuru na Umoja" (Freedom and Unity) at the bottom. George Kahama, the Minister for Home Affairs, gave the opening address, but unfortunately the public address system went awry and we couldn't understand a word although he spoke in English. A perplexed gentleman sitting next to me, a visitor who thought it was Swahili, asked me why he spoke that way. By the time Nyerere had risen to speak someone had turned the microphone off completely, so at least those nearest to him could hear what he had to say. Nevertheless, it didn't seem to dull anyone's

enthusiasm. Later Nyerere and those on the dais (the cabinet, Kenyatta, Ngala, etc.) went forward to unveil and inspect the monument.

The torch on top of the Independence Monument was part of a theme running through the celebrations that the light of freedom would shine beyond Tanganyika's borders. In a speech before the National Assembly in 1959 Nyerere had said, "We the people of Tanganyika would like to light a candle and put it on top of Mount Kilimanjaro, to shine beyond our borders, giving hope where there was despair, love where there was hate and dignity where before there was only humiliation." Nyerere had insisted that, at the moment of independence, there should be some ceremony on the top of the mountain. A large expedition was organized to raise the new flag and light a symbolic torch on the summit at midnight on the eighth. A massive bonfire and rockets were to have been visible from Nairobi. Unfortunately clouds covered the peak at the time, and so the light was seen no further than Moshi at its foot. Nevertheless it was considered a great success.

Late Friday afternoon we went to the airport to welcome the Duke of Edinburgh. He had flown from Gambia where he and Queen Elisabeth had been on a Royal Tour. He was at the controls of his plane when it landed, and a moment later he stepped out into the heat of the sinking sun. He reviewed the honor guard, met Julius Nyerere and was gone almost before we knew it.

While Prince Philip left for Government House and later a State Banquet, Kitty and I joined ex-Institute Fellow Smith Hempstone (and wife Kitty) for dinner. Afterwards we all went to the new National Stadium for the Midnight Tatum, at which Tanganyika's flag would be raised for the first time. Evidently a good proportion of Dar es Salaam had decided to do the same thing, for there were 75,000 people present.

We arrived at the Stadium about nine-thirty and it was rapidly filling up. In front of the Royal Stand stood a huge flagstaff with the Union Jack fluttering in the soft breeze. Cheerful music blared from the loudspeakers. A car drove into the arena and a voice announced, "Ladies and Gentlemen, your Prime Minister." Soon afterwards the Duke of Edinburgh arrived, followed closely by the Governor and Lady Turnbull. Massed bands marched to martial music. We sat back to watch.

For about an hour we were entertained by bands, police dogs (one preferred to follow his master rather than obey and was thus a highlight of the show), physical training exercises, a mock battle and a toy soldiers display executed by police cadets. Shortly before midnight the King's African Rifles formally became the Tanganyika Rifles as the Regimental Colors were marched across the arena and handed to a guard of the new force.

Three priests called for God's blessing on the new nation

and asked the crowd to pray in silence for a brief moment. Sir Richard Turnbull and Julius Nyerere then walked to the front and faced the flagstaff, with the Union Jack spotlighted at its top, while the troops presented arms and the band played "God Save the Queen".

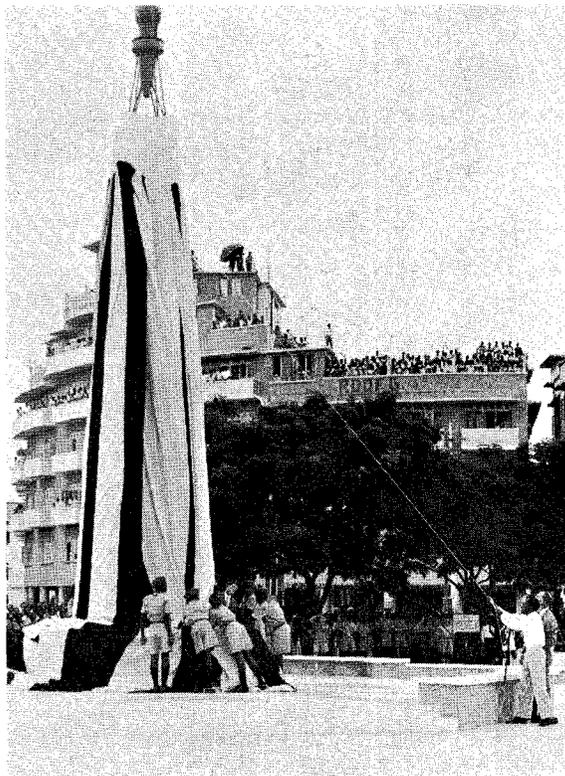
At midnight, the lights were suddenly switched off and, after a moment of silence, on again while the new flag was raised to the music of the new national anthem, Mungu Ibariki Afrika (God Bless Africa). A great roar grew and grew. Nyerere and Sir Richard Turnbull shook hands and walked back to the stand.

That was it. Tanganyika was independent. It was a subdued but moving few moments.

Suddenly fireworks burst into the air. There were rockets, shells and colorful stars as well as a portrait of Nyerere and the new Tanganyika Flag. The coup de grace was a full-fledged waterfall of golden fire. We were sitting up-wind, directly in line of the fallout, and so were black when we returned to the New Africa hours later. The streets were empty. Not a bar was open. Everyone had gone to bed.

We were awakened early the next morning by a gun salute from ships of the Commonwealth Nations not one hundred yards away. We rushed off to the actual independence ceremony at which Sir Richard Turnbull took the oaths making him Governor-General, Prince Philip handed over the Constitutional Instruments, the formal expression of Tanganyika's independence, and Nyerere and his Ministers also took formal oaths of office. Turnbull, Prince Philip and Nyerere all said how happy they were that Tanganyika had achieved independence, jet fighter and bomber aircraft roared over the stands and the brief ceremony was over. We rushed back to the New Africa for a fresh lemonade and for relief from the hot sun.

The rest of the celebrations passed quickly. We attended a press reception for Prince Philip, the Civic Welcome to celebrate Dar es Salaam's achievement of city status, a massive garden party where prominent guests were separated from the hoi polloi by a barrier, and the State Opening of Parliament. After delivering the Speech from the Throne on Monday morning, Prince Philip left for a quick visit to Serengeti National



Nyerere unveils the Independence Monument

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Park to see some of Africa's wildlife.

On Tuesday Nyerere and Kawawa flew to New York to be present at the United Nations when Tanganyika was elected its 104th member. Officials announced the cost of the uhuru celebrations would exceed the £450,000 originally estimated and would probably come closer to £1,000,000. Dar es Salaam's store-owners found themselves in the midst of a boom, and property values soared as new nations established diplomatic relations with Tanganyika and sought appropriate office space and houses. The celebrations were over, life was returning to normal and everyone settled down to the job of making uhuru a success.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Michael Wright". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ian Michael Wright

Received New York February 8, 1962

THE ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF TANGANYIKA



The central feature is an African warrior's shield. The upper part of the shield signifies the red soil of Africa. Underneath is the Tanganyika Flag of green, gold and black. The wavy bands on the white background represent the land and sea of Tanganyika's long coastline and Tanganyika's lakes.

On the shield is a torch signifying freedom, enlightenment and knowledge. The four interlaced rings around the torch represent the principle of Unity. The shield is set on Mount Kilimanjaro. An elephant tusk is on each side of the shield which is supported by an African man and woman. The cotton bush and the coffee bush indicate the theme of co-operation.

"Uhuru na Umoja" means "Freedom and Unity".