

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

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IMW-29
Tanganyika: One Year Later

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Institute of Current World Affairs
366 Madison Avenue
New York 17, New York

Dear Mr. Nolte:

A year ago to this day Tanganyika achieved independence. Today, on the first anniversary of that event, Julius Nyerere assumes the new office of President and Tanganyika becomes a Republic within the Commonwealth.

This is only an indication of the more important changes which have taken place, however. During the past year a new spirit has swept over the country. The traveller from Nairobi to Arusha gets his first impression of it when he crosses the border at Longido below the mountain of the same name and near the site of an important First World War battle. There he signs a ledger, which in the past asked the racial composition of his car's passengers under the headings 'European', 'Asian', and 'African'. Today he signs the same ledger under the watchful eyes of the same policeman, but the order is different: 'African', 'European', and 'Asian'. Wherever he goes he finds there is a new self-assertion and dignity in being African and independent.

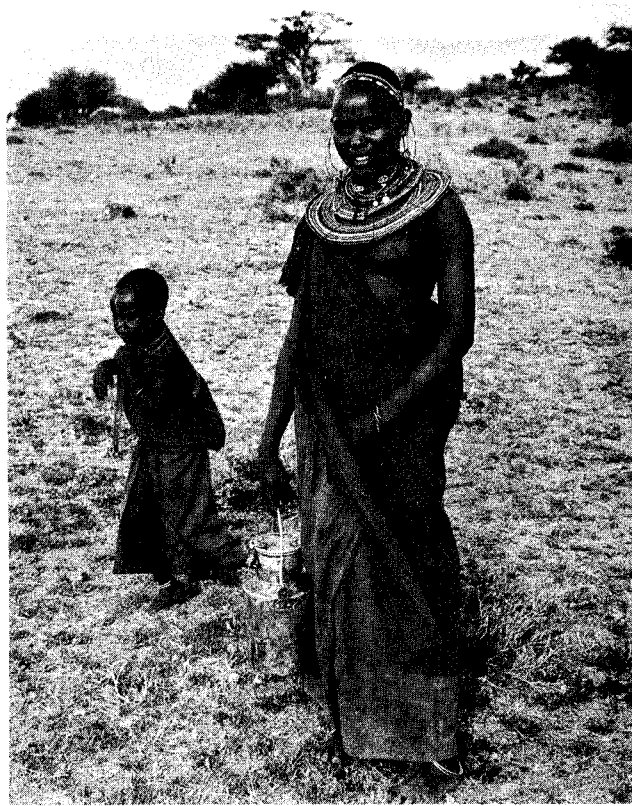
In many respects Tanganyika appears much the same, but just below the surface widespread changes have been effected which will in time alter the entire structure of the nation. For quite a while Tanganyika's leaders have felt the methods they inherited from British rule were inappropriate to an independent African state, and it is these changes which have marked the transition from colonial to home rule, as Tanganyika seeks an African way.

Tanganyika has had its full share of problems during its first year of independence. Geographically alone, the size of the country, its poor communications, and the extreme backwardness of the great majority of its people have hindered all attempts to impose a strong centralized government. What is more it took Tanganyika quite a while to realize it was really independent. I attended last May's session of the National Assembly, fully five months after uhuru, and was deeply impressed by various indications that the full meaning of independence had only just burst upon most of the members. Although such an observation can't be documented, it was sensed.

Long before Tanganyika achieved independence it had become quite clear that TANU's masterly slogan, "uhuru na kazi" (freedom and work), which quickly became not only a political rallying-cry but also a common greeting in use everywhere, was honored more in the breach than in fact. Even TANU with all its popular support was unable to translate the second half of this slogan, "work", into



Will traditional Masai society disappear in an independent Tanganyika? Their determined resistance to change is known to irk the Government which wants their potentially rich land properly developed. Quaint custom won't be allowed to stand in the way of development and Ujamaa.



actuality. Upon independence Nyerere was obviously disturbed to find TANU, to all intents and purposes, dead as an energetic and constructive grass roots party. Although it had fought effectively for independence, it had not risen to the even greater challenge of helping create a vigorous new nation.

Nyerere, whose determination to oust the old social order and hasten the new has often been underestimated, resigned as Prime Minister to devote himself to the reorganization of TANU into "a strong political organization active in every village, acting like a two-way all-weather road, along which the purposes, plans and problems of government can travel to the people, and ideas, desires and misunderstandings of the people can travel direct to the government". In short TANU was to be nothing less than the instrument to build a new nation.

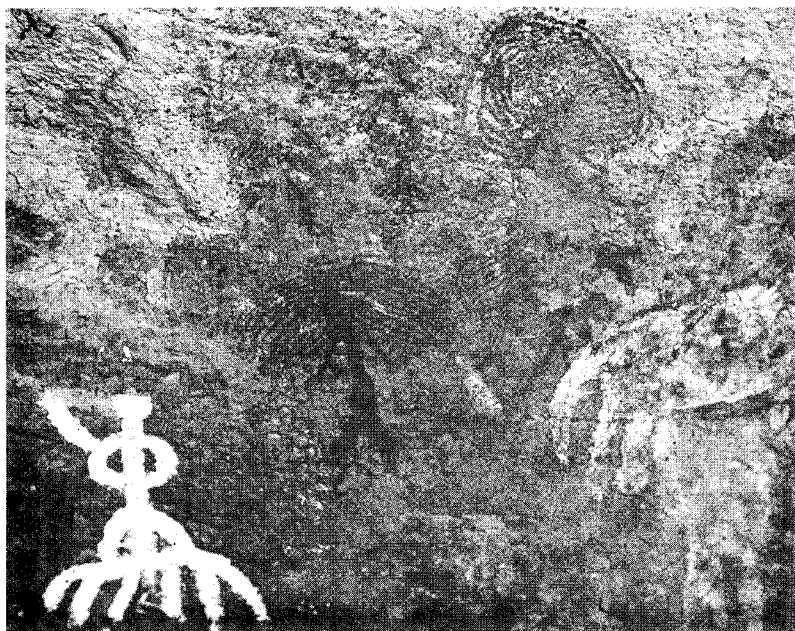
It was also clear from an article Nyerere wrote shortly before his resignation entitled "One Party Government" that TANU as a party would assume a pre-eminent role in the formulation of national policies. At his press conference announcing his acceptance of the office of Prime Minister, Rashidi Kawawa said, "Nyerere is the commander-in-chief and we are his troops," and he admitted bluntly that he would take his orders from TANU.

Nyerere is a man of action and so has written little of his political philosophy. Last April, however, he wrote a small pamphlet called "Ujamaa, The Basis of African Socialism" in which his ideas are clearly stated. An interesting sidelight is that "Ujamaa", written in English, purposely won't be translated into Swahili, although Nyerere writes it fluently and has just completed a translation of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar".

Nyerere's pamphlet is an attempt to create a new national personality for Tanganyika by turning, for inspiration, to African tradition where dress, art, history and tribal institutions all have something to contribute. Ujamaa, or familyhood, refers to the traditional economic and social system in which everyone works, no one is either rich or poor, and all benefit equally throughout their lives. Nyerere suggests a modern modification of the traditional system, an African version of the European welfare state. It is each person's duty to work toward this goal, and no one (read here, no member of the élite) should "blackmail the community" by demanding more than his share. Good socialists must always "keep their demands within the limits imposed by the society as a whole".

This is the closest anyone has yet come to suggesting a Tanganyika Way, and it has clearly been accepted as government policy. In announcing Nyerere's candidacy for President on August first Oscar Kambona said, "Our task is clear---it is the building of Ujamaa in a people's democracy." It has been this search for an African pattern which has dominated official thinking and has been the cause of those many changes which have dismayed a few and surprised us all.

The most obvious example of Ujamaa is the multitude of self-help schemes which have sprouted all over with the Government and



Tanganyika's tradition extends at least as far back as the anonymous pre-historic men who covered this cave wall with paintings in at least three different eras (elephant on right).

TANU's active encouragement. Villagers everywhere have come together voluntarily to build schools, clinics, community centers and roads. It has cost the Government very little, but without overall planning and control much village initiative and enthusiasm have been wasted. Unplanned and often unneeded only to be abandoned when

ed buildings sprang up all over the country money for more materials did not arrive.

At the same time the schemes' voluntary aspect quickly disappeared, and they have become compulsory which is defended as tribal custom. Usually a day each week is set aside for communal labor, and those who do not attend are fined. To reinforce this system the National Assembly has passed a bill making it an offence to "hinder" self-help schemes. In this context "hinder" is generally assumed to mean "refuse to take part".

Nevertheless there is lots of enthusiasm and a genuine effort is being made. Much of the inefficiency has been ironed out and there is considerably more planning, but it is admitted the schemes will not significantly affect Tanganyika's economic development. Their chief purpose is to establish a new mood in the people and to encourage a bit of work with uhuru.

Another important example of African socialism is the proposed land reform legislation which will mainly affect the immigrant population. The Government intends to abolish freehold title and substitute 99-year leases at nominal annual rents. The object is development, and so the leases will include development clauses. Although only one per cent of the land area of Tanganyika has been alienated, almost all of it to Europeans, Government officials rightly point out this is the best land in the country, and a lot of it hasn't been developed as fully as it could be. By making development compulsory the Government hopes to increase the productivity of the land and get rid of those who, for one reason or another, don't wish to comply. Observers generally feel this policy is justified because of the widespread land hunger in most of those areas with European estates.

Two other important steps also bear directly on the encouragement of economic development. At independence, if not before, the

decision was taken to enlarge the rather conservative World Bank plan by \$28 million even though no one knew where Tanganyika could possibly find the money. Nevertheless, as a senior British civil servant said to me, with a wink, "Don't worry! If they go bankrupt implementing the plan, someone will bail them out."

The other is that legislation will soon be introduced guaranteeing investors the right to repatriate their capital, profits and dividends to source. In announcing this Kawawa declared, "My Government fully realizes that unless the foreign investor is given concrete and legal assurances as to the safety of his investment and the earnings derived from it, he will be reluctant to invest."

In general the most striking trend in independent Tanganyika is the steady increase in the power of the central Government. This applies in such diverse areas as local government, labor, and the cooperatives. No doubt rapid development requires a strong central authority, but this is not the only and perhaps not even the main argument for increasing its power.

Concerning local government, it has been said that "No country which is striving for economic development at a forced pace is likely to have a natural taste for free internal institutions." That taste must be acquired. Recent reforms in local administration have not led to direct Government intervention, but the end result has been greater control from the center, both by Government and TANU.

Soon after independence Provincial Commissioners were demoted to Regional Secretaries and Regional Commissioners were appointed in their place. The same happened at district level when DCs were replaced by Area Commissioners. The new commissioners are TANU appointees who report directly to the Prime Minister (rather than to the Minister of Local Government) and whose task it is to propagate TANU policy. They are responsible for projects like the self-help schemes and are almost local party bosses. Clearly the object is to separate the political and administrative functions of government, both of which used to be performed by one man.

The Government has also called upon all chiefs to resign

Detail: A woman with long hair
(about 8" high).



their administrative posts and retain only their traditional roles. Many are opposed but, in a move designed to act as an example to others, two "irreconcilables" have been banished to remote corners of southern Tanganyika, far from their homes and seats of power.

Furthermore, local councils are also in the process of change. Most of them used to be tribal authorities, but by continuing reforms initiated before independence all but two have been transformed into rural district councils representing an entire district and its population. With TANU's eclipse of purely tribal parties (such as the Chagga Citizen's Union), often under strong pressure, TANU is playing a far greater role in local politics, often to the chagrin of district leaders who don't feel it is sufficiently attuned to local conditions.

Finally, the judicial system is being reorganized. In a recent broadcast Chief Fundikira, the Minister of Justice, announced that Government was trying to unify the courts and make one system apply in the whole country. The problem lies in trying to bridge the gap between western legal concepts and customary law. A committee is now at work to determine how best and how quickly this can be done. District Commissioners will no longer be allowed to dispense justice, and it is hoped Tanganyika will soon have "a completely independent judiciary from the lowest courts to the highest".

Two of the most controversial pieces of legislation since independence have been the labor act and the preventive detention act. The former, enacted after a steadily rising tide of strikes, curtails the freedom of trade unions to strike without the approval of the Minister of Labor and leaves organized labor almost powerless. In spite of the Tanganyika Federation of Labor's furious opposition, National Assembly members followed TANU's orders and the bill was passed almost unanimously after very little debate.

The preventive detention act, which was greeted with such disapproval abroad, enables the Minister of Home Affairs to order the detention of persons who conduct themselves "as to be dangerous to peace and good order or are acting in a manner prejudicial to the defence of Tanganyika or the security of the State, or if the Minister is satisfied that their detention is necessary to prevent them conducting themselves or acting in any such manner". Although Tanganyikans generally accept the necessity for such legislation, Nyerere among others is said to have doubts about the sweeping powers conferred upon the Minister.

It was not the contents of this bill alone which caused raised eyebrows; it was also its method of presentation. As with several other pieces of controversial legislation, it was introduced under certificate of urgency which allowed it to go through all its stages in the National Assembly in a day or two, thus stifling full democratic debate.

One of the most talked-about policies of the present Government is the rapidity with which it is Africanizing the civil service. It specifically rejects localization, which refers to making jobs available to Tanganyikans of any race (European, Indian, Arab), until the

proportion of African civil servants approximates that of the population.

The speed of Africanization is the direct result of the tremendous pressure brought by loyal party workers demanding rewards for their services. This the Government has been unable to oppose effectively, and so it is often inexperienced up-country TANU leaders who move into the offices of departing British officials.

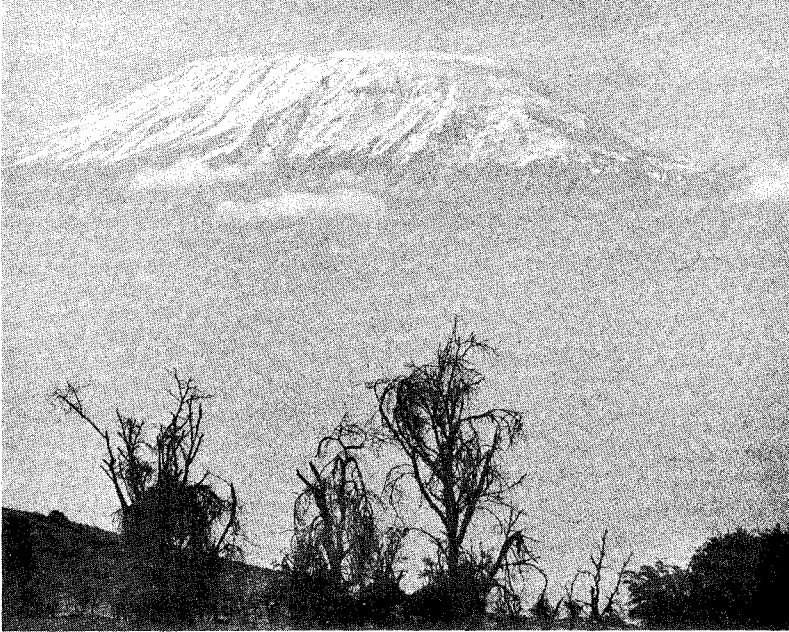
There is widespread discontent about this, especially among British-trained African civil servants who are unhappy to see unqualified political appointees promoted over their heads, often at the cost of the principles of impartial administration. Others are disturbed by the general decline in Government services as a result of their inefficiency. It is said Nyerere himself doesn't like the situation but can not put a stop to it over TANU's opposition.

Working in Dar es Salaam has lured not only the unqualified but also some of the ablest of Tanganyikans. Many were teachers; so many in fact that Ministry of Education officials complain of de-Africanization in schools. Today there are fewer African secondary school teachers than there were two years ago, and this is why programs providing qualified American and British teachers are so well received and so important. Evidently, education ranks low in priorities of Africanization, so the need will continue to exist for a long time. It is also an excellent way of maintaining standards in education while freeing a large number of the better-educated for Government service where white faces are increasingly unacceptable.

Actually white faces (and Asians too for that matter) are increasingly unacceptable throughout the country. TANU has not opened its membership to non-Africans as it was expected to do soon after independence. It is no secret that many of the TANU rank and file want to kick them all out and not only the few white extremists whose expulsion created such a stir a few months ago. What this bodes for the future is not clear, but it seems that after the next general election there will no longer be European or Asian National Assembly members unless they are nominated, a prerogative of the President under the new republican constitution.

Tanganyika is often hard to understand, but it is clear that running an independent nation has proved far more difficult than anticipated. Indeed this past year has been a difficult one for all concerned: Nyerere hasn't been very successful in reasserting his control over TANU; many of the most valuable civil servants either have been Africanized or have left just before they were to be, leading to increased administrative inefficiency; and there are indications tribalism is on the increase.

Nevertheless, the new Republic may mark the turning point. Nyerere has at long last returned to active political leadership, and his new role as President will be considerably more powerful constitutionally than his old one of Prime Minister. For this reason the constitution has come in for considerable criticism, and probably unjustly so for his new powers are not appreciably greater than those, say, of the American President. In question



There really is a candle
on top of Kilimanjaro,
the highest point in Africa.

only is the effectiveness
of his control over his
party and his nation.
Tanganyika still wants to
set an example; the purpose
and goodwill remain. From
now on Tanganyika will be
judged by results, as she
enters a new era.

Certainly much, if
not everything, depends
on Nyerere who said a few
years ago, "We the people
of Tanganyika would like
to light a candle and put
it on top of Mount Kili-
manjaro to shine beyond
our borders, giving hope

where there was despair, love where there was hate, and dignity where
before there was only humiliation."

The light has flickered at times, but it's still there.

Very sincerely yours,

Ian Michael Wright

Received in New York December 11, 1962.