

## INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

IMW-36  
Arusha

P.O. Box 770  
Arusha, Tanganyika  
July 25, 1964

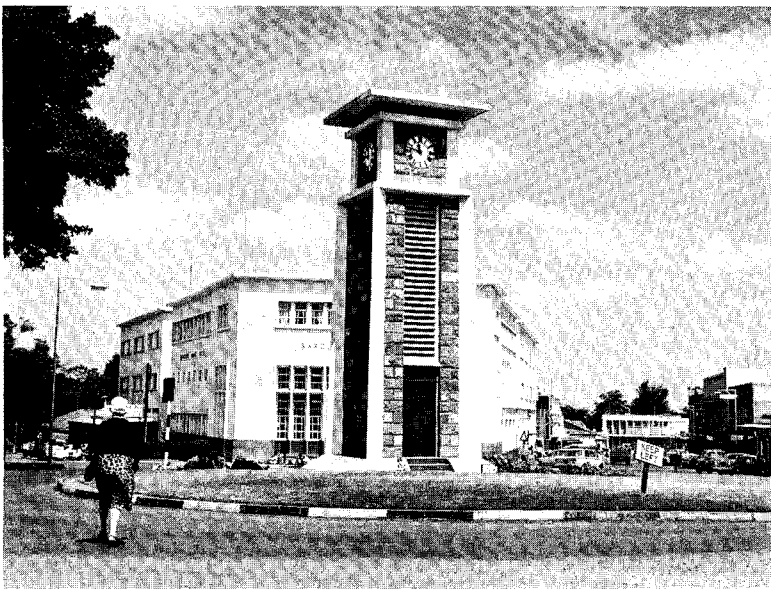
Mr. Richard H. Nolte  
Institute of Current World Affairs  
366 Madison Avenue  
New York 17, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Nolte:

Arusha is said to lie not only exactly midway between the Cape and Cairo but also to be the geographic center of East Africa. It is a delightful town of some 13,000 inhabitants, divided among 7,000 Africans, 5,000 Asians, and 1,000 Europeans. In East Africa temperature depends on altitude, and Arusha's 4,525 feet make it very pleasant for most of the year despite its mere 250 miles from the equator. It does, however, get a bit hot in January and February, and it becomes downright cold in June and July. For the rest of the year the climate is ideal, and even the two rainy seasons (April-May and November-December) don't affect it much, although the roads often become quagmires.

The surrounding countryside is also especially attractive. The 14,978 foot volcanic peak of Mount Meru towers some 10,000 feet over the town, and its rich volcanic ash ensures the fertility upon which Arusha's agricultural economy depends. Along with the Moshi District some fifty miles to the east, this part of Tanganyika is agriculturally the most progressive in the territory. Coffee is the main crop (and excellent quality too), but sisal, seed beans, wheat, sugar, and papain (an extract of which is used to tenderize meat) play an important role. There are also a number of African subsistence crops such as bananas. In contrast

to most of the rest of Tanganyika, one can't help but be impressed by the obvious fertility of the soil and the resulting large and healthy population. Even in the final years of the last century one of the first Europeans to visit the region, Count Samuel Teleki, was equally impressed. It is for this reason that tribes fought over the area for generations, so that now Arusha is a meeting ground of three tribes: the pastoral




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Town center

Masai and their agricultural cousins, the WaArusha, and the WaMeru.

The healthy climate and fertility of the north are reflected in many ways. Besides having the highest proportion of paved roads in the country, it has long been an area of European settlement. Settlers began farming around Mount Meru and Kilimanjaro soon after the turn of the century. Although there has been little continuity of ownership (two world wars, for instance, have dispossessed most of the Germans), these farms are the most sought-after in Tanganyika. Unlike Kenya, a number of different nationalities own them, and Greeks and Englishmen live alongside Americans and Poles. Within the administration, Arusha was considered the nicest place to be posted, with the result that many top-flight senior civil servants have spent considerable time there.

But perhaps most important of all is the tourist potential. Arusha is already the center of the tourist industry in Tanganyika, and its two hotels will shortly be unable to handle the large influx expected during the busy seasons. Thus the New Arusha Hotel is to be expanded, and the Government plans to invest in the Safari Hotel, temporarily closed last year when guests neither recognized nor stood up for President Sekou Toure of Guinea then on a State visit. Furthermore, there are also rumors that the Hilton chain may build a luxury hotel in the center of the town. Although the number of tourists slumped after the closure of the Safari Hotel, they are again rising rapidly.

Arusha is ideally situated tourist-wise, and its potential cannot be matched elsewhere in East Africa. Most people visit this part of Africa either to see or hunt animals, or else to observe primitive tribal life. Arusha has all three: Ngurdoto Crater and Momella National Park, Lake Manyara, Ngorongoro, Amboseli, Tsavo, and even Serengeti are within an easy day's drive. For those preferring a look at primitive peoples, East Africa's most famous tribe, the Masai, are right next door.

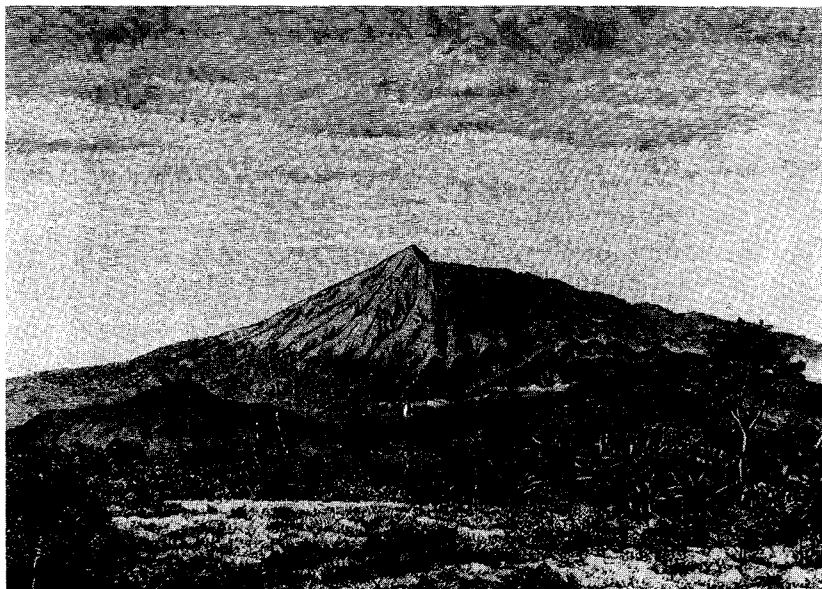
The one thing that Arusha does not yet have is a sizable non-agricultural industry. There are a few very small industries (a nearby meerschaum factory makes excellent pipes), but so far the only large factory considered, a tire factory,



PORTRAIT OF COUNT SAMUEL TELEKI VON SZEK.

decided against investment at the last moment, reportedly for financial reasons.

The greatest hope for Arusha's future lies in the creation of an East African federation, for then with a bit of luck it might become its capital. Arusha is a good candidate: it is right in the heart of the proposed federation 173 miles from Nairobi, 224 miles from Mombasa, and 448 miles from Dar es Salaam. The recent Working Party on the federation came to no conclusion regarding this important problem, but Arusha is a top contender because it would avoid the politically unpleasant task of putting the capital in Nairobi, a suggestion viewed with considerable suspicion in Tanganyika and Uganda.



**MOUNT MERU.**

The Town Clerk, Epharim Andere from Kenya, told me: "Arusha is neutral. Neither Nairobi, in Kenya, nor Dar es Salaam, 450 miles away, can have much influence on us." At one time, however, Arusha was considered the 'Nairobi of Tanganyika' because of the large settler element.

Where Arusha is at a disadvantage with other cities such as Entebbe is the existing level of public services. One student has suggested that no less than \$28 million over five years would be needed to pave roads, especially an 82 mile stretch on the Nairobi road, build an international airport (a site between Moshi and Arusha has already been chosen), and improve and enlarge schooling facilities, telephone exchanges, and hotel accommodation.

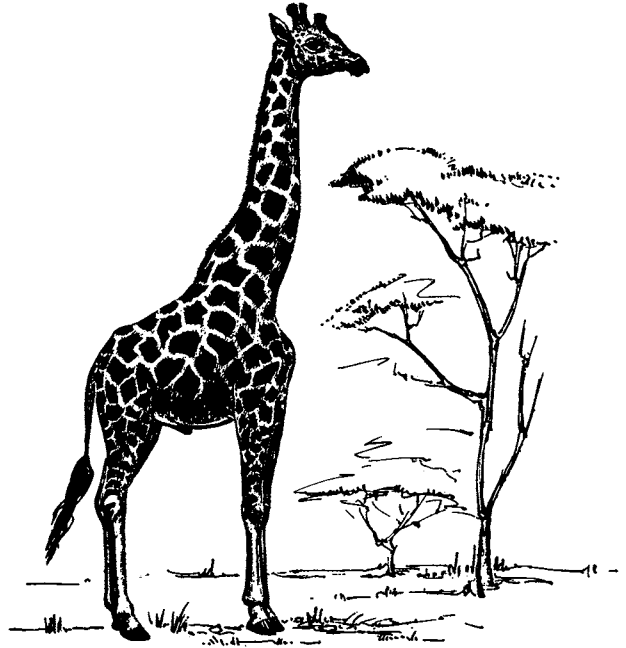
In short, Arusha is in the right place and its climate would make it an extremely pleasant capital city. Whether an East African federation will come to pass is another matter.

Regardless of which way the federation goes, Arusha seems destined for considerable further development. The Town Council and its alert Town Clerk have planned for this day, and a number of years ago they purchased an estate to the south-east of the town center. With magnificent views of Kilimanjaro and Meru, it would make an ideal site for further housing or institutional development. At one point it was hoped the new University College now in Dar es Salaam might choose Arusha instead. The climate, at least, is much more conducive to work.

Furthermore, were the federal capital to come to Arusha, it would greatly stimulate industrial development. At the head of a

railway leading directly to Tanga and Mombasa on the coast, transportation costs could be kept to a minimum. More important, a recent agreement with Uganda has guaranteed Tanganyika a monopoly in the development of certain industries in East Africa in an effort to redress the imbalance of trade between the three territories. Because of its geographical position, Arusha would be a likely spot for the siting of such industries.

With such a combination of advantages Arusha can not help but become a more important center as East Africa develops.



Very sincerely yours,

Ian Michael Wright

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