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COMMUNICATION FROM MR. JULIUS K. NYERERE
CONCERNING TANGANYIKA

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TANGANYIKA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

P.O. Box 551,
Dar es Salaam,
16th December, 1957.

His Excellency The Governor of Tanganyika,
Sir Edward Twining, G.C.M.G.,
Government House,
Dar es Salaam.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to tender my resignation from Legislative Council as Representative Member for Dar es Salaam. When I was offered a seat as a nominated member on Legislative Council I believed that Government's offer was an indication of a change of heart and I therefore accepted the offer in the hope that this change of heart would be demonstrated by a spirit of give and take. During the last four months I have made a series of compromises to enable Government to demonstrate my understanding of the spirit of give and take in the development of a democratic process.

2. Firstly, my acceptance of a nominated seat on the Council was a compromise since I am opposed to the continuation of nomination. Secondly, opposed as I am to Government's system of elections on the 1 - 1 - 1 basis I suggested, first through the press, and later in our memorandum to the Colonial Secretary, that half the number of representative members could be elected on Government's plan of 1 - 1 - 1 and the other half from single members' constituencies. I was trying to meet Government half-way.

3. Thirdly, I suggested that if Government cannot change the Constitution now at least a Constitutional Committee could be appointed now to study the Constitution and make recommendations concerning both the Constitution and the franchise. This would have meant in effect that the present Constitution would have gone on. It is understood that the committee would have taken some time to produce its own report. Then too Government itself would have taken time to study and make its own observations on this report. The present Constitution, therefore, would have continued for a longer period than was originally acceptable to my Organization.

4. Fourthly, I moved a motion in Legislative Council asking for the removal of the compulsory tripartite voting system (a small thing to ask for) and for the elections to take place throughout the country next year. I had purposely left out the question of Parity. This was a compromise on my second compromise. In fact it was not a compromise but a complete surrender. I was not willing to agree to elections on the basis of the Government's plan of 1 - 1 - 1, not for half the representative members, but for the whole membership, i.e. in ALL the Constituencies.

5. Fifthly, during the debate on my motion an amendment was moved leaving out the second part of my motion. The motion was now asking that the compulsory tripartite voting system should be removed. I purposely acquiesced in this amendment. Here was an opportunity for Government to invite the confidence of the people by removing this irritation which it was a public secret, Government was only a few months ago willing to remove. Government's opposition to the amended motion was a typical example of its attitude of opposition for the sake of opposition carried to its logical but absurd conclusion.

6. Sixthly, if my motion as amended had been carried it would have meant that after September, 1958, the Legislative Council would have had 15 elected members, and since my own Constituency is not scheduled for elections next year, I would probably be sitting on that Council with 16 other nominated members as a nominated member. A most compromising compromise!

7. Seventhly, I was opposed to the Local Government (Amendment) Bill, for very serious reasons. When a motion was moved for its third reading I could have moved an amendment that the Bill should not be read a third time. This

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would not have given Government a chance to make even a gesture of good will. Instead I purposely moved an amendment that the Bill be read a third time six months later. Here again was an opportunity for Government to invite the confidence of the people and their Chiefs. Government knew the Chiefs were opposed to this Bill. Representative Chiefs from all over the Country are meeting at Mzumbe in a few weeks time. I reminded Government of this fact. Mr. Bayldon, to whom I was very grateful, moved an amendment to my amendment to the effect that the Bill should be read a third time at the Council's meeting following the February meeting. I accepted this amendment. Here was a golden opportunity for Government to make a gesture to the Chiefs and their people, a gesture which would not have necessarily meant that the Bill would never have become law, but which would have shown that Government is willing to take time to allay the fears of the people.

8. Eighthly, if this amendment had been accepted there was more than an implied possibility of the Bill being accepted later. This would have been so in spite of the fact that the Bill seeks to establish Local Government Bodies which ignore our traditional rulers, who provide that element of stability at the Local Government level which we cannot match at the Central Government level. This was a serious risk to take.

Moreover, one of Government's aim in setting up these local Council bodies is that they should be multi-racial in composition. Government itself had admitted that out of 56 Native Authority District Councils, 36 had voluntarily invited the participation of non-Africans on them. I pointed out to Government that this development should go on; that this was an example of voluntary democratization of these very Councils which are grafted on traditional authority. Both objects would have been achieved without irritation. These Councils would have been modernized and democratised; the traditional element would have remained their foundation and symbol; the non-Africans would have been taken on willingly, and Government would have given more powers to these Councils. Here was I, the so-called Agitator and Racialist, in effect suggesting to Government how these objects could be achieved without irritating the Chiefs and their people.

I must protest against this unwise and unnecessary irritation of the Chiefs and the people. It will make the Chiefs and the people naturally suspicious of

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the presence of non-Africans on their Councils. It will set back a development in racial relations which was already taking place on the initiative of the Chiefs themselves and their people; it will create racial difficulties, which we shall have to try and remove when this country is no longer under British rule.

9. Your Excellency, unnecessary irritations are being caused in the name of the non-Africans which in fact have nothing to do with the non-Africans and can never in the long run be in the best interest of the non-Africans. These artificial and unnecessary racial irritations may be intended to delay and may result in delaying the achievement of democratic Self-Government. But I hope that they will do no more than that. I sincerely hope that they SHALL NEVER result in landing our country into a mire of intolerable racial bitterness.

10. Your Excellency, your Government has consistently, and for the most unconvincing reasons, rejected every proposal that I have made in the Legislative Council. Most of the proposals which I have made have been compromises on the proposals originally made by my organizations. If, Sir, I could believe that my function on the Legislative Council was always to give and never to receive, I would still resign; I have given everything that it was in my power to give, and what I have given has been rejected. I came to the Council expecting a little of the spirit of give and take. That spirit is not there. I would feel that I am cheating the people and cheating my own Organization if I remained on the Council, receiving allowances and attending sundowners as an Honourable Member, giving the impression that I was still of some service on that Council, when in fact I know that I am useless. I have, therefore, no alternative but to tender my resignation, and to ask that my resignation take effect from Friday, 13th December, 1957, the day my last compromise was rejected by Government.

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency,

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd)

JULIUS K. NYERERE

(Julius K. Nyerere)

Copy to: The Secretary of State for the Colonies, Colonial Office, Great Smith Street, London S.W.1

The Secretary-General, United Nations Organization, New York.
