

## INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

IMW-15  
Three WaChagga

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

Dear Mr. Nolte:

Among the many people we met on our trip to Chaggaland, three stand out in particular. Each is of a different generation, and each represents to me at least a variety of leader whose abilities and ideas can contribute much to the new Tanganyika, both at local and national levels. They all happen to be Chagga, but this is only circumstance. Men like them are found all over Tanganyika, all over East Africa for that matter. One represents enlightened traditionalism; one, a recently returned student, is anxious for rapid economic and social advance and is impatient with all that stands in its way; and the third falls in between, a conservative one might say. The future largely depends on men like these and on the modus vivendi they establish among themselves. The people will follow their leadership.

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Chief Petro Itosi Marealle is the grand old man of Chaggaland. He's about sixty, although his appearance belies this, and he's been one kind of chief or another almost continuously for the last thirty years. He's widely esteemed for his modesty and wisdom.

Chief Petro completed his schooling in 1928 and two years later went to Tabora to join the staff of a secondary school. He was called back to Chaggaland in 1931, however, to become chief of Marangu, an Area Chiefdom high on Kilimanjaro. He ruled Marangu for the next fifteen years. In his own words, "I had three policies: first, I wanted my people to work harder, and I urged men to work as well as women. Second, people were travelling miles for firewood and I encouraged them to grow their own trees. Last, I tried to make my people independent of their chief. In the old days they used to drop in at odd hours to have meat and beer with me, but I told them to come only when they had problems I could help them solve."

When in 1934 Government suggested a central Chagga administration, Chief Petro was elected Mangi Mkuu or Paramount Chief by the Chagga Council. He never took up this position, however, because Government wanted a President and the Chagga wanted a Mangi Mkuu, and they were unable to agree (until 1951). In 1946 he became one of three elected Divisional Chiefs and ruled over the seven Area Chiefdoms, including Marangu, called Vunjo. In 1961 the Divisions were abolished and he became an Executive Officer of the Chagga Council instead. Now Chief Petro is Acting-President of the Council.

Besides this Chief Petro is also his tribe's unofficial historian.



Chief Petro

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He has recently written a book on Chagga customs (shortly to be translated into English) much of which was done while at Oxford for a year of studying and writing. He has a fund of Chagga lore which he dispenses liberally.

Chief Petro is a progressive but traditional chief. Throughout the extraordinary changes that have occurred during his lifetime (he was brought up under German administration), he has not passively followed but rather actively encouraged and led his people forward. Now, although the Chagga are moving towards more democratic institutions, Chief Petro remains one of their leaders. It is upon men like this that the main burden of local development rests.

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At 48 Chief Thomas Marealle O.B.E. is one of a growing number of ex-chiefs. He comes from a line of at least seventeen generations of chiefs who have ruled the Area Chiefdom of Marangu, and he is the nephew of Chief Petro. He was educated at Mission and Government Schools in Tanganyika. In 1944, after ten years in Government service, he was sent to England for two years to study anthropology and sociology at Cambridge and London Universities. He returned to the post of Assistant Welfare Officer at Moshi. Later he became Programmes Manager of the Dar es Salaam broadcasting station, a job he resigned in 1951 to accept the position of popularly elected Mangi Mkuu of the Chagga. Known as Mshumbue (the Anointed) Marealle II, Chief Tom began his reign the most popular man in Chaggaland.

By 1960, however, his popularity had waned greatly. As one might expect, there are different accounts. Some people say he gathered all power in his hands (as one Chagga told me, "How do you call it in English, megalomania?"), and this led to friction with the Chagga Council. They feel he was too friendly with 'colonialists', and he is widely reported as having said at the United Nations in 1957 that Tanganyika wouldn't be ready for self-rule for twenty-five years. They also charge he tried to undermine TANU's authority and that he created a powerful patronage system. Finally they say he drank too much and was too attracted to beautiful women (he's a very handsome man).

His supporters, on the other hand, claim he was the butt of a slanderous mud-slinging campaign, that he only spoke the truth some of which was not always palatable to fervent nationalists, and that TANU disliked one-man rule and so engineered his ouster. Mud-slinging no doubt there was, and the truth must lie somewhere in between. A motion in the Chagga Council ousting him was narrowly passed, but in the subsequent referendum in February 1961 he was decisively repudiated by his own people.

Tom Marealle is now bringing suit against the Chagga Council for deposing him. He contends the title of Mangi Mkuu denotes life reign and many Chagga in the know feel he has a good chance of winning the case or at least part of it. He is asking \$100,000 damages, which if the Council loses could seriously impair its work. I understand from a close friend of Chief Tom's, however, that his aim in pursuing the case is for personal vindication only and that he has no intention of collecting anything should he win.

Today Tom Marealle refuses to talk of politics and Chagga affairs. He says he has retired "for the time being" from public life, and from all accounts he has no political future with the Chagga although he remains popular in some circles. But he is a well-educated man and a gifted administrator and as such has something to contribute to the new Tanganyika. As a moderate he does not always see eye-to-eye with the government, and his relations with Nyerere and TANU have not always been cordial.



Tom Marealle

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Nevertheless he is a polished gentleman and it is no secret that he would like to go into the diplomatic service. Many people consider him an ideal appointment as ambassador to the United States or Great Britain. I think he would do well in either position. The big question is how much his past will interfere with his future. I don't think we've heard the last of Tom Marealle!

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Juma Mawalla is the radical of the group. He is twenty-eight and one of the first African lawyers to practice in Tanganyika. For the last ten years he has studied abroad in India, England and the United States, although he has returned to Tanganyika for vacations frequently. He came home for good in September and recently opened an office in Moshi although he lives in Marangu in a small house which has a magnificent view of Kilimanjaro from the living-room.

Late one afternoon we sat on the lawn, watched the sun set on this view and talked. Quite naturally Juma's first concern was with Tanganyika's judiciary. "The judiciary is controlled by expatriates, and when I returned a few months ago, I was the only African lawyer in the country. All the magistrates are English and have no stake here, other than their jobs. In Moshi our resident magistrate doesn't like having an African at the bar, and more than

once he has improperly addressed me in court. I can't even go to the local lawyers' club. Just because I'm black! All my clients are convicted, and so I have had to give up my criminal practice until this man goes. This isn't freedom! That's why the recent expulsions were by decree and those expelled had no recourse to the courts. We have a real case against these people and their situation will be a lesson to others, but what English judge would uphold Government's action? Not one! One of the cases would have come before the resident magistrate here, and he would surely have acquitted him. Until we have an African judiciary, we will have to rule by decree. In theory I support the rule of law, but under the circumstances, we have no alternative."

"There is a group of young intellectuals who feel the Government is too conservative. They want our country to move forward more rapidly and take a firmer stand supporting Pan-Africanism. On the south we have hostile neighbors who want us to fail and to the north they aren't yet free. This group feels we must join with other African states and actively assist freedom movements, by force if necessary. A number of these intellectuals I'm talking about, and they even include members of the cabinet, feel Nyerere is too moderate. They consider Tanganyika an African country with minorities living here only on sufferance. Nyerere depends too much on his European (and Asian) advisors, and many people don't like it at all. This group is gaining influence and soon its voice will be much stronger."

Juma Mawalla also expects rapid development with independence, and he feels present circumstances warrant drastic steps. He has high ambitions. My guess is he'll have a chance to realize them.

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These then are three Chagga. Their ways are neither entirely African nor are they western, rather a mixture of the two. There is little of pure Africa left, but then western ideas have only just begun to influence more than a tiny minority. Tanganyika stands between the Scylla of poverty and primitivism and the Charybdis of losing one's cultural identity. Men like Chief Petro, Tom Marealle and Juma Mawalla will influence its direction. They are the new élite.

Sincerely yours,



Ian Michael Wright

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