

African hero: julius nyerere essay



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BUSTER**

Julius Nyerere was born in 1922 in Butiama, Tanganyika, where the population was living in conditions of poverty and tension between the tribes such as the Masai, the Sukuma, the Bantu, the Nyamwezi and the Chagga. Following the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885, Tanganyika was awarded to Germany. The Germans brutalized the population and created division. On several occasions they rebelled such as in the brutal Maji Maji Rebellion, but were massacred by the power of German arms. At the end of World War I, the administration of Tanganyika was given to Britain by the League of Nations through the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.

The resolution was to administrate the territory until the people would be able to develop and auto-govern (Macdonald, 1966). This colony had a good farming land and was a really good place for trade. In Tanganyika there was inequality, oppression, ignorance, poverty, disease and lacked unity as a nation. During this period, the Europeans were afraid of the idea of decolonization. Nyerere was the son of the chief of the Wasanaki tribe and had the opportunity to live and learn what democracy was by studying in Edinburgh, Britain.

Throughout his life, Nyerere often known as Mwalimu (the teacher) united the different tribes and helped them achieve coherence as a nation with his socialist ideas that he learnt in Britain. He also formed the Tanganyika African National Union. In 1961, Tanganyika gained independence from Britain and Nyerere was elected Prime Minister of his country. Later, Tanganyika united with Zanzibar and formed Tanzania. Julius Nyerere was elected president of Tanzania in 1964 and created the philosophy called Ujamaa. Julius Nyerere changed the history of Africa.

Julius Nyerere led to a change in Africa with the creation of the Tanganyikan African National Union in 1954. He chose to become a politician instead of a teacher. Nyerere turned the TANU into a strong political party. The TANU progressed quickly and in 1958 it was already a strong nationalist movement formed by the tribes of Tanganyika such as the Masai, the Bantu, the Nyamwezi and the Chagga (Mcdonald, 2002). The TANU allowed him to obtain the majority of the votes in 1960 and to be a political party recognized by Britain (Legum, 1995).

He created different branches of the party such as the women of the TANU who were the Muslims of the TANU. There were more than 200 000 members and grew from 38 branches in the 1957 to 134 branches in the 1958. They went door by door, recruiting people to the political party. The sole political party in Tanzania was the TANU since they won almost all the seats during the elections and became a political force and a representative voice to the citizens of Tanzania, gaining a certain respect from the British.

Nyerere also had a journal called the “Voice of TANU” in which he expressed his ideas. This political pressure pushed the elections that even Britain was afraid that Nyerere would use violence to gain independence and as a result, they gave them independence in 1961 (Nyerere, 1974). Julius Nyerere changed history by causing the independence of Tanganyika. Nyerere did not obtain the independence through fights and wars, but instead by a peaceful way. Julius Nyerere was the first citizen of Tanganyika to achieve foreign education and to learn democratic and socialist ideas.

In 1952, he returned to his country with the title of professor, but decided to devote himself exclusively to politics and change the course of Tanganyika. In 1954, he formed the political party TANU, the political instrument which helped him gain independence (Mcdonald, 2002). Nyerere went from village to village, gaining people for his political party in order to gain independence. This political pressure enabled the elections in 1958 and in 1960, which his political party won with the majority of seats. The British were afraid of the idea of another rebellion against them.

In 1961, the British decided to give the independence to Tanganyika as they saw that they were ready to develop the country. In the same year, Nyerere was elected Prime Minister of Tanganyika. In 1964, following the union of Zanzibar and Tanganyika, Julius Nyerere became the President of the Republic of Tanzania (Legum, 1995). Julius Nyerere also changed history when he implemented the philosophy called Ujamaa. Based on socialist ideas, Ujamaa had impacts on governance but also led to the social and economic development of Tanzania. Ujamaa was strongly influenced by his Christian faith and he defined himself as a socialist Christian.

The fundamental principles of Ujamaa were living together, working together and sharing equally the fruits of the work and also the implementation of free education for all Tanzanians (Legum, 1995). It also sought to build a society in which no one exploited others (Mcdonald, 2002). Under Ujamaa, farmers were forced to live and work together to increase productivity in order to guarantee the products needed by the population. This system faced many obstacles such as abuse of power by the leaders of the community, laziness and a lack of interest in collective work.

Another problem that Ujamaa faced was the lack of rainfalls and diseases which prevented the system from working well (Mcdonald, 2002). Ujamaa led to cooperatives movement which developed the economy of the country. Nyerere had to borrow money in order to support these cooperatives, drowning the country in debts. In the 1980s, Julius Nyerere had to face the monetary policies of the IMF and of the World Bank, which pressured him to establish a multi-political system. Under all this pressure, Nyerere refused and withdrew from political life in the 1985, disappointed for failing to change his country as he aspired.

Julius Nyerere was the father of the nation of Tanzania. In the 1950s, he created the TANU that was a basic tool to realize his ideas and change the course of Tanganyika. Julius Nyerere also brought his country to independence in 1961. He later turned the TANU into the sole political party of Tanzania. Nyerere also tried to create a socialist regime influenced by the ideas of socialism known as Ujamaa and tried to bring his people together. Even though he failed to make Tanzania a greater place to live, Julius Nyerere changed the history of Africa.