

Ethnic Politics and Conflicts in Nigeria's First Republic:

The Misuse of Native Administrative Police Forces (NAPFS) and the Tiv Riots of Central Nigeria, 1960-1964

LES POLITIQUE ET LES CONFLITS ETHNIQUES DANS LA PREMIÈRE RÉPUBLIQUE DU NIGÉRIA:

LE MAUVAIS USAGE DES FORCES POLICIÈRES ADMINISTRATIVES AUTOCHTONES (FSPAA) ET LES ÉMEUTES DES TIVS DANS LE CENTRE DU NIGÉRIA, 1960-1964

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Abstract:. This study examines the explosion of violent ethno-political conflicts in Central Nigeria in 1960. At the attainment of independence, Nigeria comprised three loosely amalgamated regions which later metamorphosed into three ethnic based political parties namely; the Northern People's Congress(NPC), National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (N.C.N.C) in the East, and the Action Group (AG) in the West. With this political structure, the seed of minority domination was already sown. The main thrust of this paper is the resistance of the Tiv to the despotic leadership of the Hausa/Fulani with their instrument of coercion, the Native Administrative Police Forces (NAPFS). Drawing inferences from this study, lessons can be learnt from the British colonial political culture of regionalism which fosters crisis of nation building in Nigeria.

Key words: Ethnic Politics; Conflicts; Central Nigeria; Tiv Riots

Résumé Cette étude examine l'explosion des conflits ethno-politiques violents dans le centre du Nigéria des années 60. A la conquête de l'indépendance, le Nigéria se composait de trois régions vaguement fusionnées qui sont plus tard métamorphosées en trois pouvoirs politiques basés sur l'ethnie, à savoir: le congrès du peuple du Nord (CPN), le Conseil national du Nigéria et du Cameroun (CNNC) à l'Est, et le Groupe d'action (GA) à l'Ouest. Avec cette structure politique, la semence de la domination de la minorité était déjà semée. L'objectif principal de cet article est d'étudier la résistance des Tivs à la direction despotique de l'ethnie Haoussa / Fulani avec leur instrument de coercition, les Forces policières administratives autochtones (FSPAA). A partir de cette étude, on peut tirer des leçons sur la culture du régionalisme coloniale britannique qui favorise la crise de la construction nationale au Nigéria.

Mots clés: Politiques ethniques; Conflits; Centre du Nigéria; Émeutes des Tivs

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INTRODUCTION

The Tiv are the largest single ethnic group in the Middle Benue Basin in Central Nigeria. They are the majority ethnic group in the present Benue State, Nigeria where they are found in fourteen Local Government Areas. The Tiv are estimated to number about five million people and about three million out of this number live in Benue State. (Okpeh, 2007:2). The rest of them are found in considerable numbers in Southern Taraba State, parts of Nassarawa State, Plateau and Cross River States. At the attainment of independence, Nigeria was divided into three regions representing the

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three major ethnic groups namely the North (Hausa-Fulani), the East (Igbo) and the West (Yoruba). The group of politicians that emerged at the attainment of independence had the massive support of their ethnic groups and political parties. In the North, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) had a large Hausa/Fulani following with Alhaji Tafawa Balewa as the leader. In the West, the Action Group (A.G.) had a massive Yoruba following with Chief Obafemi Awolowo as the leader, while in the East, it was the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon's (N.C.N.C) with a large Igbo followership headed by Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe. In the Middle Belt, it was the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) a minority Tiv party with large followership led by Mr. Joseph Sarwuan Tarka (Aper, 2003:322).

This division of the country into 'majorities' and 'minorities' ethnic groups encouraged sentiments, sowing the seeds of conflicts which the emergent political leaders exploited exerting firm control at the regions at the detriment of the centre. Each of the regional political parties tried its best to win the support of the Tiv. This was based on the fact that the political party that the Tiv accepted would control the Central Nigeria and its resources. The reaction of the Tiv was the rejection of the subordinate roles offered to them by some of these parties especially the NPC controlled government. The Tiv in the rejection of this inferior role decided to rally round their leader J.S.Tarka and their party, the UMBC. Their rejection of the NPC controlled government was symbolic, as the acceptance would mean accepting Hausa /Fulani domination. In addition, the majorities of Tiv population were Christians and prejudiced against Islam. They believed that when a Tiv became a Muslim, he would copy Hausa custom and forget his own culture and come to despise his people. In addition, the exciting political arrangement before independence and after meant that the major ethnic groups controlled the regional governments; hence the monopoly of power and patronages to their own exclusive advantage (Tseayo, 1975:96-98). The rejection of the NPC, and all that was associated with it was to lead to the bitter and violent political upheavals in Tivland during the First Republic. The attempt by the NPC, the ruling party at independence to dominate Tivland by the use of coercive measures including the Tiv Native Administration and its police forces failed and this culminated in the 1960 and 1964 riots (Abeghe, 2005:68-80). This paper examines how the misuse of Native Administrative Police Forces by the NPC controlled government led to the riots.

This paper is divided into five main sections. After the introduction is the conceptual framework. The next section deals with the background to the political conflicts in Tivland, our area of study. The third section deals with policing and the emergence of the Native Administration Police Forces (NAPFS), in pre-colonial and colonial Nigeria, while the last two sections deal with the Tiv revolts as a response to the misuse of the NAPFS.

1. A FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The 1960 and 1964 conflicts in Tivland had ethnic and political undertones. Conflict is a serious disagreement, contention or state of antagonism between two or more parties or groups. Conflicts evolve from variations in interests, values, ideas, ideologies, orientations, perceptions and tendencies and are part and parcel of social existence and progress (Gyuse, Ajene, 2006:242). Conflicts are end results of contradictions that exist in the human society. It is a state of discord caused by the actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests between people. It can result in stress or tension and negative feelings between disputants, and it is not only disruptive and destructive but also constructive (Bello, 2006:30). Therefore, it is not only the destructive nature of conflicts that counts, but whether groups involved in conflicts can maintain a healthy relationship after the conflicts. Conflict thus serves as a medium for creating integration between groups. A conflict is said to exist when two or more parties with perceived incompatible goals seek to undermine each others goal seeking capability. Conflicts may take place between individuals, groups; between individuals and organizations or groups; or between an organization and one or more of its components. Conflict is said to emerge whenever two or more persons or groups seek to possess the same object, occupy the same space of an exclusive portion, play incompatible goals and undertake mutually incompatible means for achieving their purpose (Ker, 2001:3). One of the most celebrated definitions of conflict by Coser maintains that:

The struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals (Otite, 1991:1)

Ethnic conflicts are conflicts that are perpetuated, supported and directed by members of a particular ethnic group against another. Ethnicity involves a nation, group, race or tribe that has a common cultural tradition, or a person or group of people belonging to a specific country or area by birth or family history rather than by nationality. The heterogeneous and multi ethnic nature of Nigeria has made the country a fertile ground for such conflicts. Nigerians think more of their membership and allegiance to their ethnic groups than their belonging to the nation. The zealous support of Nigerians to their ethnic groups has often led to violence.

Political conflicts are usually struggles arising from disagreements or contestations over the sharing and holding of political appointments, the creation of administrative areas and the creation of local government areas and their purported headquarters. This problem could be traced to the colonial period, when traditional institutions were subjected to the needs of the colonial administration. The colonial authorities elevated some traditional institutions at the detriment of

others. Experience has shown that the clamor for new administrative areas does not solve the problems or give a sense of belonging to the groups in their new areas, if created. When new states or local government areas are created, new majority or minority groups emerge with attendant problems.

Remi Anifowese attempts an explanation of the Tiv Riots, by proposing the frustration-aggression theory as being the bedrock of the conflicts (Anifowese, 1979:77). This means when individuals or groups feel frustrated because their basic needs are being thwarted, the tendency is to strike back at what is perceived to be causing the frustration. The Tiv felt the NPC controlled government was responsible for all their woes hence the need to fight back.

2. POLICING IN PRE-COLONIAL NIGERIA

As Killingray (1986: 416) rightly illustrates, British colonialism in Africa did not fully monopolize the means of coercion and violence. It is a well known fact that under the indirect rule system, practices of coercion such as tax collection, recruitment of forced labour, regulation of sanitation and, more importantly for the purpose of this paper, the preservation of law and order as well as the maintenance of security were delegated to Native Authorities (Fourchard, 2008:28). While it is important to state that in several parts of Nigeria the powers of the police were transferred to local communities through the Native Administration Police Forces (NAPFs), it is even more significant to observe that the very idea of the NAPFs came about through the adaptation of Nigeria's pre-colonial police organizations, especially those of the centralized emirates of the North as well as those of the Yoruba and Edo kingdoms of the West. This scenario fitted perfectly into Mahmood Mamdani's description of indirect rule as a 'decentralized despotism' through which 'local custom within a larger colonial project was a way of achieving a hegemonic domination' (Mamdani, 2002: 286).

Among the numerous palace officials in the centralized emirates of the North and the Yoruba and Edo kingdoms of the West were those who performed the role of police. In the emirates they were known as *dogarai* (Smith, 1960: 36; Nadama, 1977: 337, 352). Smith notes that the *dogarai* had the duty to 'capture and discipline offenders, and to guard the town together with warders' (Smith, 1960: 338). Fika (1978: 40-41) and Ubah (1973: 47-48) also gave a detailed description of the multifarious duties of the *dogarai*. These included the prevention and detection of crime as well as general prosecution of criminals.

In the western part of Nigeria they were known variously as *ilari* (in Oyo), *emese* (in the Ife, Ijesa and Ekiti kingdoms) and *agunren* in Ijebu-Ode. (Rotimi, 2001: 2). In the Yoruba kingdoms, the *ilari*, *emese* and *agunren* represented in the eyes of the populace the symbol of legitimate force. Like the *dogarai* they apprehended and prosecuted criminals. It is even said that the consent of the *agunren* was necessary to give the stamp of legitimacy to any Ijebu military campaign (Oroge, 1971: 44).

Though there is a dearth of scholarly studies on the pre-colonial policing system among the Igbo in Eastern Nigeria, available evidence suggests that a body of men known locally as *umuokorobia* and drawn mainly from the age-grade system performed police duties in many parts of Eastern Nigeria. Apart from the *umuokorobia* which were charged with the responsibility of security maintenance and general law enforcement, the masquerade cult, *mmanwu* also performed traditional police duties. The police action of the *mmanwu* was generally referred to as *iri iwu*. This traditional policing system involved the prevention of crime through the identification, arrest and enforcement of sanctions by means of fines known locally as *oriri iwu* or by *igba ekpe*, i.e., the public humiliation of a criminal. A special force, the *iga*, kept surveillance over village streams during the dry season in order to enforce the preservation of water resources (Okafo, 2007: 8-9; Isichei, 1978: 74).

It is noteworthy especially in Northern and Western Nigeria that the pre-colonial police formations had the following common features. Firstly, they were drawn from palace slaves and were appointed by and responsible to the kings. Next, they had a political head who was a senior official of government and almost always an eunuch with a distinctive dress and / or hairstyle. They also combined the triple roles of bodyguard, messenger and executioner. Finally, they performed diplomatic and revenue- collecting functions (Rotimi, 2001: 2).

The foregoing brief survey of pre-colonial palace organizations that performed police duties in the emirates of the North and the Yoruba kingdoms of the West is intended to show that there was a basis for the decision of the colonial administrators to allow the native authorities in those areas to own police forces. It needs to be emphasized that members of these pre-colonial palace organizations were more of personal servants of the chiefly authorities than agents of the community. They played a key role in enhancing and upholding the authorities of their employers. This image was perpetuated in the colonial and post-colonial periods.

3. INDIGENOUS POLICING AND THE EMERGENCE OF NAPFS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

With the advent of British rule in Northern Nigeria, Sir Frederick Lugard who was the head of the administration decided to adapt the political system that was in existence in the emirates to suit colonial exigencies. The Lugardian doctrine of

native administration was founded on the notion that there existed a strong, rather autocratic, Emir or chief whose authority the government could officially recognize and to whom it could delegate some responsibilities. In principle, the Emir would be subordinate to the British administrative officer but in appearance would be made to look like the actual ruler of his subjects.

When Lugard left Nigeria in 1906 the mantle of leadership in Northern Nigeria fell on Percy Girouard. Under his administration there began a shift in emphasis from the administrative principle of 'rule through native chiefs' to one of 'rule through native chiefs on native lines' (White, 1981:33-38). The shift in administrative policy sought to create the Northern native administrations into near-autonomous entities. It is, therefore, within the foregoing political context that the formulation of a policing policy for the North should be appraised. After 1925, the measures taken resulted in the marginalization of the Government Police in the North.

Tamuno (1970: 51-56) is of the view that the re-organization of the Government Police Force in Northern Nigeria between 1907 and 1913 under Governor Percy Girouard culminated in the recognition of the indigenous police organization in the emirates and that the *dogarai* eventually gained recognition as a unit of administration. Admittedly, the above position could also be buttressed by other factors that were instrumental to the emergence of the *dogarai* as a unit of native administration. For instance, at the point of British contact, the *dogarai* did not receive immediate official recognition as a unit of administration, though they were not prevented from performing their duties as earlier enumerated. They were simply not recognized probably because of the initial British attitude to the institution of slavery. Slave offices were among those the British had sworn not to recognize officially. Before a slave could be allowed to hold a public office he must first be emancipated (Lugard, 1970: iv).

The *dogarai* eventually obtained recognition in 1907 through the spirited campaign mounted by administrative officers in the Kano Province with H.R. Palmer giving the most forceful voice. Palmer had joined the administrative service of Northern Nigeria in October 1904 and his first posting was to Katsina (then grouped within Kano Province) as an Assistant Resident. When a civil Government Police Force was raised for the North at the outset of colonial rule, it was observed that most of the members were not Hausa-Fulani. In fact, available statistics show that in 1908, the force was made up of 240 Hausa, 216 Yoruba, 102 Beriberi, 53 Fulani, 25 Nupe and 54 others whose ethnicity was unrecorded (Tamuno, 1970: 50). Thus, the force comprised 293 Hausa-Fulani against 397 members of other ethnic groups. It is not unlikely that most of the Hausa-Fulani elements were not deployed to serve in the emirates, a practice that was not incompatible with colonial policy at the time of 'strangers policing strangers' (Killingray, 1986: 411-37). Understandably, this development is not surprising given the fact that colonial policing in Africa and even in colonial dependencies outside Africa such as Papua New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, etc., was guided by the simple philosophy that the job of policing indigenous population would be more effective if the police force is alien (Hill, 1986:127; Kamira, 1999:3; Leighton, 1991: 485-488).

Expectedly, the presence of this predominantly alien force in the emirates did not seem to have gone down well with the British administrators. In the annual report for 1907 on the province, the Resident Dr. F Cargill, reported on the conduct of the Government Police, by quoting approvingly from the comments of the Kano Divisional Resident, Major A. Festing and the Katsina Divisional Assistant Resident, H.R. Palmer. Palmer had complained that he was not comfortable with the use of these policemen for arrests. He contended that the sight of a man in uniform armed with a rifle caused 'too much terror and alarm' for the citizens and that it is difficult for the people to distinguish between police and soldiers. He advocated the use of native police in native dress and called for the abolition of the Government Police Force.

Incidentally, in 1907, Lugard's successor as Governor, Sir Percy Girouard, decided on a reorganization of the police system. There are three discernible reasons for the reorganization. One, it was intended to remove the predominantly alien Government Police from the emirates, especially those of the northerly provinces of Kano, Sokoto, Zaria and Borno. Two, it was intended to secure the loyalty of the Emirs by permitting them the use of their indigenous *dogarai* as police. This was very much in line with the administrative policy shift from 'rule through native chiefs' to one of 'rule through native chiefs on native lines' inaugurated by Girouard. Three, it could be cheaper to use the *dogarai* than the Government Police Force. In 1908, a wider implementation of the re-organization was effected (Tamuno, 1970: 54-55).

Meanwhile, H.S. Goldsmith who was Lieutenant-Governor between 1917 and 1921 and Captain A.G. Uniacke, the Acting Inspector-General of the Government Police Force for the North engineered a new policy in 1919 that was aimed at subordinating the Government Police to these three people in sequence: the *dogarai*, the Government policeman's own superior officer and the District Officer whenever the issue was of a local interest (Rotimi, 2001: 18).

Moreover, as soon as H.R. Palmer assumed office as substantive Lieutenant-Governor of Northern Nigeria in 1925, he and his subordinates decided not only to build up the NA police in the emirates but also to extend its network in the southerly provinces. Obviously, their preference was for policing the territory more with NA police than with the Government Police. Towards this end, the pre-colonial *dogarai* police institution was adapted for use in the emirates. Having convinced themselves of the soundness of their policing policy for the emirates, the administrative officers tried to extend it to cover the rest of the protectorate where it had not been known before (Rotimi, 2001: 19-20).

4. THE NATIVE ADMINISTRATION POLICE FORCES AND THE RIOTS

The first colonial chiefs in Tivland were not provided with policemen. The chiefs themselves appointed able-bodied young men to serve as policemen. When later, the colonial administrators saw the need to assign policemen to the chiefs, the chiefs were asked to look for men of their choice and bring them for appointment. In some cases, the chiefs were given police uniforms and asked to appoint whoever they wanted. Since the policemen were seen as symbols of authority in the North it soon became a coveted job, and their appointments were marked with corrupt practices. Policemen in Tivland were dreaded and feared. They arrested people arbitrarily without giving them reasons for their arrests or the offence they committed (Anum, 2008:). They mistreated people at the slightest provocation, especially tax evaders. A policeman could scatter a whole market on a market day. He could also take by force, a person's property without any challenge. In Akigas words:

on his return to the village, things began to happen. He laid hands on peoples property, saying you can't play the fool with me. I was not made policeman for nothing. It cost me a cow (Rotimi, 2001:146).

The role of the Native Administrative Police Forces in Tivland in the turbulent political period proceeding Nigeria's independence in different parts of the country especially Tivland has been very controversial. The police being a necessary body in any civil society are charged with the traditional duty of preventing crime. These roles, however, can be usurped by the government in power. In these cases, policemen see themselves as loyal servants of the ruling elites and not for the well being of the general public. The Tiv Native Administrative police found itself walking a tight rope being accused variously by agents of the Northern People's Congress (NPC), controlled government on one hand and the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the Tiv party and its Action Group (AG), ally forming the opposition on the other.

The perception of the police force in Tivland was that it was a Hausa/Fulani force of occupation designed to extend Hausa/Fulani hegemony. Even the name that a policeman was called was foreign and hated. The '*dogari*' or '*yandoka*,' commonly used in Tivland were not Tiv names but rather Hausa names. The police in the early years of party politics were encouraged with other N.A employees to have a stake in the survival of the system by combining their NA job with membership of the government approved political party the NPC (Rotimi, 2001:146). The police under the control of the District heads and the NA officials in Tivland molested the Tiv people who were opposed to the NPC. The police protected NPC members at their rallies from UMC attacks. In a letter from J.E.Egbe (ASP) and Adviser Benue NA Police Forces to the Police Chief Benue Province on UMBC hooliganism, J.E.Egbe stated:

on the 2nd November 1958 members of the NPC Gboko branch held a public meeting/lecture in Gboko. At the end of the lecture one man among other questioners put up his hand to ask a question. He was granted leave to do so. Then he said "you told us not to follow the Yoruba, why then should we follow the Hausas who call us Arna"? Many people clapped as they heard the question. At this juncture Danlahadi, the Divisional Secretary of NPC got up and ordered the constable on duty to arrest this man for disturbing at their NPC lecture when he is an UMBC (NAK/MAKPROF/APL/34,F9/61).

We can see that the Tiv N.A police, instead of maintaining law and order, were used as an instrument of repression for the harassment of political opponents especially the UMBC – AG Alliance. This situation led the Tiv to turn against members of the NA police during the revolts of 1960 and 1964. The Tiv took advantage of disturbance to let vengeance on the police. In the numerous Tiv/police encounters the police were humiliated.

It is worthy to note that NPC supporters equally complained of police harassment. In some cases they maintained that the police sided with the UMBC against NPC members. In a petition written to the Minister of Internal Affairs by H.O. Abaagu, NPC member in the Federal House of Representatives, he accused the Tiv NA of taking sides with the UMBC and the police of harassing the NPC. He speaks of an instance:

At Ihugh in Jechira Intermediate Area, Tiv Division, an NPC who was addressing a mass meeting was pushed down while a UMBC-AG man jumped on the table and started to preach UMBC-AG despite he had no permit, yet the police took no action AK/MAKPROF/APL/34,F9/61).

The Minister reacted swiftly to Abaagu's petition, by asking the Resident to furnish his office with information regarding police participation in politics (NAK/MAKPROF/MIA711S.1,2/4/1959). This showed how serious the government took issues when the interest of the NPC was involved. The D.O. Tiv Division who reacted to the query absolved the NA police of complicity in the harassment of NPC supporters by UMBC supporters.

From the foregoing we can safely conclude that the police were serving the interests of the NPC controlled government that gave them nourishment. That explains why the riots of 1960 and 1964 were directed against the NPC controlled native administration and the NA police forces led by the Tor Tiv Gondo Aluor. This situation notes that the NA police in Tiv division had been walking a tight rope since the advent of party politics. While they could not effectively

check UMBC fanatics, from disrupting NPC rallies, they also did not accede to NPC requests to molest UMBC supporters. The Tiv riots that broke out, capitalized on these existing divisions. The clashes started mainly between the supporters of the NPC and UMBC. These riots were motivated by the perceived marginalization and insecurity on the part of the Tiv and their feeling that the members of the NPC were responsible for their condition. The Tiv were suspicious of the authoritarian native administration system and its attempt to forcefully penetrate Tivland. They saw the native authorities as an embodiment of the NPC. The first riots were carried out in 1960 and tagged *nande-ior*, *nande* meaning 'arson or burning' down houses, while the second riots were those of 1964 and called *atemityough* meant 'headbreaking' (Ihila,2008).

5. THE RIOTS OF 1960-NANDE NANDE (BURNING)

The start of the crisis was when the elected Tiv NA council with a majority of UMBC members was dissolved in November 1959, and a new one reconstituted which was totally pro-NPC. The Tor Tiv, who was the head of the new NA council, was coerced into supporting the NPC.

Before independence on October 1, 1960 there were elections held in 1959 to elect members of the House of Representatives from which a government would be chosen to lead Nigeria to independence. Incidentally, all of the seven seats in Tiv Division went to the UMBC/AG alliance. The NA officials and Chiefs did not like this development. They believe that if something was not done fast, the UMBC/AG alliance would also win the seats in the Northern House of Assembly. Consequently, intimidation of UMBC/AG members by the NA controlled NPC became so common and they believed would soon blow into full scale violence. This situation led to an increasing open defiance and resistance to the lawful authorities in Tivland led by the Tor Tiv. The Tor Tiv was accused of using his powers wrongly and attempt made to curtail this. In a petition from M.A. Gundu to the Resident Benue Province, the Tor Tiv was accused of usurping the post of Tiv Native Authority Administrative Secretary from one Iyorliam Ikuan and giving it to one George Atim Atedze:

As it has ever been the desire of the Tor Tiv to usurp the post at all costs for his kinsman, George Atim Atedze, on the 28th January, he autocratically revoked the decision of the Council imposing on it George Atim Atedze's appointment in preference over Iyorliam Ikuan who has been holding the post efficiently for over two years without blemish. The Tor Tiv in his exalted position as the head of the Tiv Native Authority is encouraging clannishness – Ichongo versus Ipusu and there is a danger of plunging the Division into a state of disturbance (NAK/MAKPROF/APC/34 Vol IV. Ref.TPU/2B/221)

In addition, the Tor-Tiv Tiv's imposition of unpopular kindred heads on the local inhabitants in August 1960 were resisted. A similar resistance took place in Mbatie clan. There was soon a breakdown of law and order.

A major incident that signaled the start of the riots was in August 1960, when the clan head of Yandev, a supporter of the NPC, was assaulted with two of his policemen and other tax collectors while trying to collect tax. This was followed by further attacks on policemen who tried to arrest these tax evaders. In the eyes of the people all chiefs, clan heads, NA police and tax collectors were pro-NPC and so enemies to the people. The riot proper was triggered by an attempt by the clan head of Yandev to close a market owned by one Kumbul Akpai, a UMBC supporter. The clan head of Yandev Ol Ako and some strong NPC supporters had gone to close the market with a detachment of the NA police but was repelled by the people. The intervention of the Tor-Tiv did not help matters. It was maintained that the Tor-Tiv did not come to make peace but he came with more NA policemen to enforce the order. They demanded for the return of their clan head, Ol Ako, who had fled to Gboko. The Tor Tiv, who feared for Ako's life, refused to grant their request and withdrew. On the 25th August, a riot squad of the NA police armed with batons and shield was drafted to the market to enforce the closure order. The clash that followed between the police and the people who were armed with dangerous bows, arrows and cutlasses led to injury of three policemen and their consequent withdrawal.

It was against this background of the Yandev incident that the burning and looting soon spread to other parts of Tivland in December 1960. The riots led to attacks of known NPC members in Tivland and their properties were looted and destroyed. Apart from an incident in Wukari, all the acts of arson and destruction were confined to Tivland. The Wukari incident was an attack on NPC members who were passing through Tiv territory to attend an NPC convention at Wukari. This incident, however, did not lead to the escalation of violence as the Jukun refused to react (Makar, 1994:227).The police could not contain the rioting as law and order broke down. This led to young men to form themselves into militia groups, causing destruction and taking over the functions of traditional rulers. The majority of important NPC members and traditional rulers fled to Gboko during the riots.

The 1960 riots had serious repercussions on the history of Tivland. Apart from the damage done to property, the 1960 riots did not involve large-scale killings like those of 1964(Daily Times, Oct.20, 1960). Some of the people died as a result of police shorting, while others died being killed by militia groups or those defending their property. Over 50,000 people were involved. The Nigeria police force maintained that during the disturbances it arrested over 5,000 Tiv people for such offences as murder, arson, rioting, and damage to property and injury to persons. Out of these 3,882 were convicted (Daily

Times, June 30,1960) Despite the riots, politicians on the side of the NPC and the UMBC tried to restrain their supporters from violence. The fact that 50,000 were involved in these riots was a clear indication that the situation could not be controlled by the police. An appeal was made to Anja, the Divisional President of the NPC, and to J.S. Tara, the UMBC President General, to assist in restoring peace. The positive response of leaders of the warring factions contributed much to the return of peace, even though fragile in Tivland.

6. THE RIOTS OF 1964 –ATEMITYOUGH (HEADBREAKING)

The year 1960 that the first Tiv riots took place was the year independence was granted to Nigeria by Britain. One might expect that the series of reconciliatory moves that took place could end the political upheavals in Tivland but the reverse was the case. Events that followed the departure of the colonial authorities led to worsening relations between the belligerents and hence the second Tiv riots of February and March 1964. This riot was characterized by the burning and looting of property, as well as the maiming and breaking of peoples' heads (known as the *atemityough*).

It is to be noted that after the end of the first riot, a Sole Administrator was appointed to run the affairs of the Tiv NA. His duties included the restoration of law and order, the reconciliation of the various political factions in Tivland, and assisting the office of the Tor Tiv to regain his authority and personality that had been greatly eroded during the riots. The sole administrator, Mr. M.J. Dent, on assumption of office began to usurp the functions of the elders and chiefs at the same time showing sympathy with the NPC. The Administrator in his efforts to reconcile the warring factions looked into the complaints brought against some of the District heads, suspending some and retaining others. The NPC were unimpressed with his actions which they described as pro-UMBC, and reported him to the Northern Regional Government. Mr. Dent's attempts to organize peace and reconciliatory meetings between the two sides were met with resistance, a non-cooperative attitude from both sides. Mr. Dent was accused by NPC firstly of refusing to grant a permit for them to hold a rally but granting one to the UMBC to hold a rally at Agwabi, 23 miles on Gboko-Wukari road (NAK/MAKPROF/APC/34/F9/61). He was also accused of non-cooperation and taking unilateral actions.

Generally, the Tiv were dissatisfied after the riot because they were made to pay extra taxes for damages caused by the riots. More than 50,000 taxpayers were made to pay extra N5.10 per head in addition to the general annual tax of N4.50 (Anifowose, 1979:128). A taxpayer who defaulted was imprisoned for six months. This excessive taxation was generally paid including those areas which did not take part in the riot. At the same time, some areas known to have sympathy for the NPC were excluded. This decision which was taken by the NPC regional government against the Tiv was on the advice of a few NPC elders in Tivland. It was seen as further evidence of political oppression and an indirect way to punish UMBC/AG supporters for rioting and damaging the property belonging to NPC supporters.

Following the success of the UMBC in the 1960 riots, the popularity of the party increased their victory in the North Regional Election of 1961. This victory coincided with the arrest of Tarka and a fresh determination by the UMBC to unite and resist the foreign dominated NPC, though the UMBC/AG alliance broke off in 1962 following the AG crisis in the West, the UMBC continued to wax stronger in Tivland. In November 1963, there was the composition of the Tiv Advisory Council, which the Tiv complained that though they were the majority party they had only been given minority seats. The UMBC annual conference held at Agasha between 4th and 6th February 1964 exploited the existing tension and condemned the excessive taxation and its method of collection. As tax collectors were possible NPC supporters, the UMBC members frowned at their *modus operandi*; hence, they were the first targets of attack.

The first major disturbances began in Tombo Mbalagh where the clan head Gbagbar Apinega a pro-NPC on the 12th February was seized by rioters and killed along with three others. The hands of Gbagbar's scribe were cut off by the rioters. A team of N.A police which had been sent to the area to restore peace had to return to Gboko when they found a large crowd. Though a few arrests were made, the killing of Gbagbar led to a free for all fight between supporters of the NPC and supporters of the UMBC. This disorder led to an ambush of eight policemen who were later slain and their guns seized by the rioters (Abeghe, 2005:104). The murder of Gbagbar marked effectively the start of *atemityough*. As in the previous riot, the violence spread to some other parts of Tivland. Unlike the first riot, the new wave of violence concentrated on personal violence rather than violence on property.

The later stages of the riots were to manifest themselves in clashes involving the Ichongo and Ipusu segments of Tiv society. The revolts were almost converted into an Ipusu/Ichongo confrontation with the Ipusu (UMBC), led by Tondo Agede fighting against the Ichongo (NPC) led by Aernyi Kangur (Hembe, 2003:225). Most of the fighting during the riots took place at night. The UMBC members symbolized their confrontation with the broom (*chanca*) to sweep out *Baja* or *Shoja* petali (NPC). At Mbaiase in Masev, the people there were predominantly NPC but they were always attacked by the few UMBC members in the area who were supported by neighboring Ipusu areas. This led to serious fighting between the NPC and the UMBC with each side receiving reinforcements. Other serious battles were fought in Mbachin, Aliade and Mbayion.

7. THE USE OF MILITANT GROUPS

Militant groups were widely believed to be used by the various political parties during the political disturbances in Tivland. The NPC had the Sardauna Brigade as its militant wing, the Okpara Youth Brigade and Zikist were militant wings of the NCNC, Awolowo Youth Pioneers was the militant wing of the AG, Akintola Young Pioneers for the NNDP and Tarka Young Pioneers for the UMBC(Abeghe,2005:104). The political violence in Tivland was between the Sardauna Brigade of the NPC and Tarka Young Pioneers. The Sardauna Brigade that had existed for sometime in the North did not surface early in Tivland, and even when it did, it was not very popular in the beginning. It was when the sizable population of Tiv people began to join the NPC because of coercion or the purported benefits that membership of the Brigade began to grow. The Sardauna Brigade engaged the Tarka Young Pioneers in bloody conflicts. The Brigades operated with confidence in Tivland knowing that it was operating under the cover of the ruling political party, so they unleashed terror against their opponents.

CONCLUSION

This paper has analyzed the political developments linking the misuse of Native Administrative Police Forces in Tivland, Central Nigeria to the post-independence political upheavals. At independence, Tivland was polarized with the existing traditional institutions and the Native Administrative Police Forces supporting the government of the day, the NPC, against the UMBC, a predominantly minority Tiv party. In order to exert a firm control over Tivland, the government resorted to the use of the Native Administrative Police Forces, a situation the Tiv rejected and decided to rally round their leader J.S.Tarka, and their party, the UMBC. Their rejection of the NPC controlled government and its means of coercion was symbolic, as the acceptance would mean accepting Hausa /Fulani domination. The rejection of the NPC , and all that was associated with it was to lead to the bitter and violent political upheavals in Tivland during the First Republic. The paper has however shown the dangers inherent in ethnic politics.

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