

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

CONTROL OF LARGE-SCALE CIVIL CONFLICTS IN DEMOCRATIC NIGERIA

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The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

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ABSTRACT

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This paper briefly examines the most intractable destabilizing malaise plaguing Nigeria i.e. control of the conflicts among the over 200 ethnic groups. Drawing from the basic characteristics of the Nigerian state, the causes of the conflicts are analyzed; the effectiveness (and efficiency) of the police whose constitutional duty it is to maintain law and order is also examined; the reasons for the woeful performance are also analyzed; the effect of the introduction of the military in civil order role is also assessed. The impact of the flawed form of Nigeria's federalism on the promotion of the large-scale civil conflicts will also be examined as well as the defects preventing the military from being effective in solving the problems. The paper will finally recommend some ways to better control the rampant large-scale civil conflicts in the country.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	VII
LIST OF TABLES	IX
THE CONTROL OF LARGE-SCALE CIVIL CONFLICTS IN DEMOCRATIC NIGERIA.....	1
BACKGROUND.....	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	2
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	2
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	3
SCOPE	3
METHODOLOGY.....	3
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CONFLICT IN GENERAL.....	3
MAIN CAUSES OF CIVIL CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA.....	5
POVERTY	5
EDUCATION.....	6
POLITICS OF HORIZONTAL REVENUE SHARING.....	6
DERIVATION.....	8
LAND MASS AND TERRAIN.....	9
POPULATION DENSITY.....	9
INTERNAL REVENUE GENERATION.....	10
CONTROL OF LARGE-SCALE CIVIL CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA.....	11
POLICE EFFORTS IN CONTROLLING CIVIL CONFLICTS.....	12
MILITARY EFFORTS TO RESTORE LAW AND ORDER.....	15
CASE STUDIES.....	17
KADUNA CONFLICT.....	17
ODI CONFLICT.....	19
JUKUN AND TIV CONFLICT (BENUE CONFLICT).....	21

CONCLUSION.....	22
RECOMMENDATIONS	24
ENDNOTES.....	25
BIBLIOGRAPHY	31

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The responsibility for any error of fact and/or interpretation in this project is entirely mine.

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1.....	7
TABLE 2.....	8
TABLE 3.....	13

THE CONTROL OF LARGE-SCALE CIVIL CONFLICTS IN DEMOCRATIC NIGERIA

A fundamental challenge to democracy in Nigeria, or any other country with such deep and volatile ethnic divisions, is to find means for managing, containing and reducing ethnic conflict. The polarization of ethnic and regional conflict was a leading factor in the collapse of Nigeria's First Republic and a central concern in the design of the Second Republic¹

Larry Diamond (1987)

BACKGROUND

In the new states of Africa and Asia, no problem has more fiercely challenged political order and state cohesion than ethnic conflict.² Nigeria, the most populated country in tropical Africa (estimated population about 126.9m³) has been beset with many crises since gaining political independence from Great Britain in October 1960. The most intractable of these are the conflicts among its over 250⁴ ethnic groups. The three major ethnic groups in Nigeria (Hausa/Fulani in the North, Ibo in the South east and Yoruba in the South west) constitute about 70% of the country's population⁵, while other groups have been very vociferous in opposing whatever they perceive as injustice by these major ethnic groups. The military staged a coup for the first time and toppled the democratic government in January 1966. The ensuing problems of this take-over eventually culminated in the civil war which lasted from 1967 to 1970. There was a brief intervention of civilian rule from 1979 to 1983. Then the military took over again, yielding to a democratically elected government in May 1999. Elections initiate outbursts of ethnic conflict because losers employ any means to cause civil unrest. Nigerian Nobel laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka warned recently that there are signs that the 2003 general elections may provoke the worst violence the country has ever seen⁶.

This SRP argues that large-scale civil conflicts constitute a major obstacle towards any meaningful development in Nigeria. Too many lives and property have been lost in these conflicts, and the resulting insecure environment is discouraging many local and international investors. The government's efforts to control these conflicts have not been effective, judging from their alarming recurrence across the country. The most prominent of these civil conflicts are triggered by ethnic and religious issues. The root causes of these conflicts will be identified. This SRP will analyze the tendency of the government to always react to these conflicts, instead of being pro-active. The Nigeria Police Force's (whose constitutional role it is to maintain law and order) seeming inability to control these conflicts will also be analyzed. The military, attempting to restore law and order, has sometimes been criticized for use of excessive force

and exacerbating the conflicts, rather than solving them. The reasons for this will be analyzed. The SRP concludes with useful suggestions for lasting solutions.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In spite of enormous investments to ensure the protection of life and property in the country, Nigerian ethnic violence has continued unabated. Most experts have agreed that cultural identity, economic factors and politics are contributors to ethnic conflict. In most cases, economic competition between sectors of the urban community takes the outward shape of violent ethnic conflict.⁷ Since this competition for scarce economic resources has resulted in conflicts that seem to have overwhelmed the police, it is necessary to find answers to some crucial questions.

The root causes and nature of large-scale civil conflicts in the country must be identified. Are there signs of impending crisis? How does the government react to such signs? The role of the police in controlling the conflicts should be carefully reviewed. Are the organization and numbers of police adequate for the role assigned to them? Do they have the proper training and equipment for effective control? Are they adequately funded? What is the relationship between the police and other security agencies? How supportive is the relationship between the police and the public? The role of the military in conflict resolution also needs some detailed analysis. Is there a proper procedure for handing over operations from the police to the military? Is military training designed for control of civil conflicts? Are there adequate rules of engagement and use of minimum force? This SRP addresses these perplexing questions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This project will identify the deep causes of the violent civil conflicts that have plagued Nigeria in its recent history. These include the struggle for resources to improve the quality of life of the people. The combatants also clamor for more equitable distribution of the mineral resources, especially when exploitation of minerals seems to worsen the Nigerian environment. The seeming inability of the government to nip the conflicts in the bud, in spite of reliable indicators of impending violence will also be examined. The failure of the police to control the conflicts requires some investigation, since the police have been overwhelmed in each of the major civil crises. The size, organization, equipment, and training of the police will be reviewed. After the police are rendered incapable of controlling conflicts, the military are called in to restore law and order. However, the introduction of the military in many cases has been criticized because of soldiers' failure to adhere to the principle of minimum force. This issue needs to be scrutinized as well. The training and orientation of the military for dealing with civil

conflicts will be the focus of the study. Three case studies from Kaduna, Benue, and Bayelsa contribute to the analysis. Concluding suggestions will be made for effective control of such civil conflicts in the future.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This SRP will be a useful addition to existing knowledge on the maintenance of law and order in general, and especially on control of large-scale civil conflicts in Nigeria. The SRP will provide some reference for other researchers and also serve as a useful guide to the government and the citizenry in the control of large-scale civil conflicts.

SCOPE

This project will consider the control of conflict for the period 1999 to date. During this democratic period, the rule of law was generally respected and the political leaders were mindful of the reaction of the electorates, unlike military governments which were not answerable to any electorate. Time constraints will not allow a wider research to other periods.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive and analytical method. The sources of data for the study were primary and secondary. Primary data were collected through interviews and questionnaires. Individuals interviewed or served questionnaires included former commanders of operations charged with controlling the conflicts and officers serving in the Nigerian Armed Forces (senior and junior)

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CONFLICT IN GENERAL

The term “conflict” is derived from the Latin word “confligere”, which means “to strike together”. Conflict represents a condition of dissension in an interaction between two or more parties. Technically, the word could simply be defined as “opposition among social entities directed against one another”⁸. Opposition, as used in this case, merely refers to very little or total lack of cooperation. Conflict is a normal feature in human relations - natural and inevitable. It is not the contact between ethnic groups that in itself breeds inter-group conflicts, but the intensity of competing claims among the groups.⁹ To some people, conflicts are not necessarily bad or dysfunctional. In fact, some claim that conflict is a critical mechanism by which goals and aspirations of individuals and groups are articulated; it is a channel for the definition of creative solutions to human problems and a means to the development of a collective identity.¹⁰ According to Efeovbokhan, stability in government recognizes the presence of conflicts in the

political process, so it may therefore be regarded as the ability of a system to resist internal and external pressures, contain and resolve conflicts which are constant phenomena in any polity¹¹. To others, conflict is an abnormal phenomenon which should be avoided at all costs.

Thus it can be seen that conflicts may be positive or negative, constructive or destructive, orderly or disorderly. This study will concentrate on the negative ones. They are said to be destructive when the manifest violence exceeds the threshold defined by societal consensus. In this case, the process of conflict escalation culminates in mutual attacks and efforts to destroy opponents. Misjudgment, misperception, and situational entrapment often unduly magnify. Such a situation endangers human survival as well as social and political structure¹². These conflicts usually occur as a result of a clash of interests between parties involved in some form of relationship, either because they are pursuing incompatible goals or they are using incompatible means in the pursuit of their chosen goals¹³. Conflicts often take the form of peaceful demonstrations, blockade of work places, or violent clashes against governmental establishments and/or people. Over 40 violent clashes have occurred between Nigerian ethnic and religious groups since the return of democratic rule on May 29, 1999.¹⁴

Broadly speaking, there are three causes of conflicts. The first and most common is the competition for inadequate resources. Economists have confirmed that human needs (especially physiological and prestige/status needs) are insatiable. Competition (and hence conflicts) will therefore continue and may in fact assume a destructive form if what is being competed for is either scarce for a whole segment of the population or perceived to be injudiciously distributed. The second factor that can cause social conflicts is contradictory value systems, especially religious and ideological beliefs. This factor becomes very significant when one group in the society tries to force others to follow its own value system against the other group's volition. Thirdly, manipulation of information either to shape the reaction of a group in some unintended ways or to deliberately mislead the group can cause conflicts. Such manipulation is often used in Nigeria by aggrieved politicians and ethnic leaders to stir negative emotions in the populace. In most cases, violent or destructive conflicts ensue.

Either when they are fully blown or when conflicts are brewing, the manner of governmental management can dictate the nature of a conflict and its end state. Whether a conflict plays a useful role or otherwise in the relationships among ethnic groups often depends on the manner such a conflict is controlled and resolved. Established governments or authorities react differently to the emergence of conflicts. Well-managed conflicts may lead to a qualitative development in the relationships between the affected parties. If, on the other hand, they are badly managed, escalation is inevitable, leading to violence and unnecessary waste of human

and material resources. One way of responding to conflicts is avoidance. This means authorities are ignoring the alleged discriminations and thus do nothing. According to Wilmot and Hocker, avoidance is characterized by denial of the conflict, equivocation, changing and avoiding topics, being non-committal, and joking rather than dealing with the conflict at hand¹⁵. Thus the conflicts simmer only to usually erupt into violent outbursts causing a lot of destruction. This course of action, in most cases compounds conflicts. Experts have determined that the more a group is ignored, the greater the tendency to seek a violent solution to the perceived problem. Another way of handling a conflict is to confront it. In this case, one of the parties in conflict takes a unilateral action to solve the problem by force. This could be done through the police or the military to persuade, intimidate or coerce the group to do its own will.

The third way of dealing with conflicts is to invite a third party to intervene. This method works best where there is still some respect for the rule of law. Such third parties could be courts of law (e.g. International Court of Justice at the Hague if conflict is between countries) or respected personalities. In conflicts where, however, one of the warring parties does not have - or loses- confidence in the appointed third party, destructive confrontations often result as the only way of venting frustration. The fourth way of responding to conflicts is often referred to as the joint problem-solving method. This involves the parties in conflict coming together voluntarily or after being assisted by a third party to talk or negotiate, thus resolving the conflict on mutually beneficial terms. This method is often easy to accomplish when the parties (possibly after exhausting their resources without any progress) realize the futility of continuing with the conflict. The beauty of this kind of resolution is that it tends to be more enduring more than the others since the solution was achieved by mutual agreement.

MAIN CAUSES OF CIVIL CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

POVERTY

About 45% of Nigerians live below the poverty line, according to the United Nations statistics¹⁶. The reasons for this sad fact include adverse trends in the world economy, accelerating rates of population growth, corruption among the few educated elites, and gross mismanagement by the leaders. Carol Lancaster captured the economic situation in most African states thus:

By 1980, it was evident that economic progress in much of Africa had stalled or had been replaced by economic decline. Production in agriculture and industry was slowing. Per capita incomes were stagnant or falling. The value of exports was declining, while the cost of imports was increasing. In a growing number of countries, foreign debts became so large as to be unserviceable.¹⁷

The situation has only worsened since this assessment was given in 1993. Lack of basic essentials for decent living makes many in the society susceptible to being lured into violence by the relatively well-off politicians to prove their relevance and force the government to patronize them. Unfortunately, the implementation of IMF-prescribed Structural Adjustment Program, coupled with the crippling governmental debt, has significantly reduced public spending on crucial areas of the economy. The current government's attempts to reorder the old inefficient method of allocating resources and to reduce corruption are being strongly opposed by the previously favored groups, who are in turn threatening to cause unrest if the previous favorable (to them) arrangement is changed. Much recent civil unrest is due to the clamor for more equitable resource allocation.

EDUCATION

The literacy rate in Nigeria is about 57.10%¹⁸. The majority of the citizens live in the rural areas and are mostly illiterate. Thus it is quite easy for these citizens to be misled and mobilized to "defend" their rights, even though, in some cases, some of their grievances may be in the process of being addressed by the government. The July 8, 2002 blockade of a Chevron oil rig by some rural women threatening to strip themselves naked if the oil company failed to grant the community some special concessions is a classic case of mobilization of mainly illiterate folks.¹⁹ Though the leader of this group is a member of the National Assembly (Congress Woman) and very educated, most of the demonstrating women had no clue about the issues at stake except what the politician told them. Education is free up to high school in Nigeria, but some parents still need to be persuaded to send their children to school because they don't know the value of education. Also, they would rather take the children to the farm or to hawk wares to assist in sustaining the family. This lack of education makes it difficult for the illiterate people to understand the system of governance or to know what is expected of them as citizens. They are thus easy to be misled by any unscrupulous politician into violent conflicts which may not be justifiable.

POLITICS OF HORIZONTAL REVENUE SHARING

In Nigeria, federally-generated revenues are distributed to the states and local governments for administration and for the provision of goods and services using some ever changing formulas. Nigeria's form of federalism gives so much power to the center where the bulk of the nation's wealth is held that the other strata of government depend on the central government for most of their functions and in some cases even to pay salaries. Sub-national authorities handle local taxes, but these have no macroeconomic effects on the country. On the

other hand, the federal government handles the lucrative taxes from imports, customs, excises, business and mining. The states generate very little revenue. So rather than being a supplemental source of revenue for weak states, funds from the center are the major source of funding for state and local governments. The struggle for larger shares of the revenue by the states and local communities has been a major cause of many civil conflicts in the country.

Various principles have been developed for revenue-sharing from the central government to the states, none of which has enjoyed national acceptance. The two broad categories of principles are efficiency and equity²⁰. Efficiency principles focus on rationally distributing revenues to the most economically efficient units, using such criteria like fiscal efficiency, tax efforts, or derivation. Equity principles focus on explicitly political grounds like equal development, national interest, or national minimum standards. In reality, the Nigerian Government seems to have elevated equity over efficiency principles, though the government claims that both are being used. The table below shows the horizontal revenue sharing formulas used from 1970 to date.²¹

Principles	Percentage Weight Assigned					
	1970 to 1980	Initial 1981 Act	Revised 1981 Act	1990 to date	Proposals of NRMAFC ²²	Proposals of NCC Revenue Allocation Committee ²³
Equality of states	50	50	40	40	40	30
Population	50	40	40	30	30	40
Social Development Factor	-	-	15	10	10	-
Internal Revenue Generation Effort	-	-	5	10	20	10
Land mass & Terrain	-	10	-	10	-	10
Population Density	-	-	-	-	-	10
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 1

As shown above, the major criteria used are equality of the states and population. In spite of the apparent advantages of equality, and the simplicity in the application of this factor, some obvious disadvantages make the principle difficult to defend²⁴. Moreover, the principle tends to encourage indolence in some state apparatus. Emphasis placed on this principle has fueled the

unending clamor for the creation of new states in the country whether viable or not. Besides, no two states are ever equal in terms of population, geographical conditions or economic attributes²⁵. Most important of all, the principle does not encourage states to intensify their efforts to generate internal revenues, since they are assured of some proportional amount regularly.

Similarly, the controversy over accurate population figures has led to the endless allegations of inflated census figures in order to take advantage of this principle. This is the root cause of endless challenges to virtually all previous census exercises. To complicate matters further, the smaller communities complained about giving much weight to the population principle, since it ignores the fact that each big state has a large taxable base which is not available to the small states. Not surprisingly, therefore, the weight allocated to population has varied over the years, as shown below.²⁶

1970-1980	50%
1981	40%
1990	30%
Proposal of National Constitutional Conference 1995	40%

TABLE 2

The government has promised to hold another census next year. The challenge is how to make it acceptable to all Nigerians. The United Nations may have to be invited to supervise the census process to confer legitimacy, remove doubts, and thus remove a source of conflicts.

DERIVATION

The principle of derivation, which seems to have internationalized the ethnic conflict situation in Nigeria more than the other principles, holds that a sizeable percentage of the revenue obtained from minerals must be ploughed back into the community where the minerals came from. This fund is intended to be used for the development of the area and to compensate for the environmental degradation of the community resulting from the exploitation of the minerals. Protests about the refusal of the federal government to increase the weight assigned to this principle and also the failure to apply the principle to the letter eventually led to the execution in November 1995 of internationally recognized leader and novelist Ken Saro-Wiwa from the Ogoni ethnic group of the oil-rich Niger Delta²⁷. The ethnic group led by him in their

violent protest against the government had killed eight prominent elders of their own ethnic group for being stooges of the government in the exploitation of the community. They also vowed to prevent oil companies from drilling for oil in their area. The military regime arrested, tried, convicted, and executed Mr. Wiwa and eight others for the offence, even while appeals for clemency were still coming from within and also from the international arena.

As expected, the non oil-producing areas strongly oppose the use of this principle for obvious reasons. As a result of lack of consensus, the proportion of oil revenues allocated on a derivation basis steadily declined from 50% of mining rents in 1969, through 2% of the Federation Account in 1981 to 1% from 1989-1999.²⁸ Only in the year 2000 was the percentage increased to 13%. The tempo of the protest has reduced for now. A constant review of this percentage in view of economic realities will subdue conflicts in the area.

LAND MASS AND TERRAIN

The Land Mass and Terrain principle was championed by politicians from the north, which contains about 70% of the land mass of Nigeria and the South-South people, who inhabit the swampy terrain of the Niger Delta. This principle holds that these areas require more resources to develop than other urbanized areas. The southern states strongly opposed the surreptitious introduction of this principle in 1990 by the military government of Ibrahim Babangida. So great was the opposition that rather than remove it completely, the percentage allocated to land mass and terrain was reduced to five per cent each. Since 1990, the three terrain types recognized under this principle are wetlands (i.e. the swamps of the Delta), the plains and the highlands.²⁹ This principle has been so controversial that an expert has suggested that "either the use of the principle should be suspended or the weight assigned to it generally reduced".³⁰

POPULATION DENSITY

To further complicate the politicization of population data in the country and to assuage the vehement southern opposition to the Land Mass and Terrain principle, which obviously favored the north, the principle of population density which obviously favored the south, was sponsored during the 1994-95 National Constitutional Conference. This principle holds that the densely populated areas actually need more resources to provide goods and services for the citizens. To balance this delicate political and economic equation, the same 10% (as in Land Mass and Terrain principle) was allocated to the principle of population density.

INTERNAL REVENUE GENERATION

Most of the revenue allocation commissions in the country since the 1950's had always recommended that the government must encourage autonomous revenue generation, independent of funds coming from the federal government, which the states should then regard as supplements. Unfortunately, these recommendations were always ignored. However, there is a consensus among the elite that this principle should be incorporated into Nigeria's revenue-sharing scheme. In 1981, this principle was assigned 5%. The 1989 NRMASFC recommended 20%, but this was cut to 10% in favor of the land mass and terrain principle³¹. This percentage is still in force. The greatest opposition to this principle is from the relatively economically backward states in the north. The second problem militating against the principle is the dearth of reliable data on which to base the revenue generation calculation. As a compromise, the calculation is based on the percentage increase in revenue generation of a given year over the previous year.³²

The direct administration of the Federation Account by the federal government is the main problem threatening the peaceful process of revenue sharing in the country. Each succeeding government appoints ad hoc commissions to attend to protests and receive recommendations from various quarters regarding revenue mobilization and fiscal control. A permanent commission made up of seasoned bureaucrats could subject this fire brigade approach to critical analysis and fashion an enduring system that will be acceptable to most Nigerians.

CONTROL OF LARGE-SCALE CIVIL CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

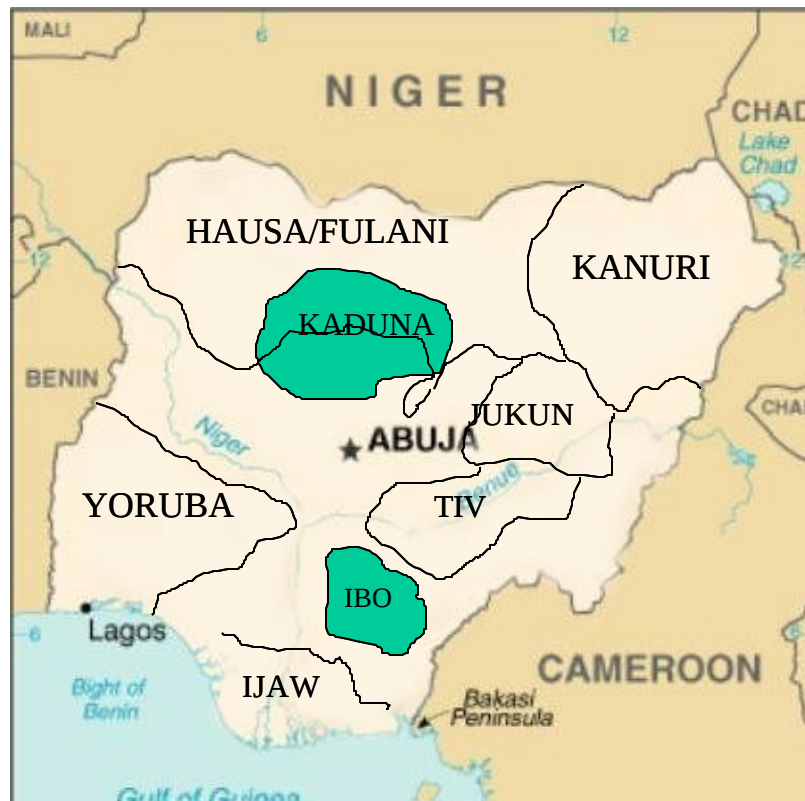


Fig 1 Map of Nigeria showing the main ethnic groups

The efforts of the government to prevent conflict have not been very successful, judging from the frequency of violent eruptions of large-scale civil conflicts and the killing of thousands of people across the country since the emergence of democratic government in 1999. These conflicts don't just emerge overnight. They seem to have some gestation period during which pro-active measures on the part of the government could easily prevent the wanton destruction that attends the escalation of the conflicts. Unfortunately, the state institutions, physical structures and democratic processes that can reduce the large-scale civil conflicts are either non-existent or completely ineffective. The Nigeria Police Force has time and again proved unable to maintain law and order and control the increasing frequency of large-scale civil unrest across the country, leaving the government with no other option but to call out the military to restore law and order. The constant resort to the introduction of the coercive military apparatus to control the conflicts could be effective in solving other types of conflicts, but they have been

proved to be inappropriate in ethnic civil conflicts³³. The government needs to be more pro-active in intelligence gathering. It also needs to coordinate the active participation of the corporate bodies in the area, traditional rulers and eminent personalities and a friendly, well-equipped police to identify a brewing conflict and prevent it from escalating into a major conflict. A virile and truly independent judiciary is essential to enforce the law of the land regarding any violation in the maintenance of peace and harmonious co-existence.

POLICE EFFORTS IN CONTROLLING CIVIL CONFLICTS

After the outbreak of a civil conflict, combatants from both sides always claim to have good will in their desire to live in harmony with their neighbors. Even if such claim were sincere, Donald Horowitz asserted that good will was inadequate to address complex issues “good will alone... would not suffice to cope with ethnic conflict, for it is the product of forces independent of individual good will. Deliberate measures were required³⁴ “. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria formally and legally vests the responsibility for the deliberate measures of the maintenance of law and order and protection of the citizenry on the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) in Section 220 (1)³⁵. This constitutional responsibility is further explicated in Section 4 of the Police Act Cap 359 as follows:

- The prevention and detection of crime.
- The apprehension of offenders.
- The preservation of law and order.
- The protection of life and property.
- The enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged, as well as performance of such duties within and outside Nigeria as may be required of them³⁶.

Other enactments under various acts of the National Assembly promulgated under the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria enable the NPF to efficiently carry out its duties to maintain law and order. In order to carry out these duties, the NPF is organized into eight zones as shown in the table below:

Zones	HEADQUARTERS	states
One	Kano	Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, and Jigawa.
Two	Lagos	Lagos, Oyo, and Ogun.
Three	Yola	Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe.
Four	Makurdi	Plateau, Benue, Nasarawa, Enugu, and Taraba.
Five	Benin	Anambra, Edo, Delta, Rivers, and Bayelsa.
Six	Calabar	Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Cross River, Ebonyi, and Imo.
Seven	Abuja	Niger, Kebbi, Federal Capital Territory, Sokoto, and Zamfara.
Eight	Lokoja	Kogi, Kwara, Ondo, Osun, and Ekiti.

Source: The Nigeria Police (Management Services Department) Force Headquarters Annex Lagos 1999.

TABLE 3

The total strength of the NPF was 100,000 as at January 1999³⁷. For a population of 127m, this gives a ratio of one policeman to every 1,270 citizens, in contrast to the desired United Nations ratio of one policeman to 400 citizens. Each of the eight zones is headed by an Assistant Inspector General (AIG) of police. Each state has a Commissioner of Police (CP) in charge of all police duties. Altogether, the police are organized into about 4,137 formations, which is by far the widest coverage in the country by any national establishment. Though there is a provision for policemen in almost every town, the extremely low strength of the NPF does not meet this provision. Policemen are thus seldom seen outside the big cities. In an apparent acknowledgement of this gross deficiency, the government has made some arrangements to recruit 15,000 fresh policemen annually for the next 5 years. Assuming this plan succeeds, even without counting normal attrition, the strength by 2007 will be 175,000, which is still far short of the UN target.

Even with the current strength, the training curriculum of the NPF needs a complete overhaul. This is because police performance is far below expectations. The minimum educational standard for enlisted men at entry must be rigidly fixed at high school diploma whereas some police are currently stark illiterates. Officer cadets should have a minimum of a college degree in addition to other qualifications. Police training should incorporate the essentials of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, encourage better relationships with the public, and stress the need to be less brutal in handling civil disturbances. The extreme brutality of the anti-riot police in the control the past conflicts earned them the nick-name of “kill and go”. Claude Welch put it mildly when he said that NPF units, despite their reputation for manhandling demonstrators, have limited effectiveness and training in riot control³⁸. It was even argued that the waves of military coups d’etat that swept through the sub-Saharan countries in the 60’s and 70’s were the direct consequences of the failure of the police to control civil unrests in the region³⁹.

Police training should also aim at reducing the current psychological distance between the NPF and the public. The people don't view the police as friends; and frequently, those who volunteer information to assist in on-going investigations end up as suspects. According to the incumbent Inspector General of Police, relatives of suspects are sometimes held against their will until the suspects are produced. He further admitted that "the wider the police-public (psychological) distance, the more difficult is the task of maintenance law and order in any society"⁴⁰. The NPF leadership must therefore take part in seminars, symposia, and workshops together with the broad spectrum of the society for better understanding of what is expected of them and the best approach towards achieving these expectation. There is no substitute for a well trained, well mannered, and well-led police force in the control of large-scale civil conflicts. Good rapport with the locals is essential for effective control of undesirable elements in the society. Alfred Denning, a respected British lawyer described the British Police thus "Young men of excellent character from good homes...who, without knowing it have born in them a sense of fair play and calmness in emergency and a respect for law and order, well trained and well led."⁴¹.

Perhaps the next greatest problem confronting the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) in the control of large-scale civil conflicts is its appalling shortage of equipment. For example, the 4137 police stations mentioned earlier have altogether about 2215 vehicles⁴². This means that over 2000 police stations don't have a single vehicle to assist them. The shortage of communications equipment is equally severe. Therefore many of their operations are based on line-of-sight means. In an era when criminal groups possess sophisticated weapons, radios, and other communications equipment, the NPF as presently equipped cannot effectively control any large-scale conflicts, especially when these conflicts become violent and destructive.

As part of the complete training and retraining package, policing methods also need to reform. Presently, a majority of the policemen use foot patrols, and static check-points along the highways to control conflicts. In major cities where vehicles are available, motorized patrol, stop-and-search (on individuals) and the 'Aberdeen' Patrol System has been adopted. According to the Aberdeen system, vehicles drop groups of four to five policemen in crisis-prone areas while the vehicle goes for another assignment. These groups then patrol the areas on foot seeking trouble makers and seizing incriminating items before the vehicle returns to pick them for a repeat performance in other areas.⁴³.

Police information-gathering techniques are mostly reactive. If conflicts are to be prevented, the NPF must adopt proactive techniques to nip the crises in the bud, rather than wait for them to be fully blown before trying to control them. Modern methods must replace the

obsolete colonial system of information gathering and processing. The police should link up with other security agencies and the traditional leaders of the various communities to share information on any simmering conflict. Even with the recommended injection of funds for the information gathering equipment, but without the cooperation of other security agencies, police performance may not justify the investment.

The high-handedness of the police and crass corruption across the rank and file are major obstacles. They must be removed if the public confidence which is crucial for police operations, is to be restored. Police corruption has been so institutionalized that policemen at road blocks set up ostensibly to verify vehicle documents even give change to hapless drivers who cannot come up with the exact bribery amount demanded⁴⁴. Police – Community Relations offices are currently organized in most cities, but their effectiveness is very questionable due to the lack of confidence mentioned above. Incumbent Inspector General of Police Balogun is even recommending psychiatric testing for all policemen in the wake of reckless killing of innocent civilians and the extortion of money from motorists across the country⁴⁵. It has been suggested in some quarters that the present crop of personnel is so corrupt that nothing short of complete replacement with young, well educated and well trained personnel within the next 10-20 years can guarantee a credible future for the NPF. Those coming in must be from good family backgrounds, well-mannered, and more informed of the psychology of crowd control. They must accord all citizens their fundamental human rights.

The relationship between NPF and other security services is not cordial. Apart from mutual suspicion, the NPF is perceived as a very corrupt and inefficient organization, full of personnel who are interested only in trading information to collect money from all sides in any conflict. According to Claude Welch, corruption pervades the (police) force at all levels. The Nigerian populace has little respect for the police, due to their ineffectiveness and venality. Ethnic tensions have escalated into major confrontations, fanned rather than reduced by inept steps by the police.⁴⁶. Thus the necessary exchange of information between the services is almost completely lacking. Since security is the business of all, there is a need for closer cooperation between NPF and other services especially concerning brewing conflicts. Also, a smooth process is needed to integrate the military, when needed, into police efforts to alleviate conflicts and thus restore law and order.

MILITARY EFFORTS TO RESTORE LAW AND ORDER

Under the present arrangement, once the NPF is unable to maintain law and order- either because of inadequate equipment, or the sophistication of the ensuing violence in the conflict or

the extent of the area in conflict- a procedure is initiated whereby the military will be called out to support the police to restore law and order. Only the President ,as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, can authorize the deployment of the military to quell a crisis. The police will accompany the military during such operations, making arrests and interrogating suspects for possible prosecution later. The effectiveness and efficiency of the military have also been questioned in the light of their apparent excessive use of force in restoring law and order in the recent past.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria assigns certain roles to the military⁴⁷:

- a. defending Nigeria from any external aggression;
- b. maintaining its territorial integrity and securing its borders from violation on land, sea or air;
- c. **suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so by the President, but subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly,** and
- d. performing such other functions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly

A standard operating procedure directs the police to hand over a situation to the military when called upon by the President for the third role (emphasized) above. This procedure is often rehearsed very well in the normal Army training. There is therefore no doubt or confusion about the conditions that must be satisfied or the procedure to be followed before the military can be called out to restore law and order.

However, the organization and training of the military for this role is embedded in their preparation for conventional war against an enemy of the state. In fact, military training assumes a clearly defined enemy and a concentration of efforts to break his will to continue the fight. Though the principle of minimum force is stressed in counter-insurgency operations, the training does not clearly focus on specific ways of dealing with fellow Nigerians protesting against some policies of the government perceived to be unfair to them. It is thus not surprising that the tactics and rules of engagement used in dealing with the enemy in conventional combat operations are also applied to quelling social conflicts. The result is that after-action reports almost always allege the excessive use of force by the military in putting down protests by civilians. A major principle in Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) is restraint, which requires the careful balancing of the need for security, the conduct of operations, and the political objective⁴⁸. Failure to achieve this balance through timely issue of appropriate rules of engagement will lead

to excessive use of force, which in turn can damage the legitimacy of the military and even enhance the legitimacy of the combatants in the conflict. For instance, the alleged sacking of a whole village, as will be seen in the selected case studies, has little to do with arresting a few criminal elements in a particular community.

The Nigerian military is just emerging from almost two decades of unbroken military rule during which might was almost accepted to be right. The accurate general public perception is that, because the military was not accountable to any electorate, they committed many acts of abuse during the military regimes. Therefore, without any thorough reorientation and retraining about rules of engagement when dealing with fellow citizens, the military is likely to act as “usual,” with the same brutal effects characteristic of the military era.

Similarly, the lack of serious and sincere after-action appraisals and failure to hold erring officers accountable also encourages troops to be tempted to ignore their mandate. Many national and international organizations have alleged that what the military did in Odi, for instance, was governmentally sanctioned killing (genocide). Yet no one has been queried for the alleged excessive use of force.

The nature and standard of military training is adequate for conventional warfare, but completely inappropriate for effective control of large-scale civil unrests. Combatants in civil disturbances are not enemies of the state; in most cases, they are misguided elements of the society. In fact, most of their grievances are indeed genuine, though their method for seeking redress may be faulty. They are not in conventional wars. Current military equipment is also not suited for the control of civil crises. Apart from personal rifles and other real battle hardware, the military has no other equipment that can facilitate the resolution of civil conflicts with less lethal effects. Further, the relationship between the military and the police, as stated earlier, is not very cordial. Consequently, the necessary exchange of intelligence at the initial stages of the conflicts is not taking place. It is therefore not surprising that the police and the other security agencies are always reacting to the conflicts after they are already fully blown, instead of nipping them at the early stages.

CASE STUDIES

KADUNA CONFLICT

The large-scale civil conflicts in Kaduna began in 1987⁴⁹. But this study covers only December 1999 to May 2000, since it is concentrating on the current democratic period of Nigeria's political history. This ethno-religious conflict pitted the Muslims living mostly in the northern part against the Christians living in the southern part of the state. Historically, the Emir

of Zaria in the north ruled the south through the District Head, whom he appointed. The Christian southerners had been peacefully but audibly protesting this form of subjugation, which they blamed for their economic distress. So when the District Head of Kafanchan (in the south), died in 1998, his 17-year old son was appointed by the Emir of Zaria to replace him in spite of the threats of the people to no longer tolerate such imposition. On the day of the presentation of the staff of office, all the roads leading to the venue were blocked by protesting people and the Military Administrator was prevented from entering the town to carry out the presentation. Ensuing wanton destruction of lives and property initially targeted the Hausa community. Later on the violence was reciprocated as the situation quickly deteriorated. Recommendations of the commission of inquiry set up to identify the culprits and punish them were not implemented. This was thus a violent struggle by the southern Kaduna citizens launched to end their perceived marginalization by the northern folks⁵⁰.

Following the introduction of the Shari'a system of administration in nearby Zamfara state, the Muslims in Kaduna demanded the same system, which they saw as the only way out of the corruption, greed, and injustice that was leading them to hopelessness⁵¹. A bill to this effect was presented to the state Assembly. While it was still being processed, the Muslims planned a solidarity rally for December 1999 to drum up support for the system. When intelligence about the simmering crisis was shared with the Acting Governor, he did not appreciate the urgency of the conflict and failed to take appropriate action until the crisis was fully blown⁵². On Monday February 21, 2000, about 2000 Christians carried out a counter rally around Kaduna city to oppose the Shari'a system. The protesters attacked anyone who failed to condemn the Shari'a system. Many lives were lost when the Muslims also carried out reprisal attacks on the Christians. This violence lasted from 21 to 24 February, and the unprecedented destruction shook the whole nation. For example, 50 new vehicles belonging to one car dealer were burnt to ashes. Economic losses ran into millions of dollars⁵³. The ability of the government to maintain law and order was seriously questioned by the people. The old ritual of setting up commission of inquiry was again followed, yet nobody was prosecuted and the recommendations were kept in the cooler, as with previous cases. Some compensation was paid to the two religious bodies who suffered in the crisis, though the Muslims rejected their own as being too small⁵⁴.

The government was still trying to bring peace to the state when another purely ethnic conflict erupted, sparked by the discovery of the dead body of a southern Kaduna man in Narayi, a settlement within the Kaduna metropolis. The Katafs of southern Kaduna accused the Hausas of being responsible for the crime and vowed to avenge the death. The scale of the

destruction was comparable to the one in February of the same year. The official casualty list released by the government listed 609 people killed; 1944 houses, business premises, and hotels burnt; 123 churches and 55 mosques destroyed; and about 25,000 people displaced⁵⁵. Obviously, the actual figures exceeded official tallies.

The military was called in as the scale of the violence overpowered the police. The rioters easily overpowered the police because of their poor equipment, poor training, and the scale of violence. The military was able to control the conflicts for a number of reasons. Both sides of the conflict welcomed them as unbiased arbiters compared to the police, who were alleged to have taken sides in the conflicts⁵⁶. Moreover, the military had gained some experience in quelling ethno-religious conflicts in other parts of the country⁵⁷. However, because of the extreme level of destruction unleashed by the combatants, possible excesses and/or abuses by the military did not come to the fore.

In order to prevent a recurrence of similar religious conflicts in the future, the state government boldly moved to address the core grievances of the conflict, which was the introduction of the Sharia law. This law will apply only in areas where Muslims are in majority. Some of the issues of marginalization are being addressed both at the state and the federal levels.⁵⁸

ODI CONFLICT

Petroleum was discovered in commercial quantities in Nigeria in the 60's; about 30% of it in Bayelsa State where Odi is located.⁵⁹ The largest ethnic group in this area is the Ijaws. The community almost immediately protested the oil exploitation, demanding that a substantial proportion of the revenue be ploughed back into the development of the community. Thus the main complaint of the community focused on the perceived inequitable disbursement of the oil proceeds coming from their area, which they alleged had suffered continuous and utter neglect over the years⁶⁰. In order to gain a unified front to press their case, the Ijaw ethnic community formed the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) on December 11, 1998. The IYC immediately adopted a confrontational approach by pressing for the withdrawal of all the oil companies from their community by December 30, 1998, thereby setting them on a collision course with the government. The IYC included a militant wing popularly known by the name "Egbesu Boys", whose activities are financed through the contributions of the prominent leaders of the ethnic group, as confirmed by the National Assembly fact-finding team.⁶¹ Thus this militant group had access to sophisticated weapons which they would use to carry out the forceful eviction of the oil companies. The Boys were also alleged to possess supernatural powers, one of which

protected them from bullets. At this stage, all economic activities ceased in the community due to the very tense situation.

On November 4, 1999 some Egbesu Boys allegedly killed seven senior police officers sent to maintain law and order following the IYC ultimatum. Some extra policemen were drafted, but five more top police officers were killed by the same Boys. It was obvious that the police were not capable of restoring normalcy. The President thereafter gave the governor two weeks to find the perpetrators for further prosecution or risk declaration of a state of emergency. At the expiration of this ultimatum, the President ordered the military into Odi to restore law and order and to facilitate the arrest of those responsible for killing the police officers on November 20, 1999. The operation lasted from November 20 to 24, 1999. Unlike the Kaduna case, the use of military weapons and the effects of their action have been subjects of national and international reviews ever since. For instance, the soldiers were alleged to have gone to Odi with artillery pieces, machine guns, bazookas, grenade launchers, and mortar bombs – all of which are normally used for attacking the enemy in a conventional war⁶². It was also confirmed that by the time the soldiers left, only a church, a community center, and a bank were left standing. Everything else was destroyed.⁶³ On December 21, 1999, based on the observed scale of the destruction from the attack by the soldiers, The Human Rights Watch called on the government “to initiate criminal proceedings against the soldiers responsible for committing the Odi abuses.”⁶⁴

Many reasons have been advanced to explain the alleged excesses of the military in this operation. My personal interview of the commander of the operation confirmed that the troops’ approach into the town was met with sustained and very accurate fire from entrenched positions⁶⁵. This led to the loss of five soldiers trying to remove an unmanned road block at the entrance to the town. The soldiers had to carry out anti-ambush operations before dislodging them from the positions. It is thus possible that the loss of the soldiers so early in the operation infuriated them, causing them to declare the whole area hostile. To some experts, the soldiers simply exceeded their mandates in unleashing such terrible destruction on fellow citizens whose taxes are used to maintain the military. To others, Odi was a deliberate and premeditated plan by the government to use scorched- earth policy to annihilate the people in order to make things easy for the oil companies.⁶⁶ Thus it was categorized as genocide on the part of the government. Some even declared that the iron fist approach of the soldiers was designed to show that in any combat against any militant group in the society (natural or supernatural), the military will always be the winner. This would discourage any other group from “challenging” the supremacy of the military⁶⁷. A consensus emerged that the military used excessive force to

achieve their objective in Odi. This was emphatically advanced by Senator Ajadi of the National Assembly, Abuja who cited it as a case of “hitting an ant with a sledgehammer”⁶⁸

A senior Nigerian military officer, admits “There is a need to strictly adhere to the use of minimum force, more so, as use of force by the security forces on fellow citizens would always be painstakingly scrutinized by various interests. Above all, the work of the security forces is to contain the conflicts and not to be a party to them”⁶⁹. The rules of engagements must be reviewed to put more emphasis on restraint than is normally practiced in conventional war. Moreover, detailed after-action appraisals must be followed by prosecution for any established cases of abuse through the normal legal procedures laid down in the Constitution. As long as no open and transparent investigation and prosecution, if necessary, follows the calling out of troops, allegations of such abuse will continue. As democracy takes root in the country, there will be less need for the military to demonstrate their supremacy over other citizens. In democracies, all are equal before the law. In advanced democracies, the military serves civil authority and is usually prohibited from law enforcement.

JUKUN AND TIV CONFLICT (BENUE CONFLICT)

The core reason for the “Benue Conflict” was the fight over land between the Tivs and the Jukun ethnic groups. The Jukuns were the initial settlers in the present day Taraba State before the Tivs joined them over 200 years ago⁷⁰. This fact has been accepted by both groups, and the Tivs did pay some royalties in recognition of this antecedence. The arrival of the British in early 20th century led to the division of the area for administrative purposes. This division gave some autonomy to the Tivs, which was then exploited by them to claim complete freedom (and even equality) from the royalties and other rituals they used to pay to the paramount ruler of the Jukuns. Of course, this did not go down well with the Jukuns. Such was the remote cause of the recent incessant conflicts between the two ethnic groups. The most recent creation of states in Nigeria put a majority of the Jukuns in Taraba State and a majority of the Tivs in Benue State. The minorities in both states constantly complained of victimization by the majority groups. The Tivs are predominantly farmers, while the Jukun Fulanis are pastoral people. Some recent friction emerged over the accusation that the Fulani cattle were destroying the crops of the farmers, but these were always glossed over, ignoring the core issue of ownership of the land. The Jukuns feel that they are the original owners of the land and view the Tivs as usurpers⁷¹. The Tivs feel that having been on the land for over a century, they qualify to be the rightful owners of the land on which they farm. They advocate partitioning of the land so that the cattle herdsmen will avoid damaging their farm land.

The most recent crisis started on 13 May 2001 with the complaint that a Fulani herdsman damaged the farm crops of a Tiv man in Tsokundi Village in Wukari Local Government of Taraba State⁷². The crisis quickly escalated, and the police were easily overwhelmed, leading to the call out of the military to restore law and order. The military were in the process of restoring order when the crisis took a frightening dimension with the abduction and eventual murder of 19 soldiers who were on patrol in a Tiv village called Zaki-Biam. The circumstances surrounding the abduction were unclear, but they were alleged to have been surrounded by very many heavily armed local combatants, disarmed and later killed. Some of the locals were even alleged to have been photographed beside the bodies of the dead soldiers. It is possible that the local combatants perceive the soldiers to be partial towards the Jukuns in the conflict. The military later sent a reinforced team to the area. This team carried out reprisal raids in the area to subdue the combatants and restore law and order. Over two hundred people were allegedly killed, and many buildings were destroyed, including the country residence of a former Chief of Army Staff. As in the case of Odi, allegations of excessive use of force were leveled against the military. Anger caused by the gruesome murder of their fellow soldiers by the locals could have been responsible for the military's iron-fist approach. However, this act merely added to the complexities of the conflict, rather than solving it. Restraints, even in the face of extreme provocation, should be embedded in the rules of military engagement in conflict resolution. President Obasanjo recently went to Makurdi, where he was reported to have apologized for the actions of the military⁷³. Investigations were conducted to establish the reasons for the seeming high-handedness of the military in the Benue Conflict resolution. The results have not yet been released to the public.

CONCLUSION

This SRP inquires into the real causes of large-scale civil conflicts in Nigeria. It analyzes the nature of the build-up to violent eruption of the conflicts, the government's reaction and efforts to control the conflicts, and the effectiveness and efficiency of such efforts. Materials from authorities on the subject matter were combined with interview responses of officers who took part in operations authorized by the government to control some of the prominent large-scale civil conflicts in the country.

A good political system with effective leaders determines the ways that violent conflicts are constructively prevented.⁷⁴ Based on this criterion, the Nigerian Government has not measured up to expectation because most of the conflicts are not prevented but poorly controlled after they have already broken out. The major causes of Nigerian civil conflicts were

enumerated in the paper. Fundamentally, the federalist structure in the country needs some adjustment. The percentage of the federally-generated revenue being held at the center needs to be cut to a maximum of 20% in favor of the states and local governments. The principles of horizontal sharing of revenue to the states should be reviewed to encourage the states to raise internally generated revenues. The three problems besetting revenue sharing in the country are disproportionate percentage of the federally collected revenue; the unfulfilled quest for an acceptable, rational, and equitable formula for horizontal revenue sharing among states; and the absence of a permanent institution for the management of the revenue-sharing system in the country.

All the above measures can be successfully monitored only by a truly fiscally independent judiciary and fiscal administrative establishment. The major cause of large-scale civil conflicts, according to the research, is citizens' competition for scarce resources. The present practice of ad hoc fiscal administrative bodies set up by each government has simply worsened the situation since these bodies merely attend to the interest of the government of the day by using spurious and indefensible principles to share the revenues. These principles have never enjoyed national acceptance. With no other avenue to express themselves, the citizens tend to take laws into their hands through violent civil disturbances to seek redress.

It is the constitutional duty of the Nigeria Police Force to maintain law and order. President Obasanjo said he is committed to make the police more effective and to promote internal security through proactive intelligence and to reduce tension in the country⁷⁵. The police as presently constituted, are simply incapable of maintaining law and order. The government must allocate massive funds for training, and equipping the police and increasing the size of the force. The government must enact a deliberate policy of weeding out the bulk of the present manpower due to the monumental corruption that has prevented the police from being of any significant use to the society. The military also needs a reorientation in their training (especially the rules of engagement) on how to restore law and order. The mentality of the military era during which acts of abuse went unchallenged must give way to new realities of subordinating the military to civil authority. Restraints even in the face of extreme provocation must be stressed in the training.

Public hearings should be held after any call-out of the military to restore law and order; officers found guilty of abuse or of brutal acts should be punished according to the law of the land. Similarly, the recommendations of commissions of enquiry established to investigate circumstances surrounding the outbreak of any violent civil conflict should be implemented. For instance, if confirmed ring leaders of the violent conflict are punished according to the law of the

land, future trouble-makers will be deterred. According to a respected religious leader in the country, the blame for the persistent crises resides solely with the government for failing to punish perpetrators of such conflict as a way of discouraging future participants⁷⁶. The alarming frequency of these conflicts also underscores this fact. If all the above measures are seriously followed, the incessant outbreak of violent crises with the attendant loss of life and property will be reduced to the barest minimum. Only then will Nigeria begin to develop its potential for stability and prosperity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to effectively control the spate of large-scale civil conflicts in Nigeria, it is recommended that:

- The Federal Government set up a permanent Fiscal Administrative Organization (FAO) by an act of the National Assembly.
- The structure of the Nigerian Federalism must be adjusted to reduce the percentage of federal revenue held at the center to a maximum of 20%.
- The principles used for sharing revenue with the states should be modified by the new FAO to encourage states to increase internal revenue generation.
- The Federal Government must fund renewed training, with equipment, and more enlightened orientation of the police.
- The bulk of the corrupt policemen must be weeded out - younger, better educated and psychologically sound candidates must be recruited.
- The Nigerian military must be retrained on the proper handling of fellow citizens when restoring law and order.
- Public hearings must be held after any military call-out to identify any excessive use of force or other abuses.
- Military officers convicted of excessive use of force or other gross abuses as well as confirmed leaders of violent crises should be punished according to the law of the land.

WORD COUNT=10,957

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⁴⁴ Robert B. Edgerton, Africa's Armies: From Honor to Infamy; A History from 1791 to the Present (Boulder CO, Westview Press, 2002), 181.

⁴⁵ The Guardian Newspaper, December 12, 2002, article 03 available via <http://www.ngrguardiannew.com/news/article03>.

⁴⁶ Claude E. Welch JR, "Civil-Military Agonies in Nigeria: Pains of an Unaccomplished Transition", Armed Forces & Society Summer 1995, 608.

⁴⁷ Federal Ministry of Justice, The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (Federal Government Press, 2001), 79-80

⁴⁸ Department of Defense, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, Joint Pub 3-07(Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 16 June 1995), II-4.

⁴⁹ Bashir Isyaku, "Issues and Perspectives in Kaduna Crises", in Building Peace, Advancing Democracy: Experience with Third-party Interventions in Nigeria's Conflicts, ed. Isaac Olawale Albert (Ibadan, Nigeria: John Archers Ltd, 2001), 214.

⁵⁰ Defense Attaché, Nigerian Embassy, Group Captain A Okanlawon, interview by author, 23 December 2002, Washington D.C

⁵¹ Bashir Isyaku, "Issues and Perspectives in Kaduna Crises", in Building Peace, Advancing Democracy: Experience with Third-party Interventions in Nigeria's Conflicts, ed. Isaac Olawale Albert (Ibadan, Nigeria: John Archers Ltd, 2001), 220.

⁵² Defense Attaché, Nigerian Embassy, Group Captain A Okanlawon, interview by author, 23 December 2002, Washington D.C

⁵³ Bashir Isyaku, "Issues and Perspectives in Kaduna Crises", in Building Peace, Advancing Democracy: Experience with Third-party Interventions in Nigeria's Conflicts, ed. Isaac Olawale Albert (Ibadan, Nigeria: John Archers Ltd, 2001), 220

⁵⁴ Ibid, 222.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 223.

⁵⁶ Defense Attaché, Nigerian Embassy, Group Captain A Okanlawon, interview by author, 23 December 2002, Washington D.C. In fact, many of the victims sought refuge in military barracks.

⁵⁷ There have been other ethno-religious crises in the past which the military was able to control. The author took part in one of such conflicts in another northern city of Maiduguri in 1982.

⁵⁸ Defense Attache, Nigerian Embassy, Group Captain A Okanlawon, interview by author, 23 December 2002, Washington D.C

⁵⁹ Dr Isaac Olawale Albert, The Odi Massacre of 1999 in the Context of the Graffiti left by the Invading Nigerian Army (Paper presented at the Peace and Conflict Studies Program, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, November 2002),2.

⁶⁰ Deputy Defense Attache, Nigerian Embassy, Col S.Y. Bello, interview by author, 23 December 2002, Washington D.C

⁶¹ Dr Isaac Olawale Albert, The Odi Massacre of 1999 in the Context of the Graffiti left by the Invading Nigerian Army (Paper presented at the Peace and Conflict Studies Program, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, November 2002),3.

⁶² Ibid,11.

⁶³ Ibid,4

⁶⁴ "Nigeria: Focus on the deployment of troops in Odi [19991230]", <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Newsletters/irinw-123099.htm>I cited in Dr Isaac Olawale Albert, The Odi Massacre of 1999 in the Context of the Graffiti left by the Invading Nigerian Army (Paper presented at the Peace and Conflict Studies Program, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, November 2002), 10.

⁶⁵ Col H.A. Agbabiaka former Commanding Officer of 2 Battalion, interview by author, 12 January 2001, Oshogbo, Nigeria.

⁶⁶ Dr Isaac Olawale Albert, The Odi Massacre of 1999 in the Context of the Graffiti left by the Invading Nigerian Army (Paper presented at the Peace and Conflict Studies Program, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, November 2002), 8.

⁶⁷ Ibid,12.

⁶⁸ Ibid,14.

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⁷⁰ Hamid Bobboyi, Crisis and Conflict in Central Nigeria: The Case of Jukun and Tiv Paper prepared for the Conference on Nigeria: Unity, Governance and Conflict, organized by the World Peace Foundation, (Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 14 December 2002), 4.

⁷¹ Deputy Defense Attache, Nigerian Embassy, Col S.Y. Bello, interview by author, 23 December 2002, Washington D.C

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⁷³ AllAfrica Global Media, UN Integrated Regional Information Networks (allAfrica.com) available on <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/2003011020678.html> accessed January 2, 2003.

⁷⁴ Isaac Olawale Albert, Introduction to Third-Party Intervention in Community Conflicts (Ibadan, Nigeria: Peaceful Transformation Forum in association with John Archers (Publishers) Limited, 2001), 4.

⁷⁵ President Olusegun Obasanjo, Grand Strategy for National Security.(Abuja, Nigeria: The Presidency, April 2002), 12&13.

⁷⁶ Victor Onyeka-Ben, "Adeboye blames Government for religious Conflicts", The Guardian , 10 January, 2003 accessed via <http://www.guardiannewngr.com/news/article18>

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