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## The Imperatives of State Police in Nigeria

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# The Imperatives of State Police in Nigeria

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of the Police and policing are primarily to ensure the protection of lives and property of any given society, for human survival, peace and progress of any community is inferably anchored on well-trained, responsive, and apolitical security architecture, particularly in a country like Nigeria, a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural geographical environment with very large landmass and population. Before the advent of colonialism, the various ethnic groups and communities in Nigeria had various forms of police and policing for maintaining peace, law and order. These were usually carried out through the instrumentality of secret societies and hunters (Ohundele, 2018). Such secret societies like Ekpe in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States and Ogboni in the South Western States of Nigeria were used for fighting crimes, and criminality during the pre-colonial era. In the South Eastern states of Nigeria, the age grade and masquerade society made up of all adult male citizens played the role of policing and fighting crime, hence policing of the entire society was the responsibility of all adults (Aniche, 2018). These indigenous law enforcement agencies were jettisoned by the colonial regime, though some communities still use the hunters and vigilante up till date in policing the community, even in combat such as in the Sambisa forest in Borno State, North East Nigeria

ravaged by Boko Haram insurgency, banditry and cattle rustling.

What is today the Nigeria Police Force was established in 1830 after the merger of Lagos Police Force and Royal Niger Constabulary, but has over the years been overstretched, and increasingly suffered neglect by successive administrations in the country. However, in spite of its deluded image and centralized structure, it has struggled within limited resources and lack of training and retraining, to maintain some form of law and order (Aremu, 2018).

The concept of State Police System is not alien to many countries, particularly the advanced Western Nations. The State Police System is an essential ingredient inherent in federalism in which powers are devolved to the federating units including policing. Unfortunately the 1999 constitution of Nigeria in section 214 part III of supplemental provision, exclusively vests policing functions on the federal government and places police and other government security agencies in the exclusive legislative list, a distortion of federal principle. Nigeria has had a centralized police structure, adopting top-bottom approach even before independence. No other federal system attempts or adopts this approach.

The USA whose Constitution Nigeria adopted in 1999 offers a template for decentralized police structure with about 18,000 police departments, federal, state, municipal, county, village, college, campus and corporate organizations. (Punch, 2018). State Police in USA are also known as Highway patrol, State Highway Patrol, State Troopers, all carrying out law enforcement activities including criminal investigations across the state. They collaborate with local police (county and village) to address complicated criminal cases. In other words, policing in the USA involves independent autonomous police system at different levels of governance in the country. This implies that law enforcement in the USA is decentralized and the Federal police authorities deal with violation of federal laws while states police enforce state laws.

In Australia, a federal state, police and policing functions are vested in the federal, state and local governments. Under the law, bulk of general policing is the responsibility of the states but shared with the municipalities. Australian federal police mainly coordinates the state and Local Government Forces and extends same to New Zealand Police in a unique transnational arrangement. In India, general police duties are undertaken by the different 29 states and 7 Union territories, while the federal police provide

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support and deal with specified offences and national security issues.

The German Constitution vests general policing in the Lander (States). Some important cities in Germany also have distinct and independent police organizations of their own.

In Canada, the basic law vests law enforcement in the 10 provinces, though about 8 of the provinces have contracted out their policing function to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that also polices the country's three territories covering financial, border and national security issues. Quebec and Ontario, because of their French heritage, retain control over policing in their provinces. Municipal and local police force also exist alongside the federal and state police agencies. Most native Indian nationalities managing the semi-independent First Nation Resources also have autonomous police units in their communities. In Britain, the UK has not dismantled its unitary system of government, but has devolved policing into 45 territorial and 3 special police forces.

An important feature of federation is devolution of powers and in any federal state, the primary responsibility for law enforcement should necessarily lie with the federating units. This state of affairs obtains in enduring and lasting federal democracies mentioned above but in Nigeria, a federal state, police and policing are centralized. The police as the first line of defence for the citizens should be very close to the people as much as possible, but in Nigeria the police authority is far removed from the people and this tends to limit the effectiveness of the Nigeria Police Force. The ineffective central policing system has led to deteriorating insecurity, insurgency terrorism and banditry in the North East, and violence, kidnapping, armed robbery and impunity have overwhelmingly ravaged every other region of the country.

The Nigeria Police Force as presently constituted has an Inspector General of Police appointed by the President, at the head. The state governors are the chief security officers of their respective states and they may only direct their respective state commissioners of police, on security issues but the commissioners may only act with the express permission of the Inspector-General. This has made the functioning of the police nebulous and ineffective (Sun, 20118). Beside the present national policing architecture is archaic and at variance with international best practice, giving rise to grave security implications.

If Nigeria had adopted the state police system, all the major political incidents, increasing wave of criminality heightening insecurity would have been checkmated. The police structure has grossly incapacitated the smooth administration and effective policing of the country. With noticeable cracks showing all over the country, the Police organization as presently

structured appears to have been overwhelmed by the gravity of the workload assigned to it (Okezie, 2021).

Furthermore, the long-standing and antagonistic posture of the citizens against the police personnel due to police brutality, corruption among its rank and file, hijacking of the police by the political class, poor infrastructural facilities and welfare further compound and decimate effective policing in Nigeria. Beside, lack of statistical data on the police and the personnel and lack of adequate equipment have created an overwhelming operational and administrative burden on the country (Okezie, 2021). The size of the police compared with the area and size of the population, alienation of the different segments of the country, mutual distrust and mistrust, cultural and language barriers are other challenges of the present unitary police structure in Nigeria.

Given this avalanche of challenges, does the present structural architecture of the Nigeria Police Force maintain law and order in the country, how effective have the state governments been able to maintain internal security in their respective States under the instrumentality of the centralized police structure, what are the challenges of policing in Nigeria and how can these challenges be surmounted? These and other questions are what this study seeks to address.

This study proposes that the centralized structure of the Nigeria Police Force has grave implications for security and is the major cause of insecurity, (terrorism insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery, proliferation of small arms and light weapons) in the country. The objective of the study is to examine if actually the centralized structure of the police and other security agencies has led to insecurity in the country. The study adopts the historical/descriptive model. The work would be immense assistance to the police institution and other security agencies and policy makers, provide input for further research and fill gap in literature in the area.

The study adopted both the Conflict and Alienation theories as its theoretical frameworks. Conflict theory holds that the society is divided into different strata or classes with diverse interests. Ross (1983) maintains that conflict occurs when parties disagree about the distribution of materials or symbolic resources and act because of the incompatibility of goals or perceived divergence of interests. Similarly, Coser (1967) defines conflict as a process or struggle over values and claims to scarce resources, status and power in which the aim of the proponents are to injure their rivals. Conflict results from disagreement between groups (Nwanegbo and Alumona, 2009). It may also arise from the pursuit of divergent interests, goal and aspiration by individuals or groups in defined social and physical environment (Otite, 1999), particularly over resource organization, mobilization and allocation. Resources in every society are scarced, and are

accessed inequitably in favour of the rich and elite of the society who support and struggle at all times to maintain the status quo, while the poor agitate for change. This inequality generates conflict in the society. The police in Nigeria was covertly created not to serve the interest of all citizens but to protect the interest of the rich or elite at the expense of the poor (Alemika and Chukuama, 2000). According to this theory, the police exist to perpetuate this inequality thereby furthering the suppression and oppression of the poor who are alienated from the commonwealth by the rich in the society. The role of the police is therefore to suppress the poor and powerless with a view to protecting the interest of the rich and those in power (Broaden, 1978), and as succinctly put by Broaden 1982), the police are structured organizationally and ideologically to act against the marginalized strata of the society. This informs why most police personnel in Nigeria are not civil.

The alienation theory which proponent include Karl Marx, Durkheim, Robert Baluner, is a condition in social relationship which depicts a low degree of integration or common values and a high degree of distance, estrangement, isolation, separation or severance between individuals and a group in a community. Under this condition, some or most people withdraw their affection for a particular institution of government due to inherent characteristics that are believed to be at variance with what the people expect. Alienation creates that sense of powerlessness and helplessness among the people, particularly when an acceptable pattern of conduct or delivery of social services or value has broken down and are no longer effective as rule of behavior. The condition of complexity and conflict created there from give the people the impression that the enforcement of the rules of conduct can no longer be adequate as guidelines of acceptable conduct. Consequently individuals tend to rely on their own judgment and not on services offered by the government institution concerned. The police in Nigeria is daunted with bribery and corruption, extortion, illegal road blocks, extra-judicial killings, intimidation and use of excessive force, supplying arms and ammunition to armed robbery gangs, mass and illegal arrests, revealing the identity of informants to the criminal involved, playing ignoble roles in election, sponsoring violence. Consequently the citizens no longer look up to the police for protection but have resorted to self-help measures or self-defence or mob action for their own protection including unregulated and often violent reprisals against suspected sources of their collective endangerment (Ekeh, 2002).

According to the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, the state governors are the chief security officers of their respective states who preside over state security meetings but cannot direct the Commissioner of Police on security issues affecting their states. The commissioner can only carry out the instructions of the

governor if approval is obtained from the Inspector-General of Police or the National Headquarter of the Police Force. If State Police Force was created in Nigeria, most of the security threats would have been completely addressed or minimized.

## II. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The idea of uniformed policing of an area was first mooted in 1667 by the government of King Louis XIV of France. It was specifically aimed at protecting the city of Paris which used to be the largest city in Europe. The police were mandated to purge the city of miscreants and hoodlums. Ever since then, governments all over the world have emulated the pattern of policing and many still retain the state police system to suit their domain. Countries in Europe, Russia, the USA, UK and others have all adapted the state police system which has turned out to be the best practicable policing system as it is easy to adapt administratively and operationally (Okezie, 2018).

The Nigeria police was first established in 1820 as a constabulary with 200 men for 3 major segment of the country-the North, East-Calabar and West-Lagos as at then. The Nigeria Police was then a paramilitary organization. In 1896 the Lagos police was formed, the Niger Coast Constabulary was earlier established in Calabar in 1894 under the newly proclaimed Niger Coast Protectorate. Each was specifically set up with unique operational features. The British colonial government used the police to enhance their indirect rule system by collaborating with the traditional rulers to better enforce security. With the increasing rate of development and the establishment of a unitary government, there was the need for the centralization of the police. However, the system became unwieldy as population increased and record were not easy to compute and kept. Administrative and operational procedures also became cumbersome (Okezie, 2021).

In 1914, the Northern and Southern Police Force were united. It should be noted that the Royal Niger constabulary established in Northern Nigeria was later split into Northern Nigeria Police Force and Northern Nigeria Regiment (Iwarimie-Jaja 2003). In 1930 the present Nigeria Police Force with headquarters in Lagos was fully established with initially an. Inspector-General of Police as the commandant (Igbo 1999) and later changed to Commissioner in 1937 but latter reverted back to IGP in 1951, while regional heads were called commissioners of police (Kupolati, 2007).

The amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Police Force in 1914 also saw the establishment of special police branches such as the Criminal Investigation Department, the Immigration and Passport Control, the Central Motor Registry, the Police Colleges, the Force Communication, the Police Band etc. (Iwarimiejaja, 2002: ). The unification of the forces



also made it impossible to fight the alarming increase in such crimes as murder, manslaughter, counterfeiting, theft, housebreaking, child stealing, illegal distillation of gin and illegal mining (Igbo, 1999: 122). The force was later reorganized and a Police Council vested with powers in respect of policy, organization, finance, personnel and condition of service was established.

Garba (2012) has noted that the idea of the modern Nigeria police is a creation of colonial rule in which its history and function were to serve the interest of the British colonial rulers. It was organized as a quasi-military squad by the colonial government i.e as an instrument of coercion, riot control, oppression and suppression of discontentment and protests by the colonized people. In other words, the colonial police was established neither as agent for promoting the rule of law, human rights, community safety nor for protection of the citizenry, rather, the police was used as a coercive force to further the goal of colonial annexation of territories and to quench protests as well as opposition against colonial rule. It was anti-people. In fact the establishment of the colonial police was more to serve and protect the commercial interest of the colonial masters. This pitched the police against the people they were meant to protect and there were series of clashes between both parties. Right from the beginning, the purpose of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) was to protect government functionaries, sometimes against the natives. The post-colonial Nigeria Police is a carryover from the colonial past. In this respect, the character of the Nigeria police as in the colonial period, has deliberately been designed to appear tough and intimidating to the civil population thus, alienating or disconnecting the people from the police. (Ekeh, 2002). The history of community-police relation in Nigeria, has thus been described as the idea of policing imposed on the country by the colonial master calculated to foster antagonism between the police and the people. To make matters worse, the corruption perception of the Nigeria police by the Nigeria people over the years has heightened. Consequently the Nigeria police is perceived as the most corrupt government institution both locally and internationally, worsening community-police relations. Under this state of affairs, the Nigeria police has been unable to fight crime let alone prevent it (Ikuteyijo and Rotimi, 2012).

### III. THE NIGERIA POLICE AND PRIVATE SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS

Consequent upon the rising insecurity, a number of private security organizations have emerged in Nigeria. These include the neighbourhood watch, vigilante, night and Day watchmen, native or ethnic militia. Although, some vigilante security outfits may have started as neighborhood watch, they are not exactly the same. Vigilante and neighbourhood watch are

both private security organization primarily made up of volunteers from the community but differ in their modus operand.

Vigilante is a private individual who punishes an alleged law breaker, or participant in a crime by meting, out extra-legal or extra-judicial punishment to an alleged lawbreaker. However, not all vigilant activities are illegal, sometimes, vigilante may apprehend or catch criminals and hand them over to the Police for investigation and prosecution. (Aniche, 2018).

Prior to the advent of the Nigeria Police Force in 1830 by the British colonial administration, there were various groups performing the role of policing the communities in what is today known as Nigeria. In some segments of the country secret societies, age grade were used for protecting the communities. This model of policing was supplanted with the colonial police in 1889 to provide civil and quasi-military function to the British colonial administration in Nigeria. According to Tamuno (1970), by far the most crucial factor in understanding the existence in Nigeria of semi-military police lies in the nature of Nigerians opposition to British jurisdiction and rule. In otherwords, the troops and police were ready instruments of enforcing government order when peaceful overtures failed. In the circumstance, the police formed the frontline of defense in Britain's attempts to maintain law and order and soldiers were usually drafted in whenever police action failed. In fact, there was no distinction between the police and the military during colonial regimes.

Vigilante justice was spurred on by incessant criminal activities by unscrupulous individuals due to either non-existent or insufficient punishment by the police or non-prosecution of criminals thus causing community members to volunteer to protect the community. Vigilante as non-governmental groups have therefore emerged in response to increasing incidence of theft and armed robbery. Vigilante groups have existed in Nigeria for decades not only under civilian rule, but also during the previous military regimes. They have traditionally been seen as law and order enforcement individuals and groups where the traditional functions of the police to maintain law and order has failed to check criminality in the society. The concept of vigilante in Nigeria specifically refers to unarmed voluntary citizens or groups created in local communities to help the security agencies confront common criminality and social violence by arresting suspected delinquents and handing them over to the police. They may arrest suspected criminals provided that they are unarmed and the suspect is immediately handed over to the police (Anichi, 2018). One noticeable characteristics is that with the corruption in the police, the suspected criminal easily find their ways back in the streets, terrorizing people and even in extreme cases, unleashing vengeance on the people that handed them

over to the police or masterminded their arrest by the police.

Beside the police have also been known to have disclosed or revealed the identity of their informants to the suspected criminals before and after being released from police custody under-questionable circumstances, who later go after the informants. The police in many instances have also failed to redeem the price tag it puts on suspected criminals who are at large. Beside they are alleged of bribery and corruption, extortion, illegal road blocks, extra-judicial killings, intimidation and the use of excessive force on innocent citizens, giving arms to armed robbers, involvement in armed robbery operations, mass and illegal arrest, and unable to confront armed robbers and other hardened criminals. Police are sometimes used as private body guards and tugs to rich politicians and play ignoble role in election violence. All these perceptions of the police by the people have disconnected them from the public. At time community members who are police informants are derided. Under this state of affairs, many Nigerian communities no long look up to the Police Force for their protection but rather have resorted to other means like self-help or reprisals against persons suspected to endanger their common existence the community (Ekeh, 2002). The increased incidence of crime since the end of the military regime has resulted in the proliferation of heavily armed vigilante groups in nearly every corner of Nigeria. Erosion of confidence on the police by the people and mutual mistrust or distrust between them has led to the emerging new vigilante security operations. The vigilante groups no longer hand over suspected criminals to the police but instead now carry out instant justice or extra-judicial execution and killings of suspected criminals. This disconnect between the police and the community has heightened tension in the country.

In certain communities, a person may choose the role of vigilante as a result of personal experience as opposed to social demand. Persons seen as escaping from the law or above the law are sometimes the targets of vigilante groups. It may target person or organizations involved in illegal activities in general or it may aim at a specific group or type of activity. It has become a common sight for vigilante groups to engage in violent assault of their targets or verbally attack them or vandalize their property.

Neighborhood watch, on the other hand, is an organized group of citizens who aim at preventing crime and vandalism within a neighbourhood, using legal means of bringing people to justice. In other words, neighborhood crime watch is not vigilante security apparatus, because when suspecting criminal activities, members of neighborhood watch contact appropriate police authorities but do not intervene. Neighborhood watch, is therefore a group of police informants that give the police relevant information that helps in their

investigations, prosecutions and crime prevention (Aniche, 2018).

In Nigeria, ethnic militias or militant groups have been erroneously taken to be vigilante groups. Although, some ethnic militias are involved in vigilante service, they are not strictly speaking vigilante security apparatus in that they also engage in other activities which are not necessarily or primarily vigilante service. This implies that vigilante activities are not the primary objectives or roles of the ethnic militant groups like Odua People's Congress (OPC), Movement for Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), IPOB. These radical ethnic organizations only assume or usurp the responsibilities of vigilante security, but are purely militant groups which in most cases engage in insurgency and other rebellious activities.

The security of the society is the functions of both the state and the citizenry. The police cannot handle security matters alone, it requires the cooperation and partnership of the citizens. Security engenders development and without security, there is no development. Security does not only facilitate development, it is one of the features of development, it is regrettable that the community policing practiced before now in Nigeria has not ensured security and safety in the country let alone facilitate development. Rather than policing the community, the Nigeria police has been busy alienating the people. Thus, insecurity and crimes have scared investors away from Nigeria, crippled economic activities and hindered development in the country.

#### IV. SPECIFIC INSTANCES OF NIGERIA POLICE LAXITY

Many factors are responsible for the call for state police and these include the followings:

Boko Haram began when the leader, Mallam Muhammed Yusuf illegally started gathering and indoctrinating borno youths. Under a state police system or decentralized police system all the security apparatus would have been ignited to effectively control his religious rascality that eventually developed or snowballed into insurgency in the North Eastern state of Borno. The state governor was depending on the federal police that was not available for him. Today thousands of innocent lives and property worth billions of naira have been destroyed. Such operational laxity abound across the country. (Okezie, 2021) under the centralized police system.

Endsars agitation was another evidence of the federal security laxity. When the agitation was building up in Lagos state, state police structure would have swung into action immediately and quelled the protest, but rather, the state governor helplessly tried to establish official contact with the federal police without success. Under a state police, the Endsars protests which became bloody would have been averted. State

police is an important prerequisite of true federalism. The lack of it heightens insecurity in Nigeria.

**Police Brutality and Impunity:** cases of police brutality and impunity abound nationwide in Nigeria. For instance, a high court judge was manhandled in public glare by political thugs while the police watched helplessly in September 2014 in Ekiti state and in November of same year, 7 out of 26 members of the Ekiti House of Assembly impeached the speaker under the watch of the police. If there were state police which personnel were mainly indigenes and familiar with the political terrain, this would not have happened.

With abduction, especially of school children in Chibok, Dapchi, in 2014, lawlessness and bloodletting across the country, Centralized policing has reduced parts of the country to lawless zones and continue to take a heavy toll on lives and property, scaring away potential foreign and local investors. Such states as Zamfara, Plateau, Taraba, Benue and Kaduna and many others, are today in the hands of Fulani Militants, Kidnappers, armed robbers and cattle rustlers carrying out horrifying killings; the killing of 20 people in communal clashes between the Ukele of Cross Rivers State and the Izzi people of Ebonyi State in 2019, the massacre of 200 people in Bakin Ladin of Plateaus State in June 2018, the murder of 7 policemen in Gwagwadala by unknown gunmen have also been confirmed that under the present centralized policing, the country is no longer safe (Nation 2018). Amnesty International have even revealed that between January and June, 2018, 378 persons were killed in Benue state, and 340 in Plateau state, and 217 persons were also killed in Zamfara State. (Amnesty International, 2018).

Frustrated by the security situation in all states of the country, state governors resorted to setting up vigilante groups in their respective state and regional security outfits as parts of their efforts in tackling insecurity. In 2020 the South West Region established a regional security outfit code named Amotekun, to complement the efforts of the security agencies in fighting crime in the zone. A few weeks later, the South East governors announced the setting up of their own regional security outfit code name Ebubeagu in response to the rising crime wave in the region. Unfortunately, state and community vigilante groups have brought little or no succor to the people. The regional outfits would help address insecurity in the country, but for the constitutional hurdle they have to surmount to enable them be fully equipped with the necessary arms and ammunition.

## V. CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF THE PROPOSED STATE POLICE

The proposition of state police creation has generated much concerns and apprehensions, one of which is the fear of the political class hijacking it. This is

real because there were occasions in which the leadership of the present federal police has been politically compromised and in all states where governors have supervised the conduct of local government elections in the last 10 years and more, all the council elections have been won by the ruling party in the state. This is because the state Independent Electoral Commission in each state is appointed and funded by the state governors. Also the demolition of the state headquarters of a faction of the All Progressive Party (APP) in Kaduna, allegedly on the orders of the state government is demonstrative of intolerance of opposition in the state. There is also the fear that a number of state governor may personalize and misapply the police forces under their authorities for ulterior motives. The possibilities are real from our previous and current experiences.

One of the challenges of state police could be the inability of states to adequately fund the state police. Most of the states depend almost entirely on federal allocation for sustenance, and may find it difficult to maintain state police. A few times the country has witnessed police protest, on account of delayed or unpaid salaries and allowances. For instance the withdrawal of police services was witnessed in 2002 when a section of the Nigeria Police Force personnel came under the name, National Police Union and declared a one-day strike. A similar occurrence happened in Maiduguri, Borno State, by mobile police personnel over unpaid allowances for seven months. They barricaded major roads around the state police headquarters and fired gun shots in the air, thus intimidating and terrorizing the people. Again economic news magazine, 2018 in its Annual State Viability Index (ASVI) discovered that 17 states were insolvent, because "their internally generated revenues (IGR) in 2017 were far below 10 percent of their receipts from the Federation Account Allocations (FAA) in the same year."

But decentralized policing is inherent in federalism which provide for proper delimitation of jurisdiction and authority. Even countries like India and Pakistan that practice state and community policing do have some serious challenges. Since every crime is local, a centralized police system that is controlled from the centre lacks speed and intelligence to curb crisis in the state and bring security closer to the people.

One of the deep-rooted apprehensions the public holds against the current policing dispensation is the police brutality fueled by its name tag – police force. The proposed state police should therefore, not be made to carry the sobriquet of force which is not done in other federal states.

Notwithstanding growing positive public sentiments, unbundling the Federal police will not be possible, unless the Constitution is amended. Sections 214 and 215, for instance, place the police under the exclusive control of the Federal Government. 214(1):

provides for instance that there shall be a police force for Nigeria, which shall known as the Nigeria police force, and subject to the provisions of this section no other police force shall be established for the Federation of any part thereof. This makes it impossible to create state police apparatus.

Federal Police Service Commission could however exercise a level of oversight over the activities of the state police, such as maintaining common facilities for all police services in the country, including training, criminal intelligence data bases, forensic laboratories and rendering assistance to the state police services in specialized areas like behavioural analysis, counter terrorism, and a system of inspectorates and certification, such as supervision of standards and annual certification of every state police service. There is the fear of abuse.

The governors as state chief security officers have no powers over appointment of state commissioners of police. This makes it extremely difficult for the governors directives to the commissioners on security issues to be carried out without clearance from the Inspector General of Police.

## VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### a) *Summary and Conclusion*

The recent upsurge of public interest in state police reflects to a large extent, the frustration of the citizenry who are no longer safe even in their homes. Consequently the study recommends as follows:-

Policing in Nigeria is different from what obtains in other federations globally. In the US, the police is decentralized and instituted along the various federal, state and country authorities. In Britain, there are over 20 police jurisdictions, same for France, Canada, Germany and many others. Inferably the police, as the first line of defence for the ordinary citizens should be as close to the people as possible. When the authority is far removed from the people, it tends to limit the effectiveness of such a police force as we have continually experienced in Nigeria. It was in recognition of this fact that the Nigeria police sometimes endorsed the need to rijig the over-centralized structure of the police as currently constituted by advocating for community policing which implies that while the present central authority is retained, the police could be made to be more responsive and effective by recognizing local necessities in the deployment of men and officers. This latter proposal could not achieve the desired result. Though not much at variance with state police, community policing seeks to bring the internal security matters closer to and involve the ordinary people in their own security but places the power to issue directives and instructions to the police on the Inspector General of police in Abuja while the Governors even as state

chief security officers have little or no power to compel commissioners to take immediate action during emergencies. The call for establishment of state police is therefore a response to the need for timely intervention during emergencies in the state, as state commissioners of police would carry out directives of the governors without waiting for Abuja.

### b) *Recommendation*

#### (a) *Powers of the state governors*

- State governors should be chief security officer of their respective state both in name and in deed but their powers should be limited to making policies, not operational use and control and power to appoint state commissioner of state police.

#### (b) *Cutting cost of governance and wastages*

- Cutting cost of governance and wastages in the system could save sufficient funds and resources to fund state police The funding of the state police should be a first line charge deducted at source from the Federation Account and paid directly to the State Police Service Commission.

#### (c) *Police Trust Fund*

- State House of Assembly should establish Police Trust Fund for funding the police including police welfare and the present level of allocation to the state from Federation Account should be substantially increase to meet state commitments, including state police.

#### (d) *Police Service Commission*

- The current Federal Police Service Commission should be overhauled. The National Assembly should amend the constitution to provide for independent State Police Service Councils for each of the states of the federation. the councils should be concerned with both the policies and welfare of the police personnel.

#### (e) *Amendment of the Constitution*

- The national assembly should amend the constitution to make provision for the type of arms and amonition the state police establishment should acquire, delete the phrase and subject to provision of this section, no other police force shall be established for the federation or any part thereof, it should also delete the word force from the Nigeria Police Force. Similarly amendment to sections 215 and 216 of the 1999 constitution should clearly define the structure of both state and national police and the crimes and offending behaviours they are to deal with.

#### (f) *Crest, Flag and Uniform*

- The current crest and flag of the federal police should be sustained, while the state police agency should have separate crests supper-imposed on



their preferred colours. The uniform that each state police should be adorned with should have no striking differences between the national and state police agencies. Whether national or state police, personnel uniforms should be same with a caveat.

(g) *Recruitment*

- State police should recruit mainly indigenes who are conversant with the terrain, local culture, language, and sensitivities of the people they seek to protect. The police at the national and state levels should make professionalism rooted in civility and integrity their guiding principle. Police personnel in the real sense should be emotionally intelligent and stable to undertake serious policing duties.

(h) *Nucleus of State Police*: The present regional security outfits where they exist as in the south, (Amatekun, Ebubeagu), should form the nucleus of the envisaged state police or personnel of such outfit should be integrated into state police operation in the states they come from.

(i) *State House of Assembly*

- The state House of Assembly should be constitutionally empower to establish state police force which should accord with the provision an Act of the National Assembly.

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