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POLICING IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: WHITHER THE NIGERIA POLICE?

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The need to maintain law and order, even in primitive society with simple societal structures, cannot be waived aside with impunity. The reason being that, to have peace, there must be machinery saddled with the enforcement of law and order.

In all civilized jurisdictions the role played by the police is enormous, and arguably, indispensable. The police is a very important and significant lubricant-oiling the wheel of peace – hence it is little wonder that discussion about it will continue to be topical.

The social contract theory of John Locke and other social contractarians, gave us an insight into the state of nature – where life was solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. In a bid to forge a peaceful society, man surrendered his rights, including the right to defend his life and property to a sovereign (government). The government so formed is saddle with the sacred duty of, among others, protecting life and property. Chiefly, the police is the organ through which this is done.

This paper will examine the imperativeness of the police, check out whether the Nigeria Police Force is 21st century compliant with regards to its role as defined by the law; a history of the Police will also be undertaken; there will also be some suggestions as to reformation of the police in Nigeria.

The jurisdictions mainly covered are England, United States of America and the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Introduction

The Police in England, United States of America and the Federal Republic of Nigeria are the focus of this paper. The policing systems in all these jurisdictions are examined in retrospect and at the present. In these jurisdictions, the Police is the primary law enforcement agency. It is the first contact that a person has with the criminal justice system.

Policing in England

The need for policing was quite discovered by the English society at a very early time. Even though when it started, what was put in place to combat crime did not look exactly like the modern police; yet it was the forerunners of the present system. As far back as the thirteenth century, the English society had developed the phenomenon of hue and cry:

My lords, it has been an offence for the last 700 years or more, not always under the name misprision of felony but still an offence. Ever since the day of hue and cry, it has been the duty of a man, who knows that a felony has been committed, to report it to the proper authority so that steps can be taken to apprehend the felon and bring him to justice. In the thirteenth century, it was

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his duty to raise hue and cry; that is to say. He had to report it to the sheriff of the country or his officer or to the constable of the town; whereupon it was the duty of that officer to levy hue and cry, that is, to shout aloud calling on all able-bodied men over the age of 15 to pursue the offender and arrest him: it was their duty to join in the pursuit. The duty on the officer to levy hue and cry and on the citizens to join in pursuit was reinforced by various statutes and particularly by the statutes of Westminster (1275) 3 Edw1 st 1 c 9.¹

The first police force was created in Britain in 1829. Organized policing in England started in 1800 because growth in trade led to the expansion of disorder. The history of the police force in England in the eighteenth century cannot be completed without talking about the Fielding Brothers. The Fielding Brothers led effort to improve policing in England. They organized small groups of volunteers to catch lawbreakers and bring them to book. Early policing in England were carried out by justices of the peace, who were both an administrator and a judge. They were later supported by parish constables. Parish constables were unpaid individuals; who were typically wealthy farmers, artisans and tradesmen; elevated to the position by their neighbours for a year. The pressure for a professional police force was mounted in the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century produced the Fielding Brothers in London, whose activities had been described above.

The activities of reformers: Jeremy Bentham and Patrick Colquhoun is worthy of note. Between 1795 -1800 they made plans for reforming London Metropolitan Police system. The first professional police force was the Thames River Police in 1798. However, the person that revolutionized policing in England was Sir Robert Peel. It was his effort that culminated into the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829.

This Act saw the birth of seventeen police divisions and one hundred and sixty-five uniformed Police. The Metropolitan Commissioner and Chief constable in the country were chosen from the upper class until the Borough forces and all other ranks were selected from ordinary working men and given opportunity to obtain promotion through their own effort. There emerged after 1856, three different types of Police force in England. The Metropolitan in London, the Borough Police Force and the Country Police Force, with different structure each. The commissioner of the Metropolitan police is responsible to the home secretary. By 1913, the English police formed a union, but a strike action in 1919 in Liverpool and Birmingham led to its abolition and a prohibition on police strike.

Police in England are answerable to the law alone. They have no immunity; they can be sued in a civil court just like any other person. In recent years, many analysts however, have claimed that contemporary policing is entering a new era:

Many analysts have claimed in recent years that contemporary policing is entering a fundamentally new era. Perhaps, Davie Baylcy and Clifford Shearing, two leading policing scholars who argued that modern democratic countries like the United States, Britain and Canada have reached a watershed in the evolution of their systems of crime control and law

¹ Lord Denning, *Landmarks in the Law*, (Butterworths, London, 1984), p. 240.

enforcement. Future Generations will look on our era as a time when one system of policing ended and another took its place.²

What change is being talked about in the excerpt above? The first change has to do with the pluralisation of policing. This means that the job of policing is no longer conceived as the exclusive duty of the police – the state financed and organized body that specializes in policing. Of course, the police is just an integral part of an ensemble of policing institutions. Surely, from the above, it can be gleaned that the police have changed in what they do and what they are expected to do, the tasks and powers to act for them. And how they are seen and see themselves.

Transformation in Policing

Change is the only permanent thing. This truism found a home in the English policing practice. Globalization and cultural change.³ The twentieth century has brought about tremendous changes to bear on the English policing concept. This century brought about the much talked about liberation. With this, the notion of right – particularly individual rights – were much in the vogue. The resultant effect was that it affected the people's perception of traditional authority of which the police is a limb. The last half of the century has brought about a positive change in the economy of the English people. There has been a growth of prosperity and mass consumption of manufactured articles. With this phenomenal increase, came high crime rate. Aside from this spate of high criminal activities, the major changes in family life over the same period have significant consequences for informal social control.

The effort of Robert Peel and others cannot escape being mentioned:

This pinnacle of police legitimation in popular opinion was the achievement of a combination of policies by Sir Robert Peel and other architects of modern British policing in the early nineteenth century in face of widespread opposition. These included subordination to the rule of law minimal force tactics, crime prevention through uniform patrol, separation from direct government control and partisan politics while seeking popular accountability in the sense of responsiveness to public opinion and personnel policies aimed at ensuring high standards of personal discipline and integrity. The success of these strategies in winning popular consent was made possible by the wide process of gradually increasing social inclusion into common citizenship rights.⁴

The latter part of 1950s saw threats rocking the legitimacy of the police. There were controversies and scandals. The Police Act of 1964 was the product of the Royal Commission set up in 1960 to look into the scandals. The Police Act did not completely see to the end of controversy as far as policing issues were concerned. A learned author summed it up thus:

There were conflicts that revolved around the issues of corruption, abuse of suspects, excessive use of force, partisanship, militaristic public order tactics,

² Criminal Law Review, 2004, p. 601.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

race and gender discrimination, lack of individual and organizational accountability, declining efficiency and increasing alienation from the public political conflict over policing became most heated in the decade after the mid 1970s. The focal points of these controversies were the militaristic police tactics adopted to deal with the urban riots and the bitter industrial struggles of the early 1980s and the apparent growth of police power in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984 ("PACE").⁵

Police and the Criminal Evidence Act of 1984

The Criminal Evidence Act, 1984, gave the police in England enormous powers. Under this Act, the police was clothed with the powers to investigate crime which went beyond the power of the ordinary citizen. Hitherto the promulgation of this law, the power of the police had been extended by statute and case law. The Criminal Law Act of 1967, for instance, granted constables the power to arrest on reasonable suspicion that an arrestable offence had occurred, while citizens' power only existed when such an offence actually takes place.⁶ The Misuse of Drug Act of 1973 gave the police a uniform national power to stop and search on reasonable suspicion in relation to drug offences.

Controlling the Controller

One vexed problem bedeviling the police is the problem of holding the police to account. And this is a very serious problem. Police governance could be gleaned from two levels, procedures for remedying misconduct by individual officers – and for governing the whole organization and its policies. The courts and the complaints system are the main means of holding individual officers to account. Police officers are rarely prosecuted for crime arising out of wrongful performance of their duties. The Police Act of 1964 laid down the procedure for making complaint against the police. Due to the defects inherent in this law, it was replaced by the Police Act, 1976 – which established the Police Complaints Board. The Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984 replaced the board with the Police Complaints Authority. Despite all these boards and laws, there were still much yearnings and aspiration for reforms as far as the discipline of police officers are concerned. The Police Reform Act of 2002 replaced the Police Complaints Authority by a new Independent Police Complaints Commission. This overhaul of the complaints system finally introduces many procedures long called for by civil libertarians.⁷

The Police in the United States of America

The nature of the police force that emerged in the American Society, though partly modelled after the British Police System, has its distinctive features. To start with, against what was obtained in most western nations, where the police was a federal matter, the American Police was tied to local government. Closely related to this feature, is the fact that police department appeared at different times throughout the nation. According to history, big eastern cities created police forces first, with smaller cities lagging well behind.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

The type of police Americans came to know in the early nineteenth century was descended from the medieval Police of England. Because of this, the American Police of the time was also bedevilled by problems suffered by the force in England. Despite these problems, the Police in the United States of America, made appreciable impact. To begin with, they were hierarchically organized and to some extent accountable. Another remarkable feature of the Police was the fact that they were salaried. This meant that they no longer had to extract fee for their services, thus making them far more helpful to the poor. However, this feature brought with it untoward happening into the police. A writer puts it this way:

Salaries also provided a means for politicians to support their supporters; political machines hoping to mobilize the Irish vote would hire Irish police officers. Thus, early on, the ethnic and racial composition of the police force became a minor of local politics. Police officers were also partisan workers for incumbent political parties, working to get out the vote or, sometimes, to prevent people from voting. Until their jobs became subject to civil service rules in the late nineteenth century, the police were intimately tied to city politics. And it was this tie that sometimes caused police to support strikers, say, or to refuse to implement morality legislation such as Sunday closing laws. In both cases, the police were partisan of the city government; when majority state government enacted laws not supported by a local party, then police might well be on the minority side.⁸

In the same vein, another writer submitted:

In New York city, at the middle of the nineteenth century, the approval of the Ward's alderman was required before appointment to the police force, and the Tammany Hall corruption of the same period depended in part on the use of the police to coerce and collect graft and to control elections. During this same time, the election of a new mayor – particularly if from a party different from the incumbent's – signalled the coming dismissal of the entire police force and the appointment of one controlled by the new mayor".⁹

The police played vital role in helping strangers find their way, they also took in lost children, boarded and sometimes fed the homeless. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, police departments began to hire blacks and women. Blacks were often employed to patrol black neighborhoods (the city guard of New Orleans hired Blacks as early as 1814), but their chances of movement into white neighborhoods were negligible.¹⁰

Police Professionalisation

The rise of professional "policing is associated initially with the paid, full-time body of police that stemmed from England's Peelian Reform of 1829. Despite the existence of similar bodies in the United States of America from 1845 onward, the genesis of America

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ Charles R. Swanson *et al.*, *Police Administration*, 4th edition, 1998, p. 2.

¹⁰ *Criminal Law Review*, 2004.

professional policing is associated with the initiatives of August Vollmer, who was Chief of Police in Berkeley, California, from 1902 to 1932."¹¹ Carte put it thus:

The image of professional Police as we know it today is largely the creation of one man, August Vollmer. Vollmer was a tireless crusader for the reform of policing through technology and higher personnel standards. Under his direction the Berkeley department became a model of professional policing efficient, honest, scientific. He introduced into Berkeley a patrolwide police signal system, the first completely mobile patrol – first on bicycles, then in squad cars – modern records system, beat analysis and modus operandi. The first scientific crime laboratory in the United States was set up in Berkeley in 1916, under the direction of a full-time forensic scientist. The first lie detector machine to be used in criminal investigation was built in Berkeley department in 1921. However, Vollmer's department was better known for the calibre of its personnel, he introduced formal Police training in 1908, later encouraging his men to attend classes in police administration that were taught each summer at the University of California. Eventually he introduced psychological and intelligence testing into the recruitment process and actively recruited College Students from the University, starting around 1919. This was the beginning of Berkeley's "College Cops, who set the tone for the department throughout the 1920s and 30s and came to be accepted by Police leaders as the ultimate model of efficient, modern Policemen."¹²

Another feature worthy of being mentioned with regards to the American Police is the impact the Supreme Court has had on it:

Significant judicial review of local Police actions has been a somewhat recent practice. however, during the period from 1961 to 1966 – a period frequently referred to as the "due process revolution" – the U.S. Supreme Court took an activist role, becoming quite literally givers of the law rather than interpreters of it.¹³

Due to circumstances, the American Supreme Court, in a bid to curb lawlessness on the part of the police, made key decisions, which drew heavy criticisms from law enforcement officers as handcuffing police in their struggle with lawlessness. These decisions included *Mapp v. Ohio* (1961), which banned the use of illegally seized evidence in criminal cases in the states by applying the fourth Amendment guarantee against unreasonable searches and seizures; *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963), which affirmed that equal protection under the fourth Amendment requires that legal counsel be appointed for all indigent defendant in all criminal cases; *Escobedo v. Illinois* (1964), which affirmed that a suspect is entitled to confer with an attorney as soon as the focus of a police investigation of the suspect shifts from investigating to accusatory; and *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966), which required police officers, before questioning suspects, to inform

¹¹ Charles R. Swanson *et al.* *supra*, p. 4.

¹² Gene Edward Carte, "August Vollmer and the Origin of Police Professionalism", *Journal of Police Science and Administration* (1973), p. 274.

¹³ Charles R. Swanson, *supra*.

them of their constitutional right to remain silent, their right to an attorney, and their right to have an attorney appointed if they cannot afford to have one. Although the suspect may knowingly waive these rights, the Police cannot question anyone who, at any point asks for a lawyer or indicates "in any manner" that he or she does not wish to be questioned.¹⁴ No doubt, the above decisions had profound effect on police offices. The Supreme Court in its bid to curb the use of improper and questionable tactics barred the use of illegally obtained evidence in a criminal prosecution to prove guilt. This action, known as exclusion rule, rested primarily on the judgment that deterring police conduct that violates the constitution rights of an individual outweighs the importance of securing a conviction of the specific defendant on trial. However, more recent Supreme Court decisions have impact more favorable to law enforcement. This may be because there is a conservative majority in the court. In *Massachusetts v. Sheppard* and *United States v. Leon*, the court held that evidence obtained by the Police acting in "good faith" even if it is ultimately found to be illegally seized due to an error committed by the judge or magistrate, is still admissible in Court. In *Leon*, the Court ruled that evidence obtained relying on an invalid search warrant is admissible. An author has this to say on the changed attitude of the Court:

The most controversial and complex of these cases occurred in 1991 in *Arizona Fulminante*, the Court ruled that an error made by the trial Court in admitting illegally obtained evidence (in deterring that a confession was coerced) does not require an automatic reversal of the confession if the error is determined to be harmless, that is, if there was no reasonable possibility that a different result would have been reached without the illegally seized evidence.¹⁵

The Nigeria Police

What eventually emerged as the Nigeria Police is really rooted in the country's colonial history.¹⁶ It began with the formation in 1861, of a 30-man strong Consular Guard in Lagos colony primarily to protect British colonial interest.¹⁷

In 1879, a 1,200 member armed constabulary believed to be the nucleus of what later became the Nigeria Police Force was formed while in Lokoja (in present Kogi State). In 1894, the Niger Coast Constabulary was formed in Calabar (now in Cross River State) and in 1896, the Lagos Police was formed. Upon the 1914 amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates, the several Police Forces formed across the country and which were hitherto operating separately and independently of each other were merged to usher in what is today known as the Nigeria Police Force.

The Nigeria Police Force¹⁸ (N.P.F.) is the primary law enforcement agency in the country. It is a vital arm of the public service for maintaining law and order, and it

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ Policing Nigeria in the 21st century edited by Solomon E. Arase and another, 2007, p. 43.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ Some people have suggested the deleting of the word 'force', see G.O.S. Amadi, *Police Power* in Nigeria, (2000, Afro-Orbis Publishing Co. Ltd.), p. 1.

represents the first contact with the criminal justice system. The NP.. is established by S.214 (I) of the Constitution.¹⁹

There shall be a Police Force for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigeria Police Force, and subject to the provision of this section no other Police Force shall be established for the Federation or any part thereof.

As the basic law of any given nation, a constitution, unless it is otherwise imperative to do so, usually speaks in general terms, allowing the details to be supplied by enabling legislation.²⁰

The constitution, therefore, does not concern itself with such details as the establishment of the control and command set-up and how such can function for a satisfactory performance of Police duties.²¹ This background, the 1999 Constitution, provides, generally that the NPF shall be organized and administered in accordance with such provision as may be prescribed by an Act of the Federal Legislature.²² It stipulates further that the Police shall have powers and duties as may be conferred upon them by law. These provisions give constitutional validity to such laws as the Police Act. The Police Act itself provides for the making of Regulations with respect to the organization and administration of the Police Force.²³ Presently, there is only one Police Force in Nigeria.²⁴

The much that is written here, on development in the Police, does not bother on originality, but a rehearse of what has been written elsewhere:²⁵

Since the 1930 amalgamation of the Country, the Nigeria Police has undergone series of constitutional, situational, command and control reforms such that today, with a manpower profile of over 320,000 officers and men, the Force is rated as the largest law enforcement institution in Africa. The Area of Responsibility (AOR) of the Nigeria Police in the Country covers 5,000 village posts; 5,515 Police Stations; 1,115 Police Divisions; 123 Area Commands; 37 State Commands (including the FCT); 12 Zonal Commands and a Force headquarters, which is the overall administrative and operational head of the Force.²⁶

The Control and Command Structure of the Police

With respect to the Nigeria Police Force, it can be said that its management may be split into two via the Constitution,²⁷ that is, the control structure, and then command structure.

¹⁹ Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ *Ibidem*.

²⁴ s.214 (1), C.F.R.N., 1999.

²⁵ Policing Nigeria in the 21st Century, Solomon E. Arase (edited), *supra*.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ CFRN, 1999.

The Control Structure

The 1999 Constitution provides for the Nigeria Police Council (N.P.C.) and the Police Service Commissioner (P.S.C.) under section 153 (1) and 153 (1) (m) respectively. The composition and function of the NPC are provided under the Third Schedule, Part I (L) paragraphs 27 and 28 respectively. And the composition and powers of the P.S.C. are found under the same third schedule, part 1 (M), paragraphs 29 and 30 respectively.

The composition of the N.P.C. is provided as follows:

S. 27: The Nigeria Police Council shall comprise the following members:

- (a) The President who shall be the Chairman;
- (b) The Governor of each State of the Federation;
- (c) The Chairman of the Police Service Commission; and
- (d) The Inspector-General of Police.

And in regard to the functions of the body it is provided as follows:

S. 28: The functions of the Nigeria Police Council shall include:

- (a) The organization and administration of the Nigeria Police Force and all other matters relating there to (not being matters relating to the use and operational control of the force or the appointment, discipline, control and dismissal of members of the force);
- (b) The general supervision of the Nigeria Police Force; and
- (c) Advising the President on the appointment of the Inspector-General of Police.

As regards the Police Service Commission (P.S.C.), the Third Schedule further provides as follows:

S. 29: The Police Service Commission shall comprise the following members

- (a) a chairman; and
- (b) such numbers of other persons, not less than seven but not more than nine, as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.

And the powers of the P.S.C. are:

S. 30: The Commission shall have power to:

- (a) appoint persons to office (other than the office of the Inspector-General of Police) in the Nigeria Police Force; and
- (b) dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding any office referred to in the sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph.

From the constitutional provision above, it could be seen clearly that the control of the NPF is in the hand of the NPC. A learned author submitted thus:

Now the NPC can be regarded as the boardroom where the police board of directors think out policies with regard to organization, administration and supervision of this law enforcement institution. The PSC, on the other hand comprises the field workers whose duties involve the enlistment or

recruitment of police officers, seeing to their welfare and discipline. With this analogy we can see that the control of the NPF rests with the N.P.C. This is evident, at the risk of repetition, in the composition of the membership of the P.S.C. All the members are presidential appointees. They are not likely to disregard the directions, right or wrong, of the president in respect of the functions and powers of the PSC.²⁸

The learned author cited above, has said it all. The truth about the NPC is that its reins are in the hand of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. To demonstrate this, section 215 (3) of the Constitution, readily comes to mind. Under this section, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria may delegate his power to a minister of the Government of the Federation. The President may by this delegation empower the minister to:

Give to the Inspector-General of Police such lawful directions with respect to the maintenance and securing of public safety and public order as he may consider necessary, and Inspector-General of Police shall comply with those directions or cause them to be complied with.²⁹

Akin to this provision, is section 9 (4) of the Police Act:³⁰

The President shall be charged with the operational control of the force.

By this provision, the president is saddled with the operational control of the force.

The Command Structure of the Nigeria Police

Here, the main concern is the purpose for which the Police is established. The purpose embodies the police duties which, generally speaking involves the maintenance and security of public safety and public order.

Under our criminal justice system, the Police are invited as soon as a crime is committed. At the apex of the command structure is the Inspector-General of Police, who receives lawful order and directions from the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria or his ministerial delegate concerning the maintenance and securing of public safety and public order.

The command structure is not entirely independent. This is because the appointment of the Inspector-General of Police is done by the President, who is the chairman of the Nigeria Police Council. And we have seen the power wielded by the N.P.C. Below the I.G.P. (Inspector-General of Police) is the Deputy -Inspector-General (who is in charge of the directorates) who is second in command to the I.G.P. Then, comes the Assistant Inspectors-General (in charge of zonal police commands). There are also police training institutions (the academy and colleges). There are commissioners of police who are in charge of state police commands. Each state of the federation is divided into Area commands. An Area command is in turn divided into divisions, headed by a divisional police officer – DPO.

²⁸ G.O.S. Amadi, *Supra*.

³⁰ CAP. P19 L.F.N., 2004.

The command structure is all about the legal powers and duties of the police. This means that the entire police force owes its allegiance to the law and is accountable to the law.³¹

Nigeria Police Force in the 21st Century: Any need for Reformation?

Having gone this far, it is most relevant (given policing in England and America) to ask whether the Nigeria Police Force, in its present state, is fit for twenty-first century policing? If the posed question is answered in the non-affirmative, then the issue of what is to be done to correct the anomalies comes into the picture.

It must be said from the onset that the author is aware that the quality of the police (and by extension policing) you get in a polity is almost, if not entirely, dependent on the level of development therein. An erstwhile Inspector-General of Police of Nigeria was also of this opinion:³²

To this extent therefore, the standard of policing available to a country is a veritable indicator of its level of development. Consequently, it is axiomatic to observe that the developed economies of the modern world have highly efficient police organization, while the police forces of third world nations are reflective of their inferior social, economic and political status.”³³

Be that as it may, in a work of this nature, the lop-sidedness in the force must be pointed out.

Corruption as it Affects the Police

Of all the problems bedeviling the police in Nigeria, corruption seems to be the most disturbing. As noted above, a police force is the product of its immediate environment, the corruption-ridden Nigeria Police Force is no exception.

It is beyond debate that corruption is one of the monsters prevalent in this country. The position of Nigeria on the corruption table of Transparency International is much disgusting, to put it mildly. Against this background, the Police Force is not spared. Corruption has eaten into all the spectrums of the Force. Here, in Nigeria, it is a common sight (though an eyesore) that policemen unabashedly collect money from motorists on our roads. Only a couple of years back, the tenth indigenous Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Tafa Balogun, was docked for having misappropriated 70 billion naira.

Even President Olusegun Obasanjo sometimes³⁴ ago had to berate the Police as being responsible for the high spate of armed robbery in the country. It was that bad. Cases wherein police officers compound heinous crime are too many to be listed. Cases abound where police officers have shot dead innocent citizens for as low as bribe of ₦20.00 (twenty naira).

The concept of corruption, more than anything, is deadly to societal growth generally, not only the police:

³¹ G.O.S. Amadi, *supra*.

³² Mr. S.G. Ehindero former I.G.P.

³³ Forward (by S.G. Ehindero) in policing Nigeria in the 21st century, *supra*.

³⁴ Obasanjo ruled Nigeria from May 29th, 1999 – May 29th, 2007.

corruption is a serious crime with devastating consequences," U.S. Vice President Al Gore said when addressing the Global Forum on fighting corruption last February," a cold, vicious, often violent sacrifice of citizen security, for a narrow greedy, private, personal profit on the part of a crooked official.³⁵

With the police in developing economies like Nigeria, corruption is more than a monster. Let us look at the matter more practically. Why is it that a Nigerian does not (and may never) believe in the much harped slogan, 'the police is your friend?' The answer is not far fetched. In the eye of the public, the police stand for corruption personified. The resultant consequence of this is that police-communal ties is at its lowest ebb, if not totally absent. Since the inception of the fourth republic, not less than two Inspectors-General of Police had one corruption scandal or the other tagged upon him.

The Size of the Police Force

Nigeria is a vast country, no doubt about that. With a population of well over one hundred and twenty million people, the country necessarily needs a large police force to police its nooks and crannies. The Nigeria Police is under-manned. According to a source,³⁶ the area of responsibility - AOR-of the police in the country covers 5,000 village posts; 5,515 police stations; 1,115 police divisions; 123 Area Commands; 37 State Commands (including the FCT). Upon this statistics, the truth is that the police as presently constituted is grossly incapable of efficiently and effectively policing Nigerians in the twenty-first century. Yet this source³⁷ claimed that the Nigeria Police Force is rated as the largest law enforcement institution in Africa!

The Problem of Intelligence Gathering

Modern policing has definitely transcended beyond the tactics of obtaining information by tortures and allied methods. Without appearing to ridicule the Nigeria Police Force, one can conservatively say that the concept of intelligence gathering, which developed nations (especially the United States of America) have put to optimum use, is grossly lacking in our Force. The resultant effect of this, is that, it slows down the walk of the Police; thereby rendering it inefficient.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the concept of policing comparatively in Nigeria and some other jurisdictions with a view to knowing whether the Nigeria Police is fit and proper to police the nation in the twenty-first century.

³⁵ Quoted in "Corruption, Economic Growth and Macroeconomic Volatility" by Huiyan Zhang, Perspectives, Vol.2, No.1, gotten from the internet on 26/4/2005.

³⁶ Policing Nigeria in the 21st century, Solomon E. Arase (edited), *op. cit.*

³⁷ *Ibidem.*