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ETHNIC PLURALISM AND POLITICAL CENTRALISATION:
THE BASIS OF POLITICAL CONFLICT IN UGANDA

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(by Dr. Y.R. Barongo)

INTRODUCTION:

The Ugandan society is characterized by two inherently
contradictory and conflictual social and political formations.
On the one hand, ethnic pluralism with its multiple centres
of interests, identities, loyalties, patterns of action and
power, features as a basic structure of society. On the
other, political centralization which is basically incomp-
atible with the process of political pluralism, is the
dominant form of the country's political organization.

We propose to argue and demonstrate in this paper that
the phenomenon of excessive cetralization of power in
a multi-ethnic political context is one of the important
factors that explain the incidence of political conflict
and violence of the kind that have characterized political
life in Uganda since independence. In a political arrange-
ment that is typical of Uganda, where power is highly
centralized, there is only one major centre of political
power, And this means two things that tend to create forces
of political conflict. First, the base for political
activity and decision-making is narrowed to a uni-focal
political arena. This allows the participation of only
a small section of political elites. Secondly, in the
absence of effective lower levels of participation, the
struggle to gain access to political power at the centre
gives rise to acute political competition. The exclusion
of some sections of society from political decision-making

and the struggle of the elite members of ethnic groups to
control the centre, hightens and intensifies political
conflict. To many observers of the Ugandan political scene,
particularly those of foreign (western) origins, the struggle
for political power at the centre among political elites
from different ethnic backgrounds which in recent years has
assumed violent dimensions, is an expression of ethnic or
'tribal' conflict and hostility. Contrary to such views,
this paper attempts to show that the violent conflicts that
have bedevilled the Ugandan nation since the 1966 crisis,
are purely political conflicts in origin, cause and effect.
The paper contends that the struggle for participation and
control of political power at the centre, is one of the
major causes of political conflict in this country.

In the end, the paper advocates for the decentralization
of power and the creation of a strong system of local govern-
ment as means of minimizing political conflict in Uganda.
Decentralization has the effect of diversifying the centres
of power and widening areas of political participation.
This, in effect, leads to the diffusion of conflict among
the various centres of power and, therefore, to the
attenuation of the impact and effect of conflict on the
political process and the political system. Above all,
decentralization encourages local autonomy. It provides
opportunities to the broad section of the national population
to control local decisions that affect their daily lives
and their immediate environment. Such popular and wide-
spread participation of the nationals in political life,
contributes to the stabilization of the political process

at the local and national levels. Examples are cited from
elsewhere to demonstrate how the principle of decentra-
lization of power has tended to mitigate conflict and to
ensure political stability and socio-economic progress.
But first, let us examine the theoretical question
pertaining to the relation between pluralism and political
conflict.

PLURALISM AND CONFLICT

Basically, the concept of pluralism refers to a
situation in which there exists in society many groups of
various sizes which may have different values, interests,
ideas and aspirations.[1] When applied to social and
political organization, pluralism denotes two tendencies
in group relations. On the one hand, given the character-
istics of the groups involved, a situation of pluralism
may result in consensus, harmony and understanding among
the various groups. On the other, the dynamics of plur-
alistic life may produce situations of conflict leading to
incompatibilities in social and political relationships
among groups. Social scientists have identified three
models of pluralism which account for these two tendencies
in group relations, namely, social pluralism, cultural
pluralism and ethnic pluralism. A brief review of each
of those models is necessary in order to clarify the
theoretical thrust of the main themes of the paper.

Social pluralism is essentially a model that explains
the persistance of democratic stability in a plural society.[2]
The pluralist model of democracy sees society as mode up of
several social groups of various sizes and interests.

These groups are independent of each other and the govern-
ment, and provide a basis for the dispersal of power in
society. Groups intervene between the individual and the
government; they check each other's power and that of the
government thereby discouraging the monopoly of power by
anyone group or by the government.

The various groups that exist in society are organized
around common interests and needs of their members.
Membership is voluntary and group solidarity rests on
civic ties among its members and not on primordial or
sacred particularism. Individuals join groups in order to
advance their interests and provide for their needs in
a collective manner. An individual may belong to more than
one group thus creating a network of interlocking relation-
ships among the various groups. Common among the groups in
a plural society are the many groups that are organized to
cater for the social, economic, professional and civic
interests of their members such as trade unions, chambers
of commerce, Medical and Bar associations Women and Youth
organizations etc. Such groups provide platforms for the
expression of numerous demands and create centres for
political participation at group level.

Since the various groups have different interests,
needs and demands, the interaction among themselves
and the government inevitably creates situations of conflict.
However, the intensity of violent tendencies of group
conflict are mitigated by the existance of underlying value
consensus among group leaders and members. Through the
process of negotiation and compromise, individuals and groups

are able to arrive at a mutual adjustment and accommodation of the various competing claims. This mechanism enables society to maintain its equilibrium and consensus in the context of continuing conflict. In addition, the over-lapping membership of individuals in various groups creates cross-cutting loyalties thereby providing channels for integrative communication among different groups. On the whole, the theory of social pluralism believes in the importance of social groups as the basis of democratic stability and integration of society.

It should be noted here however, that contrary to what is believed to be the case, pluralist democracy does not promote or guarantee the dispersal and balancing of political power in society. On the contrary, social pluralism actually encourages the acquisition and monopoly of power by a few individuals and groups and provides grounds whereby the interests of the stronger group of individuals pre-empt and dominate public policy. Pluralist democracy places a high premium on the freedom of interest group activity and on the principle that public policy should result from the free interplay of the various competing interests. But attempts at balancing the various group interests becomes problematic in practice because what turns out as the common or public interest represents no more than the interests of the stronger and better organized groups.

While it allows competition, therefore, pluralist democracy promotes in reality the interests of organized vested interests and strong pressure groups which dispro-portionately represent the interests of wealth and those

of a minority section of society that controls and dominates
the means of production. Pluralist politics does not safe-
guard the interests of the weaker groups, which in terms
of numbers, may represent the interests of the majority.[3]

There is no doubt that Uganda has a pluralist social
structure. But this structure is dominated by a few, well-
organized and urban-centred elite and business interests.
The power and influence of these groups stand in stark
contrast to the powerlessness of the ill-organized groups
of the masses of the workers and peasants. Thus, whereas
social pluralism is a reality of Uganda's social and political
scene, it does not function effectively to provide centres
for the popular participation of a wide section of the
national population. In terms of the needs for mass
participation, social pluralism provides no viable
alternative to the requirements of diverse centres of
power at the various levels of decision-making which a
decentralized political structure provides. Hence, conflicts
arising out of the struggle for political participation
and power continues to persist in the context of social
pluralism.

In recent years social scientists have developed
another model of pluralism - that of cultural pluralism.[4]
Unlike the social pluralism model which finds in the
diversity of groups a mechanism for conflict, consensus
and stability, the cultural pluralism framework portrays
the relation among groups as one of irreconcilable conflict
that often leads to political violence and the malintegration
of society. In a culturally compartmentalized society,

people are divided not so much over concrete social, political or economic interests but over deep-seated cleavages arising out of primordial or sacred ties. Cultural groups exists naturally; they are not volutary because membership is reserved for people who are born into them. Examples of such groups include ethnic, racial, caste and religious groups. And because membership is exclusive, individuals become highly identified with and attached to the groups in which they are members. Thus one finds that a powerful consensus on values exists within a group but not between groups. This makes it difficult for the various groups to cooperate and integrate together. Normally, one group monopolizes political power and uses its control of the institutions of government to dominate others. Accordingly, political order, stability and social conformity are maintained by coercion and not by any consensus on values.

The analytical rigour of the cultural pluralist model rests on its assumption that the various groups that constitute society exist as separate communities each with its own distinct cultural values, institutional patterns and political orientations. As was the case when it was first formulated and applied,[5] the model does reflect the realities of a colonial society in which factors of race and culture made it difficult for the various cultural groups to interact and co-operate and in which wealth, power and prestige were distributed a long racial lines. In contemporary Africa, the model has practical utility in analysing and understanding the problems of conflict

and political violence existing in the racially and
culturally heterogeneous white dominate societies in southern
Africa. But in Uganda and the rest Africa, the cultural
pluralism model does not seem to be of value in offering
a viable framework for understanding situations of conflict
and group violence.

Attempts to account for the endemic conflicts that
sometimes manifest themselves in traumatic violence in the
racially homogeneous but ethnically plural societies
of Africa, led to the development of the ethnic pluralism
model by Leo Kuper and M.G. Smith.[6] This model sees
African societies as made up of many ethnic groups of
various sizes and influence. These groups are distrinct
from each other on the basis of language, social organi-
zation and other cultural characteristics. Each ethnic
unit forms a political entity that may constitute a centre
of political power and claim the identity and loyalty of
its members. But unlike the cultural groups which live
side by side but separately, ethnic groups share a certain
amount values which derive from a basically common culture
and race as well as common historical and contemporary
experiences. This enables people to interact and live
together. However, because of the differ3nces in interests
and the desire to maximize influence in a competitive
situation, groups tend to use the resources available to
them to assert themselves in relation to other groups.
Using ethnic identity and solidaristic ties as weapons of
political bargaining, the elite cadre of the various groups
engage in constant struggles for the control of state power.

And when they gain this control, they use political power
to suppress the interests of other groups and to ensure
the dominance of members of their own ethnic groups in all
sectors of employment and social and political life. Such
a state of affairs creates tensions among the in and the
out groups and leads naturally to political conflict and
violence.

There are two basic characteristics of the pluralist
models discussed above that should be noted. First, all
the three types of pluralism imply the existance of multiple
and diverse centres of power and political activity. The
recognition of this reality is important in any political
arrangement aimed at maintaining a stable political process.
In a pluralist democracy these centres are recognized as
independent centres of power, influence and political action.
The activities of the various groups are utilized to
mitigate conflict and to integrate society together.
On the other hand, political centralization tends to
suppress the activities of independent groups and to
destroy these groups as centres of mass political parti-
cipation.

The second charactiristic to note is that conflict is
the basic feature that underlies the process of group
relations and interaction. With respect to social pluralism,
conflict is mitigated by the underlying consensus on
values. In the case of cultural pluralism, conflict is
contained through coercion and the political domination
which one cultural group maintains over others. With regard
to ethnic pluralism, the relation between groups is

characterized by competition and rivalry and not hostility
and suspecion as is the case in respect of the relations
among cultural groups. So, the less frequent ethnic groups
are made to compete among themselves for power or resources
the less situations are created for conflicts to develop
among them. Ethnic conflicts, particularly those of a
violent kind, can therefore be avoided through a political
arrangement that allows little competition and rivalry among
the groups. And this is an arrangement that gives relative
autonomy to ethnic groups to make decisions that affect the
control and utilization of local resources. It is to this
political device of managing conflicts among ethnic groups
in Uganda since the colonial times that this analysis now
turns.

POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION OF ETHNIC PLURALISM.

Characteristically, colonial administration in Uganda
was based on a system that recognized the multi-ethnic
nature of society. Following the 1900 Agreement, the
British proceeded to establish a system of administration
in which territories or districts that were demarcated on
ethnic lines became the basic political and administrative
units.[7] These units, particularly the Kingdom areas and
more especially Buganda, were given considerable autonomy
by the well known British colonial system of indirect rule.
Whereas the British controlled the central government and
administration, the power for the management of local
affairs was retained and exercised by the local political
and administrative elites within the overall colonial policy

and under the supervision of the colonial government agents.
Thus the kingdom and district political and administrative
units provided traditional elites and, later, an increasing
number of educated Africans, a wide range of opportunities
for political participation and decision-making.

The Local Government System.

The 1949 Local Government Ordinance strengthened
further the system of local government. Kingdoms and
districts became the basic structures through which the
country was administered. Increasingly, it became a
deliberate policy of the colonial government to encourage
educated Africans to work in their respective local govern-
ment administrations and to leave the central government
to the British officers.[8] Consequently, local governments
became the foci of identity and loyalty for African elites
and centres of political participation.

The colonial system of local government, as estab-
lished in Uganda, had inherent mechanisms of preventing
the development of conflicts among ethnic groups. In the
first place, the system made sure that there were no major
areas of competition and struggle over which ethnic groups
could come into contact and conflict. By and large ethnic
groups were politically kept apart from each other.
There was no struggle to control the centre and the
resources involved because these were under the exclusive
control of the central colonial government. Since sub-
stantial amount of power to make local decisions was
decentralized and diffused among local government units,

and since these units controlled critical resources such as
employment and provided also opportunities for participation to
many traditional and educated elites, ethnic groups had
limited areas of contact upon which conflicts could develop
among them. It is this device of dispersing power among
local political units which ensured that the centre was
kept under relatively less pressure of political activity.
For the ethnic groups, the centre was not an object for
competition and struggle among them. And it is precisely
this device that enabled the colonial government to maintain
political stability and social harmony in potential
situations of explosive ethnic conflict.

The 1962 Independence Constitution.

The need to control and accommodate conflict arising
out of ethnic pluralism was one of the important factors
that determined the structure and provisions of the 1962
constitution which the British left behind on the country's
attainment of independence.[9] The Independence constitution
was indeed an ingeneous act of social engineering that
reflected an understanding of the complexity of Uganda's
social and political forces on the part of the departing
British. It sought to continue and strengthen the experiment
that had began early in the colonial times of dispersing
power among the various ethnic units and broadening areas
of mass political participation. The main features of the
constitution that were specifically aimed at avoiding the
possibilities of ethnic tensions and conflicts included the
granting of greater degrees of autonomy to kingdom and, to

a lesser degree, district administrations; the establishment
of a strong system of local government and the expansion of
areas of local political participation and representation
in the form of elected councils for each district. Let us
look at this important feature of the constitution a little
further.

Uganda's Independence constitution was a unique
document that contained both elements of unitarism and
federalism. This in itself was a reflection of the country's
peculiar social and political structure that needed an
intricate arrangement that was capable of holding the multi-
ethnic nation together in relative peace and stability.
What was required for the purposes of avoiding the problem
of ethnic conflict, was a political device which the British
had tried before with remarkable success. This was a device,
which has already been mentioned, that provided ethnic
groups with sufficient powers to conduct their own affairs
and which, therefore, left the centre relatively free from
ethnic-based political activity. As long as ethnic groups
enjoyed such powers, they regarded the centre to be of less
importance as an object of struggle for control. Increas-
ingly, a wider section of traditional and modern elites
were inclined to seek political participation in local
units rather than the centre. And this device had the
effect of maintaining political stability by decongesting
the centre of the heat of political struggle and conflict.

In full recognition of this need, therefore, the 1962
constitution decentralized political power and dispersed
it among the various local units with varying degrees of

autonomy. Buganda, the largest and most prestigious kingdom
in the country, was granted full federal status in relation
with the centre while the smaller kingdoms of Bunyoro, Toro,
Ankole and the territory of Busoga were each granted
a federal status of a lesser degree. The rest of the ethnic
groups that were organized in district political units and
which historically did not have hereditary traditional
rulers, maintained unitary relationships with the central
government.

In terms of power, the kingdom of Buganda with its
own government and system of administration, enjoyed
considerable autonomy and controlled a wide range of resources.[10]
At the centre of political activity was the institution of
the Kabaka (the King) and the Great Lukiiko — the Assembly —
which was constituted by a large size of elected represent-
atives. The system of administration was organized in
ministries each of which was headed by a political Minister.
As a political unit that was built around the Baganda ethnic
group, the Buganda
kingdom government provided a wide range of avenues for
high skilled employment in its system of administration.
It also provided broad areas of political participation to
a wide section of both traditional and educated Baganda
elites. Indeed, there were many Baganda political elites
who had built viable political careers in the Buganda
political system and who were forced to turn to national
politics only after the destruction of the kingdom in 1966.[11]
But while the kingdom government existed as a local political
unit, it served to absorb thousands of political and admini-
strative elites and to prevent thereby, the building-up of
conflicts at the centre.

The powers which Buganda enjoyed under the 1962 consti-
tution as well as the basic political and administrative
institutions which existed in the kingdom, were to be found
also in other kingdoms, although these were relatively of
lesser degree of importance and significance. Thus, each
kingdom government had an elected assembly as the centre of
political activity and decision-making. It had also compa-
ratively smaller compliment of ministerial departments around
which the administrative system of the kingdom government was
organized. Like the Buganda Government,
the other kingdom governments too provided opportunities
for employment and political participation to large sections
of traditional and educated elites and relieved pressure
that would otherwise have been exerted on the central govern-
ment by people pursuing these values and goals.

With respect to the non kingdom unitary districts,
the constitution provided for the devolution of power by
the central government to an elected council in each
district. Essentially, the districts were directly governed
by the centre. But the councils exercised powers and
performed functions that were conferred upon them by law.
At independence, district councils derived their power from,
and their functions were defined by, the Local Administration
Ordinance of 1962. And the functions of these councils
were of such magnitude and importance as to necessitate the
establishment and maintainance of a system of local admini-
stration that employed thousands of local traditional and
modern elites. As local political and administrative units,
therefore, district administrations catered for the needs
for employment and political participation and kept away

from the centre a large section of politically active elites.

Thus we find that the 1962 constitution embodied important features of political pluralism. The constitution recognized the political life of ethnic groups by providing for the decentralization and dispersal of power among the political units of the various groups. It is this principle of constitutional pluralism that regulated and controlled ethnic conflicts and stabilized the political process at the national level. As we shall proceed to show presently, it was the abolition of this constitutional provision and safeguard that signalled the entry in national politics of bitter and, on the most part, violent ethnic conflicts and struggle.

A further legal provision that strengthened the foundations of the politics of political pluralism in Uganda, was the Constitutional Heads (Elections) Act No.66 of 1963.[12] Enacted by the National Assembly hardly a year after independence, the Act showed the magnitude of the pressure of non kingdom ethnic groups for more power, recognition and status. The Act provided for the election by District Councils of Constitutional Heads in districts who were to occupy the status and perform the functions that were more or less similar to those of the hereditary rulers in the kingdom areas. This Act expanded further the areas of political participation at the local level. Some notable national political elites relinguished their positions at the centre to become Constitutional Heads of their districts.[13]

The foregoing analysis has focused on the discussion of the political and institutional arrangements for the control of political conflict and inter-ethnic political violence. As already indicated, these arrangements were to be found in two areas of colonial initiative. The first was the system of local government that was organized around ethnic groups as political and administrative units. These units were given wide-ranging powers to deal with matters and problems of local concern. The second arrangement was enshrined in the Independence Constitution which decentralized and liberalized the political structure and gave definite constitutional powers to local political units both federal and unitary. As long as these arrangements remained in force, the country enjoyed periods of relative stability, peace and socio-economic development. But this was not to last long as the proceeding discussion attempts to show.

TRENDS TOWARDS POLITICAL CENTRALIZATION: THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL CONFLICT IN UGANDA.

For a period of approximately four years of independence, the central government led by Prime Minister Apolo Milton Obote remained relatively stable, strong and free from traumatic conflicts. Its main political challenges and pre-occupations of the time were confined largely to the role of refereeing over conflicts and disputes among local political units, mainly Buganda and Bunyoro.[14] But by and large, the kingdom and district administrations remained inward looking and apparently contented with the powers and

functions conferred upon them by the constitution and other
laws under it. As long as the central government refrained
from tampering with these powers and functions and was seen
to be fair in dealing with matters of concern to ethnic
groups, local political units remained largely disinterested
in the politics at the centre. But the moment the central
government started encroaching on the powers of the federated
states, particularly those of Buganda, and was perceived
to be using its powers unfairly to surpress the interests
and aspirations of local political entities, the relationship
between the central government and Local administrations
became increasingly strained.[15] Gradually, the strained
relationships between the centre and the local political
units, particularly Buganda, forced the local units to enter
the central political arena to assert themselves.[16] In the
face of the challenges emanating from other centres of power,
the central government reacted by attempting to reassert its
supremacy over local political units. The increasingly
developing conflicts between Buganda and the central govern-
ment provided opportunity for the central government to
accumulate more power by undermining the powers of the local
political units. In other words, as time went on the central
government embarked on a consciously calculated process of
political centralization which drew more and more local
political entities and their most active political elites
into the imbroglio of political competition and struggle at
the centre.

The process of political centralization passed through
three phases that represented a period of fundamental

political changes in the country's post-independence history namely, the Buganda crisis of 1966 that resulted in the demise of the foundations of political pluralism in Uganda - the 1962 constitution, the advent of the 1967 constitution that abolished kingdoms and, finally, the imposition of the one-party state in 1969 which signalled the end of the politics of institutional and legal opposition and conferred anthoritarian outlook on the central government.

Coming from Lango district, a nonkingdom area, and guided by the 'revolutionary-centralizing' philosophy,[17] Milton Obote was culturally and politically inclined to prefer a unitary form of government for the whole country. During the Constitutional Conference in London in September 1961. Obote came out strongly in favour of supreme powers for the central government. But the pressures from the kingdoms, particularly Buganda, led to the spliting of state powers between the centre and the federal states. It is this constitutional encumberance and the tendencies of Buganda to guard its federal status jealously against the encroachment of the central government that prevented Prime Minister Obote from pursuing his preferred vision of political centralization as early as he would have wished. The opportunity for fulfilling this vision was presented by the events that led to the 1966 crisis which Obote handled to his advantage with political skills that earned him admiration even among his political opponents.

The 1966 Crisis

The 1966 crisis was a culmination of two main political developments. The first of these was the break-up in 1964 of

the ruling alliance between Obote's Uganda Peoples Congress
(UPC) and Buganda's Kabaka Yekka (KY).[18] This led to the
political relations between Obote's Central government and
the Kabaka's Buganda government based at Mengo becoming
strained. The second was the internal factional conflicts
within the UPC which resulted into the arrest and detention
of some of Obote's Ministers, the suspension of the 1962
Constitution and further deterioration of the relations
between Buganda and the central government. As these deve-
lopments are fully documented elsewhere,[19] only a short
outline will be given here.

In what was seen to be an 'Unholy Marriage', the UPC
led by Milton Obote entered into an alliance with the KY
in 1961. This alliance was clearly aimed at ousting the
Democratic Party (DP) led by Ben Kiwanuka from power[20] at
the pre-independence general elections that were later
scheduled to take place in April 1962. The alliance was
seen as unholy because of the evidently divergent socio-
political outlooks of the two parties. The KY was basically
a traditionalist party whose main pre-occupation was the
glorification and preservation of the institution of the
Kabakaship and the protection of Buganda interests. The
UPC on the other hand was led by men with a modern vision
of the state - men who exhibited nationalist outlooks and
tendencies in favour of a unitarist government. By and large,
the UPC - KY fraternity was seen as an alliance of
convenience whose inherent contradictions were sooner or
later to cause problems for the alliance itself.

The alliance consisted of a series of mutual under-
standing between the UPC and KY. One of these was that KY
would have the exclusive right to field all candidates in
Buganda in competition with the DP in the event of a direct
election to the National Assembly and the UPC would field
candidates only in the rest of Uganda. The two parties would
then join forces at the national level in Parliament.
Details were worked out as to how the two parties were to
share power if the alliance won the elections.

The 1962 constitution provided for direct elections
to the Buganda Lukiiko and gave powers to the Lukiiko to
decide whether Buganda's twenty-two representatives to
the National Assembly were to be directly elected by the
people, as was to be the case in the rest of the country,
or nominated by the Lukiiko. Early in 1962, elections to
the Lukiiko were held and turned out to be a contest between
KY and DP which the KY won overwhelmingly. Then during
the national elections in April of that year, the Lukiiko
decided that Buganda's representives to Parliament were to
be nominated by the Lukiiko. This left the DP in the cold
without any representives from Buganda because those who
were nominated by the Lukiiko to represent Buganda in
Parliament were all KY men. With UPC winning the majority
of seats in the rest of the country,[21] the combined strength
of the Lukiiko nominees and the UPC's elected representatives
placed the UPC-KY alliance into power.

Uganda, therefore, entered the period of independence
with the UPC-KY delicate political outfit in power. But
this outfit was not destined to last long. The incompatibili-
ties between the two parties did not permit them to work

harmoniously together and soon the basic divisions and
conflicts between them came into full view. At first Obote
had to tolerate many of the problems that were caused for
him by KY being in government. But when the UPC became
increasingly strong and dominant as a result of the cross-
overs in Parliament by mainly DP members of Parliament,
Obote summarily terminated the alliance in August, 1964 and
removed KY ministers from office. This saw the end to the
working relationship between Buganda and the central govern-
ment and plotted the path of political confrontation between
the two. It was this tendency, towards the gradual monopolization of
power by one group- the UPC - that ushered in the beginning
of a period of political conflict at the centre.

Yet it was the contradictions within the UPC itself,
rather than the break-up of the party's alliance with KY,
that triggered off the 1966 crisis. Right from its formation
in 1960, the UPC could be said to consist of two factional
tendencies: one progressive and socialist- inclined and
the other conservative and pro-capitalism. The factions
based on these two tendencies came into open conflict and
struggle for the control of the party during the 1964 Annual
Delegates Conference of the UPC that was held in Gulu Town.
In the election to the key position of Secretary-General of
the party, the radical socialist-inclined incumbent, John
Kakonge, lost to the challenge of Grace Ibingira representing
the conservative capitalist wing of the party. The accedency
of the ambitious Ibingira to the powerful party post of
Secretary-General placed him in a position in which he began
to aspire to the leadership of the party itself and

ultimately of the government, both of which positions were
held by Obote at the time. Through scheming, manipulations
and forming of strategic alliances, Ibingira and his
supporters in the party and government sought to undermine
the power and position of the prime minister with the sole
aim of throwing Obote out of power. In one politically
significant incident in February 1966, Ibingira and his
group collaborated with the DP and KY members of parliament
to support a motion tabled by a leading KY member, Daudi
Ocheng, accusing Prime Minister Obote, three of his close
ministers and army chief of staff Col.Idi Amin of impropriety
in receiving large sums of money, being proceeds from the
sale of gold and ivory that were allegedly derived from
the involvement of the Uganda army in the 1964-65 Congolese
rebellion. In particular, the motion called for the immediate
suspension of Col.Amin who, apparently referred to in the
motion as the leading army officer, was charged together
with some members of the government of planning to overthrow
the constitution. The interesting side of the matter was
that before proceeding to undertake an upcountry tour,
Obote had summoned the UPC parliamentary group which formed
the majority in parliament and decided collectively that
Ocheng's motion would not be allowed to be tabled for
discussion. But as soon as Obote left Kampala, the motion
was not only tabled and discussed but was also adopted by
the seating UPC MPs in conjunction with the DP and KY MPs.
The lonely dissenting vote was only registered by John Kakonge.

The political implications of this motion were
enormous. A top military officer was to be suspended,

a dioision that was certainly destined to cause uneasiness
in the leadership and ranks of the army. As was common
elsewhere in Africa that year, such action would probably
have led to a military intervention and the overthrow of
Obote. But most significantly, Obote and his close ministers
were to be investigated for gross misdemeanour in receiving
and putting to private use unauthorized funds. Such action
was caloulated to undermine Obote's power and source of
legitimacy as the leader of government.

But Obote took this challenge with characteristic calm.
He completed his tour as scheduled and upon his return tc
the capital proceeded to move very fast to deal a decisive
blow on those colleagues in government that were plotting
against him. On 22nd February, 1966 and contrary to the
provisions of the constitution, Obote assumed full powers
of government and ordered the arrest and detention of five
ministers of his government, including Grace Ibingira.
It is worth noting for the sake of our interest in inter-
ethnic relations and sources of conflict, that all those
arrested and detained were southern Bantu politicians.
This was followed on 24th February by the suspension of
the constitution itself which effectively removed the Kabaka
of Buganda, Sir Edward Muresa, from the office of President
and Head of State which he had occupied since 1963 under
the terms of the UPC-KY alliance. Then in April 1966 Obote
removed all doubts as to the direction to which he was
heading by introducing to the National Assembly and having
that body adopt immediately without debate the 1966 interim
republican constitution which made him President and Head of
State.

The most important political outcome of the 1966 crisis, for our purpose, was the abrogation of the Independence Constitution which had been the symbol of political pluralism in the country and the increasing accummulation of power by the central government. For sure, the tampering with the constitution, which had been the chief source of the power of the Buganda Kingdom under the Kabaka, and the assumption of extra - constitutional powers by the central government under Obote, could not go unchallenged.

In numerous resolutions which culminated in the last one in May 1966 that called upon the central government to remove its seat of government from Buganda soil, the Buganda Lukiiko engaged in a bitter political struggle for the survival of the institution of Kabakaship and the Buganda State. In a sharp reaction, the central government interpreted this resolution as an act of rebellion by Buganda and provided Obote with the opportunity to lauch an armed attack on the Kabaka's palace under the pretext of looking for arms that were planned for use in the rebellion. After a spirited battle, the Kabaka's forces at the palace capitulated and Sir Edward Mutesa fled into exile, leaving behind the ruins of a kingdom that had played a central role in the historical political development of Uganda.[22]

The defeat and dismemberment of the Kingdom of Buganda marked the end of subnational centres of power that were organized around ethnic groups and ushered in an era of a highly centralized Ugandan state. Henceforth, there was to be one major centre of power - the central government - to which all Ugandan elites were to look for political

participation and employment. It was from this time that
the importance of controlling power at the centre dawned on
many political elites who had hitherto contented themselves
with participation in Buganda politics, and elsewhere in
district political units. The narrowing of areas of part-
icipation and political power at one centre resulted in
intense political struggle among political elites for the
control of the central government. And since the 1966 crisis
had dramatized those events as the struggle for power
between the southern Bantu and the northern Nilotics, the
struggle for participation and power in Uganda came to be
seen and interpreted largely in ethnic terms.

The Republican Constitution and One-Party State.

After his triumph in 1966, Obote proceeded to make
preparations for the complete elimination of all centres and
symbols of rival power. This was achieved following the
adoption of the 1967 republican constitution which is
currently in force. A leading provision of that constitution
declared that "The Institution of king or Ruler of a kingdom
or Constitutional Head of a District, by whatever name
called, existing before the commencement of this constitution
under the law then in force, is hereby abolished".[23]
This provision did not only abolish the kingdoms which had
been Obote's main source of political challenge before the
events of 1966, but it also effectively abolished the system
of local government as had been established elsewhere in the
nonkingdom areas. A large section of elites could no longer
look to District Councils for political participation or to

the public services of district administrations for employ-
ment. Instead, they all looked to the centre in search of
these values. This resulted in the increase of political
conflict and tension among the competing members of ethnic
groups.

With the republican constitution firmly in place and
with the reins of power firmly in his hands, Obote then felt
sufficiently strong and politically safe to embark on a
socialist adventure. For long, he had apparently kept his
socialist tendencies under the carpet because he had lacked
sufficient power to reveal them, given the power equations
within which he had to operate. But now this power he had
and therefore, throughout 1968 and 1969, Obote made speeches
and released a series of literature[24] spelling out his
government's intentions to follow a socialist path of
development. His socialist package for Uganda was adopted
in December 1969 in Lugogo Indoor Studium in Kampala by the
delegates conference of the ruling party. And then, as
Obote was leaving the conference hall late in the evening
at the height of his political triumph, he was shot at and
injured in the mouth by an intending assassin. The attempted
assassination was obviously blamed on the enemies of the
impending socialist revolution in Uganda, which included
both internal and external forces. Obote took advantage
of this event to strengthen his power and that of his govern-
ment further by clamping down on opposition parties and
declaring a one-party state in Uganda.

The declaration of the ruling UPC as the only legal
political party removed completely the remaining elements of

political pluralism in the country. Henceforth, political competition was confined only within the ruling party. Consequently, the state became highly centralized and authoritarian. Political competition and the struggle for power at the centre became very acute. In order to retain power in the face of serious challenges from other quarters, both real and imaginary, Obote was increasingly forced to place his most trusted men in the key branches of the state apparatus. As it turned out these men happened to be members of his own ethnic group, the Langi, or those from the ethnic group closely allied culturally to Obote's, the Acholis.[25] Such a preponderance of people from a few ethnic groups in the key centres of power gave the other ethnic groups, which happened to represent the majority, a feeling of being politically dominated. This gave further impetus to other groups to struggle to control political power at the centre.

The magnitude of group struggle for power was dramatized violently by the 1971 military coup led by Idi Amin. Among the accusations levelled at Obote by the coup leaders was his favouritism for the Langi and Acholi, particularly in the army and intelligence services. Following the initial success of the coup, Amin and his ethnically determined supporters proceeded to eliminate the Langi and Acholi from the army and to do precisely what they had accused Obote of doing. He established a hegemony that controlled political and military power for eight years which was based on a coalition of ethnic groups from the West Nile district and southern Sudan to which Amin belonged or had close affinity.

After the fall of Idi Amin in 1979 and the two-year
interim period of the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF)
administrations, Milton Obote and his UPC party came into
power for the second time round following the disputed 1980
general elections. Once again, he established a government
that was propped up by the dominance of the Langi and Acholi
in the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA).[26] In response
to this development, and particularly to the widespread
belief that the 1980 elections had been rigged in favour
of the UPC,[27] Yoweri Museveni organized a resistance movement
and a guerilla army, both of which came to be dominated by
the southern Bantu, most notably the Banyankole and the
Baganda. Then in a crude twist of history, trouble developed
within the Acholi-Langi alliance in the UNLA when Obote was
accused in early 1985 of his old problem of ethnic
favouratism. The Acholi officers accused him of favouring
the Langi over the Acholi in appointments to top military
positions.[28] In July of that year, the Acholi Officers
under the leadership of General Tito Okello, the UNLA
Commander, and the northern Brigade Commander, Bazilio Okello,
broke ranks with their traditional Langi allies and overthrew
Obote's government in a military coup. The new Head of State,
General Tito Okello, proceeded to establish a coalition
government in which the Acholis were evidently in dominant
positions both in government and the army.[29] But Okello's
government was to be shortlived because six months later
in January 1986, it was removed from power by the force of
arms of the NRA. Following the collapse of Okello's govern-
ment and the disintegration of the UNLA, Yoweri Museveni

established a government, currently in power, which is dominated by the southern Bantu.[30]

Thus, political conflicts and violence in Uganda have tended to acquire ethnic dimensions in recent years because of the excessive centralization of power which has led the struggle to control the centre to be very intense indeed among the elite members of ethnic groups. In this struggle, political and military elites have tended to mobilize and use their ethnic bases and resources, such as military manpower, in order to struggle effectively to control political power at the centre. Hence, the seemingly ethnic conflicts and hostility in Uganda are basically political conflicts originating from the struggle for popular democracy and political participation. As long as the active political elites are by the existing political structure required to participate only in one centre of power at the national level, the struggle for power will continue to reflect itself in seemingly inter-ethnic conflict and violence. And as long as the old mutual suspicion continues to exist among ethnic groups along the southern-northern divide, the more difficult it will be to achieve a national consensus which is so vital for political stability.

POLITICAL DECENTRALIZATION AND POLITICAL STABILITY

I have persistently argued in this essay that political centralization intensifies conflicts among (ethnic) groups while decentralization of power tends to diffuse such conflicts. Basing analysis on the colonial system of local government and the provisions of political pluralism in the Independence Constitution, I have shown how the dispersal of

power and responsibility among many local political units
in Uganda tended to work in favour of political stability
by keeping political conflicts among ethnic groups at the
lowest lvel. We have demonstrated further how the abolition
of political decentralization in 1966 and the subsequent
concentration of power at the centre, increased the tempo
of political conflict that led to the development of a
culture of violence and endemic political instability.
With reference to the Nigerian post-independence experience
we propose in this last section of the paper to take a
further, if brief, look at how political decentralization
may provide a viable framework for political stability by
decongesting the centre of excessive political conflict
and undercutting the potentialities of ethnic atagonism.

THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

Nigeria emerged into independence in 1960 with a three-
region federal structure.[31] Each region, namely, the
Northern, Western and Eastern regions, was organized around
a dominant ethnic group: the Hausa/Fulani in the north,
the Yoruba in the West and the Igbo in the East. The federal
arrangement provided each constituent unit with a regional
government, headed by a Premier, and with a Regional Assembly
constituted by elected representatives as the centre of
political activity. This arrangement encouraged the develop-
ment and functioning of regionally-based political parties.
Indeed, such parties existed and controlled the governments
in their own regions. Thus the Northern Peoples Congress
(NPC) led by Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto
controlled the Northern Regional government, Chief Obafemi
Awolowo's Action Group (AG) was dominant in he Western region,

while Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe led the National Council of Nigerian
Citizens (NCNC), a party that was in government in the Eastern
region. By and large, the federal government remained a weak
outfit that was run by a weak coalition of the regionally-
based political parties, the control of which was an
unattractive proposition for many leading politicians.[32]
The preoccupation of the political parties then was to be
supreme in their own regions. The regions, therefore, rather
than the federal centre became areas of intense
political participation and activity.

The three-region federal structure, however, tended to
mask greatly the multi-ethnic nature of the Nigerian society.
The fact was that the three main ethnic groups around which
the federal structure was organized, dominated other important,
and in many cases very large, groups within the regions.
For example, the Hausa/Fulani in the north were seen to
dominate other politically important groups such as the Tiv
and the Idoma. Similarly, in the West, the majority Yoruba
dominated many mid-west ethnic groups while in the East
the Igbos dominated the equally socially advanced Efiks and
Ibibios. Such an arrangement, therefore, became a source
of constant friction and tension between ethnic groups within
the regions and became a basis for the articulation of
demands for further expansion of autonomous centres of power
to meet the political aspirations of other important ethnic
groups.

It was precisely in response to such demands and
pressures that the Mid-West region centred around the Benin
ethnic groups, was curved out of the Western region in 1963

to become the fourth region of the Nigerian federation.
While this action gave political solace to mid-western
ethnic groups, it certainly acted to fuel the demands of
other 'minority' groups elsewhere for 'local self-deter-
mination.' Such demands became so widespread and reached
such high degrees of intensity that they were seen by many
observers as constituting the greatest threat to the survival
of the Nigerian nation as a single political entity. This
was the state of affairs when the first military takeover
of the federal government occured in January 1966 under
the leadership of an Igbo commander, General Ironsi.

Like many other alarmed Nigerian leaders at the time,
General Ironsi mistook the demands for further expansion
of centres of power and democratization of the political
structure for signs of political disintegration of the
Nigerian state. In an attempt to quell what he saw as the
forces of disintegration, he proceeded to promulgate a decree
that abolished federalism and imposed a unitary form of
government in its place throughout the country. This action
created more problems than it solved; in fact, it made
matters worse. The demands for the restoration of federalism
in its expanded form, as earlier demanded, became intensified.
Political calculation would have required General Ironsi to
back down. But his insistance on the centralization of
power under one unitary government led to the tragic end of
his regime and his life in a counter-coup of July 1966.

On assumption of power, the new military leaders under
the leadership of Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon immediately recognized
the reality. And the reality was that the best way to
diffuse political tension and ethnic conflicts was not to

narrow areas of participation through the process of political
centralization but rather to expand them further through
decentralization and creation of greater numbers of
autonomous centres of power. In one of his first few
decisions in office, therefore, Gowon announced the creation
of the twelve-state federal structure that gave considerable
concessions to the demands of many ethnic groups for greater
political decentralization. The civil war that erupted
between the former Eastern region which styled itself as
Biafra and the federal forces prevented the immedicate
implementation of the new federal system. But when the war
ended in 1970, Nigerian federalism began to thrive again on
the new twelve-state structure.

Although the division of the country into twelve states
was certainly an improvement on the former four-region
structure, the exercise was not based on careful study and
thought. On the contrary, it was a haphazard decision that
was taken to diffuse a serious political situation at the
time. Accordingly, in demarcating state boundaries, no
serious consideration was undertaken in grouping ethnic
units together on the basis of affinities or compatibilities.
The twelve-state structure was basically a replication of
the old colonial provincial structure. Therefore, many
ethnic groups found themselves either divided across state
boundaries or seriously dominated by others. Accordingly,
the demands for more states continued to be championed by
many ethnic groups throughout the country.

Following the coup of July 1975 that toppled the Gowon
regime, a high powered Commission on the Creation of New
States was set up to study the problem carefully and

recommend on how the problem was to be solved on a more or less permanent basis. Basing on the recommendations of commission, the present nineteen- state federal structure was established. Later on in 1976, Nigerian federalism was strengthened and perfected by the establishment of an elaborate system of Local Government which provided even greater opportunity for political participation and decision-making at the very local level.

In marked contrast with many other African countries, therefore, the political trends in Nigeria since independence have been in the direction of greater expansion of political pluralism through increased decentralization of power and diversification of centres of political participation. The Nigerian federalism is constituted by three tiers of government. At the lowest level, there are the more numerous political and administrative units in the form of Local Governments. These serve the needs of the local elites and smaller ethnic groups for participation and political decision-making. At a higher level, there are the larger centres of power in the form of states with all compliments of the institutions and resources of government. It is at the state level that a greater number of Nigerian political and administrative elites aspire to participate. Then, there is the federal centre whose political and admini-strative elites constitute a weak coalition of political forces and ethnic groups in the federation. Although the federal centre controls enormous national resources and commands supreme power in the land, it is not the major target of political activity. In so far as the states control

local resources and provide services that are nearer to the
people, it is the states that constitute the main centres for
meeting the political and economic aspirations of the
majority of the Nigerian people. Indeed, Nigerians within
Nigeria are identified on identify themselves on the basis
of the state of their origin . It is the state identity that
determines what benefits one can get in terms of such things
as employment, scholarship or even a school adminission for
ones child. The state, therefore, is a political unit around
which peoples hopes, aspirations, sentiments and loyalties
are attached.

In the final analysis, the Nigerian experiment at the
atomization of power has, since the Civil War, gone along
way in providing a framework for political harmony and
stability in the context of ethnic diversity. What pertains
in Nigeria now is not a situation of conflict and hostility
among ethnic groups, as was predominantly the case during
the era of the three-region power structure when the base
of participation was still narrow for many elites, but a
situation of competition and rivalry among them. Ethnic
groups organized in states compete with each other for the
allocation of federal resources; they compete among them-
selves for the achievement of further rates of development
in terms of good roads, number of schools, hospitals, number
of doctors and other highly qualified personnel. In this
sense, political decentralization in Nigeria has not only
provided a basis for the control of inter-ethnic conflicts
but has also given impetus to a dynamic process of social
and economic progress in the country.

CONCLUSION

In citing the Nigerian example here, the idea is
certainly not to advocate for that country's style of
governmental organization as a political device for
controlling political violence and inter-ethnic conflicts
in Uganda. Rather, the purpose has been to demonstrate,
borrowing from that example, the importance of the _principle_
of political decentralization in the control of group
conflict, particularly of ethnic kind. As has been indicated,
this principle was first tried in Uganda by the colonial
government in the 1950s with remarkable success. And before
its dissolution in 1962, the same government embodied the
same principle in the Independence Constitution. For the
first three or four years, the principle of the existance
of diverse centres of power was tolerated. This ensured
political stability for the country during the period.
Not until 1966 when this principle was grossly violated and
then Obote embarked relentlessly on the process of political
centralization, that the period of acute conflict and
violence which has since characterized Uganda's political
life actually set in.

It should be pointed out that decentralization of
power and unitarism as a system of government are not
mutually exclusive. It is perfectly possible to have a
strong central government existing side by side and in
harmony with a strong system of local government. What is
necessary is to broaden areas of political participation
and decision-making by creating local political units that
individually or collectively cannot successfully challenge

and cripple the centre. Such amount of power and responsibility are then surrendered to them to perform functions and provide services to the local people that are basically complementary to those of the centre. It is a strong system of local government that can provide the much desired opportunities for ethnic groups to manage affairs that are of vital interest to them. It is the same system that can satisfy the needs of the masses of people for popular democracy. And it is the satisfaction of these basic political needs that can minimize the incidence of political conflict and violence in Uganda and ensure the political stability and socio-economic progress of the country.

FOOTNOTES

1. For a definition and discussion of the concept of
   pluralism see, among others, David B. Truman,
   The Governmental Process, (New York: Knopf, 1960);
   Harry Eckstein, Division and Cohesion in Democracy,
   (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966);
   Leo Kuper and M.G. Smith (eds), Pluralism in Africa,
   (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California
   Press, 1969).

2. The link between plitical democracy and social
   pluralism is contained in the writings of many theorists
   of liberal democracy. See, for instance, William
   Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society, (New York:
   The Free Press, 1959); Seymour Lipset, Political Man,
   (New York: Doubleday, 1960); Gabriel Almond and Sidney
   Verba, The Civic Culture, (Princeton: Princeton
   University Press, 1963) and Robert Dahl, (ed.), Political
   Opposition in Western Democracy (New Haven: Yale
   University Press, 1966).

3. For another critique of the social pluralist inter-
   pretation of democracy see, Peter Bachrach, The Theory
   of Democratic Elitism (Boston: Little, Brown and
   Company, 1967).

4. The cultural pluralism model owes its inspiration to
   J.S. Furnival's study of the relations between the
   cultural and racial groups in colonial India and
   Burma. See his Colonial Policy and Practice
   (London: Cambridge University Press, 1948). Those who
   have applied this model to the study of contemporary
   societies include, M.G. Smith, The Plural Society in
   the British West Indies (Berkeley: University of
   California Press, 1965) and Leo Despress, Cultural
   Pluralsim and Nationalist Politics in British Guiana
   (Chicago: Ranal Mcnald, 1967).

5. By J.S. Furnival, ibid.

6. Leo Kuper and M.G. Smith, Pluralism in Africa, op.cit. especially the Introductory Chapter.

7. For an outline of the history and political developments of colonial Uganda see, K. Ingham, The Making of Modern Uganda (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1958) and David Apter, The Political Kingdom in Uganda (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).

8. See Apter, ibid.

9. See, Uganda Government, Uganda Constitutional Instruments (The Constitution of Uganda in Force) (Government Printer: Entebbe, 1963).

10. See Article 74(1) and (2) and Schedule 7 of the 1962 Constitution of Uganda.

11. Prominent among contemporaries who held leading political positions in the Kabaka's Government are the present Education Minister in the NRM/NRA government, J.S. Mayanja-Nkangi, who held the position of Katikkiro (Prime Minister) in the early 1960s and Abubakar Mayanja, presently the Minister of Information, who at one time served as Minister of Education in the Buganda Government.

12. See the Constitutional Heads (Elections) Act, No.66 of 1963 (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1963)

13. For example Chemonges relinquished his seat in Parliament to become the Constitutional Head of Sebei district with the title of "Kingoo of Sebei".

14. The most politically significant conflict or dispute of the time was the long outstanding dispute that existed between Bunyoro and Buganda over the 'lost counties'. The "lost counties" were tracts of land that belonged to the Kingdom of Bunyoro before Britain imposed colonialism over Uganda but which were given to Buganda, first as a punishment to Bunyoro for resisting

the colonial invading armies and secondly, as a present
to Buganda for assisting the British to defeat the
Bunyoro resistance. After successfully dodging its
responsibility for settling the problem it had created,
the departing British left it to the government of
independent Uganda to settle by holding a referendum
in the disputed counties after two years of independence.
This the central government under Prime Minister Apolo
Milton Obote did and two of the counties under dispute
were returned to Bunyoro and the dispute was finally
solved.

15. The Kabaka's Government resorted to court litigation
    each time it thought that the central government was
    acting contrary to the provisions of and powers
    conferred on it by the constitution. For a discussion of
    this see, Ali.A. Mazrui, "Violent Constitutionalism
    in Uganda", Government and Opposition, Vol. 11 No.4
    (July - October 1967).

16. It was from the strained relationships between the
    governments of Buganda and Uganda that the Kabaka and
    the Buganda Lukiiko became mobilized to play increas-
    ingly activist roles in the affairs of the central
    government. Otherwise, both the Kabaka and the Lukiiko
    had been interested primarily in the Buganda affairs.

17. See, A.G.G. Gingyera-Pnyowa, Apolo Milton Obote and
    His Times (New York, London, Lagos: Nok Publishers,
    1978), Introduction.

18. The Kabaka Yekka (KY) was more of a political movement
    than a political party. It emerged suddenly in early
    1961 and spread rapidly throughout Buganda. As its
    name suggests, (Kabaka Yekka - Kabaka Only or King Only)
    it was mainly interested in matters related to
    Buganda, more particularly in the preservation of the
    institution of the Kabakaship.

19. see, for instance, A.M. Obote, "The Footsteps of
    Uganda's Revolution", East African Journal, Vol.V.
    No.10, October 1968 and A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinyowa, op.cit.

20. The Democratic Party led by Benedicto Kiwanuka won
    the 1961 general elections to the Legislative Council
    which took Uganda into a period of internal self-
    government with Kiwanuka as the first Prime Minister.

21. Outside Buganda, the UPC won 38 seats against 24 seats
    for the DP.

22. For a full chronicle of the 1966 crisis by an insider
    and leading participant see, Sir Edward Mutesa,
    The Desecration of My Kingdom (London: Constable, 1967).

23. See, Uganda Government, The Constitution of the Republic
    of Uganda (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1967),
    Article 118 (1).

24. The main socialist document authored by Obote was
    The Common Man's Charter, (Kampala: Consolidated
    Printers, 1969).

25. For instance, Obote's cousin, Akena Adoko, was the
    head of the powerful and much feared intelligence
    agency, the General Service Unit and it was generally
    known that Obote was grooming Lt.Cols Oyite-Ojok and
    M. Arach, both of them from Obote's ethnic group, for
    top leadership positions in the Uganda Army. See,
    A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinycwa, op.cit. p.246.

26. Both the Army Commander, Gen. Tito Okello, and the
    Army Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Oyite-Ojok were Acholi
    and Langi respectively.

27. The claims that the 1980 general elections in Uganda
    were rigged in favour of the UPC were advanced by the
    opposition politicians and the Democratic Party.
    See, for instance, "The rigged 1980 Uganda General
    Election", A document supplied by the DP Secretariat,
    Kampala and A.W.F. Bwengye, The Agony of Uganda: From
    Idi Amin to Obote (London: Regency Press, 1985).

28. This was one major reason given for the July 1985 coup
against Obote's government. cf. General Toto Okello's
maiden address to the Nation carried by Radio Uganda
July 29, 1985.

29. The Military strongman, Bazilio Okello, a close ally
of General Tito Okello, was made the Commander of
Defence Forces'. The Cabinet and appointments to top
positions in parastatals reflected clearly the dominance
of the Acholis.

30. Again one needs to look at the ethnic composition of
the Cabinet and top Commonders of the NRA to see the
preponderance of people from the southern Bantu.

31. The discussion of the Nigerian federalism and its
problems that follows is based largely on Professor
E.O. Awa's two books: Federal Government in Nigeria
(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964) and
Issues in Federalism Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 1976).

32. At independence and after the general elections of
1965, the Coalition federal government was made up by
two regionally-based political parties, namely, the
NPC and the NCNC. The regions were so powerful and
the control of their governments more attractive than
the control of federal government that the most
powerful politician of the time, Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello
decided at independence to remain as the Premier of the
Northern Region and to send his protege, Alhaji Sir
Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, to head the Federal Government
as Prime Minister on behalf of the majority NPC party
of which Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello himself was the leader.

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