

The Political Economy of Police Corruption in Nigeria

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Abstract : The Nigeria Police Force bears the constitutional mandate as the primary policing agency for the protection of life and property within Nigeria; however, the police have an historical ill-reputation for corruption, ineptitude and impunity. Using the institutional theory of police as the framework of analysis, the paper argues that the performance of the police in Nigeria mirrors the dominant political, social and economic institutions and the structural environment of the Nigerian state. The article puts in perspective the deliberate political decision to underfund the police, leaving officers of the force the extra task of foraging for funds to undertake the duty that the Nigeria state primarily exists for; the article further explores the nexus between corruption in the police in Nigeria and the issue of funding. The article finds that the Nigerian state, by deliberately under-funding the police, while expecting the agency to perform its duties, has indirectly sanctioned the corruption of the force and approved the cooption of the institution of police and policing for private use in Nigeria.

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