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The Politics of Labour Control and Inter-Group Relations in the Jos-Plateau Mining Camps 1945-1960

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Abstract

Intergroup Relations is one of the major issues in African states. This is because of the introduction of modern system of government and economy, democracy and capitalism, the former is the game of number where the majority group rules and the latter is a competitive game that embodies contradiction just for survival sake. In such situation, the minorities in terms of ethnic, religious and regional groups do feel marginalized. These kinds of feelings normally affect intergroup relations negatively. In respect to the present day Jos- Plateau in Nigeria, the objective of this paper is to understand, the politics of labour control and intergroup relations in the Jos-Plateau mining camps, 1945-1960. This will enable us to have a grasp of one of the formative stages of the present day Jos-Plateau civil unrest.

Key Note: Politics, Labour Control, and Intergroup Relations.

Introduction: This paper examines the emergence of the trade unions during the tin mining activities on the Jos Plateau tin fields from 1945 – 1960. It looks at the circumstances that gave birth to them, it also examines how the colonial state and the mining companies struggled to contend with the trade unions demands ranging from better monthly wages to good condition of service. In the struggle, the mining companies and the colonial state sowed the seed of disunity among the people to prevent the emergence of a vibrant labour union on the plateau tin fields from 1945-1960.

Land and location of Jos – Plateau: One of the first geographical statements made on the Jos–Plateau was that of Leo Africanus, who referred to it as extremely cold mountains, in the kingdom of Zazzau. Because of its excess cold, the people were said to keep themselves warm at night by burning charcoal under their constructed mud beds.(Morrison,J.H.1976) Geographically, the Jos plateau lies between latitude 9 and 10 north and longitude 90 and 10 east and is in the central part of Nigeria. The Jos Plateau got its name from geographer like Buchanan and Pugh (Buchanan C.K. & Pugh J.C.1955) The Jos Plateau has different geographical and climatic features, which gives it a different outlook from the immediate regions to the east, west, south and north of it. It is a high plateau bounded on all sides by sharp escarpments at a height between 450–600 metres above the surrounding plains of the Bauchi plateau and former Gongola(Nyam S.O n d.) It has an average height of 1,142 metre above sea level with the highest peak of 1,828 meters on shere hills. The

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lowest points vary from 600-900 metres above sea level. The escarpment made it difficult to climb the plateau except a few passes through the escarpment to the west, east and south (Nyam S.O). The geological formation consists basically of cambian basement complex with granite rocks protruding as inselbergs the granite rocks have cassiterised mineral, tin. The plains of the plateau are dotted with laterised basalt flat –topped hills, which add scenic beauty to the plateau. (Morrison J.H.)

By the year 1914, the following mining companies had already secured a place in Jos plateau Northern Nigeria. The Niger Company Limited Tin Area registered on 13th October, 1910. Ropp Tin Limited was registered on 1st March, 1912(Calvert A.F.1913:242-262) others comprised Kaduna Syndicate registered in 1910 followed by Janter Nigeria Company and Kwall Tin Field.

As observed by Bukharin, in the face of challenges, the capitalists or European industries formed cartels and trusts. (Bukharin N1917)This was also applicable to the Tin industries in the area of study. By the year 1945, the Tin companies formed combine and it was given the name Amalgamated Tin Mines of Nigeria, ATMN. By the year 1940s, important development took place. This was the formation of trade unions and the fragmentation of the union movement. By this period the long mining activity came to have a very big impact on the Berom population, the closest to the mines. Colonial administration had been taking compensatory measures to pay them for the damages on their land. But this was always low and mining companies usually made their arrangement without any resources to administrative adjudication. (Borok A.M.2011) A farmer could continue to work, as was often the case, but mining work could start at any time with only a pittance owed to the producer of crops on the destroyed ground. Therefore, the mineral ordinance of 1916 entitled a farmer to compensation but could not make any impact on the people. The situation became worst as the mines owners could simply hand some token to the chiefs who depended on the colonial authorities for their position, as a form of bribe. This kind of situation was contrary to that of the local land – holders in the Goal Coast and Sierra-Leone mines field. The Berom unlike the Anagutas, Jarawas and Ron, their neighbour did not have excess grains and vegetations to get fire wood for sale in the new market (Borok A.M.2011) this development led to peasant resistance among the Berom. And this became part of a large movement with the emergence of trade unions in the Tin fields. Despite all suppressions on the emergence of trade unions in British colonies, by 1940, the British parliament passed the colonial development and welfare Act provided for economic aid to the colonies, but the Act stipulated that no colony might receive aid under the rights of trade union, and unless the works for which the aid was to be used were carried out under a contract which embodied a fair wages causes and which forbade the employment of children under the age of fourteen. Trade Union Ordinance was passed in various countries after the coming into operation of the Act. (Borok A.M.2011)

Mines Workers Union Formed: The organization of Trade Unions began in earnest when the laws regulating them came into operation. The first trade union in Nigeria registered in 1940, by the end of that year there were five registered unions with a membership 3,500. At the end of 1942, 62 unions claiming a membership of 21,000 had been registered. The tremendous increase in the cost of living during the war inspired the agitation for a cost of living allowance. In 1942 the Nigeria union won a 100 percent increase in the minimum wage following the granting of cost of living allowances. The failure of the government to honour its promises of reviewing the cost of living allowance if there were further increases in the cost of living provoked the general strike of 1945 which lasted for forty – four days in Lagos and fifty two in the provinces. The war years marked the beginning of Union Organization in the tin mines. There survives only one reference to 1940 strike of southern workers at a water site, the first half of 1941, an African workers union

The Politics of Labour Control and Inter-Group Relations in the ... Borok A. M., Suleiman A., Charles Azgaku had been formed among ATMN workers with GWB Ansah as president, a union meeting in August that year attracted the presence of some 400 workers. In January 1942, the ATMN union claimed to have 800 paid up members and during that month, in accordance with the new Trade Union Ordinance, it was registered at a ceremony attended significantly by the Acting Resident (Ananaba, W.1979) of the Province. (NAK/JosProf/III 4240/1943) It was followed in the next couple of years by the registration of African Mines Workers Union in the medium sized companies such as Gold and Base metal mining (Labour Department Report 1943). In ATMN Union by 1944, Ansah remained the President and K.C Mensah headed the Ex-Lands union. All these leaders were Ghanians (NAK/JosProf/1700/1943). But later the leadership of the ATMN workers union went to Patrick Umuna a dragline operator with the company.

The visit of Zik and Imoudu: In September 1946, the leader of the National Congress of Nigeria and the Cameroon, Nnamdi Azikiwe, toured the cities and towns of the North. Among his party was Michael Imoudu, the Railway workers Union chief whose arrest had helped to spark off the 1945 General Strike. For audiences of southern origin especially in the 1940s, the course of labour and of the NCNC was one. In various parts of the North, artisans, particularly in the Native Authority Systems, followed in the wake of Imoudu and Azikiwe(Cohen R.1971:3) The visitors came to the plateau and spoke at Jos, Bukuru and Barkin Ladi mines.NAK/JosProf/10/P/S/141/1946) This appears to have been the trigger for the amalgamation of the different companies unions on 7th September, 1946 into the Nigerian Union of Mine Workers (NUM) claiming an entrance fee of two guineas. NUM clearly aimed at the very top bracket of wage workers. (Freund, B.1981:180) This new union was headed by JGN Onwudinjo, Secretary – General, A.J Stobber and Secretary–General of the union to commissioner of labour, Lagos i.e the representative of the labour commissioner. (NAK/JosProf/III/4240/1943) From the time of the Azikwe – Imoudu tour, trade union militancy on the plateau developed fast and was made strong by increasing bursts of organizational activity and five significant strikes within a decade. As mentioned earlier, this coincided with a period of massive labour unrest and political agitation, the uniform trend in most parts of British West Africa. On 26 May, 1947, GBMM went on strike, though cooperation among labour of different companies was weak, workers from the major companies later joined including ATM.

In the wake of the strike, and under Curry's patronage, a new amalgamation of company union took place which provides more binding than the former. This new organization was called Nigeria African Mines Workers Union (NAMU). From this time NAMU continued to Champion the activity of labour union.(NAK/JosProf/7718/1947) But by 1954, Northern Mine Workers Union was born. The development took place due to the activities of one Audu Danladi and Alhaji Isa Haruna who organized the Northerners on the grounds that NAMU was non – northern dominated by 1958, the Berom formed a separate trade union, the middle Belt Mines Workers Union. This was a continuation of the earlier Berom Progress Union which was formed in 1947. (NAK/Jos/Prof/7718/1947) These show the outline of unionism in the mines field.

Significance and Consolidation of the Trade Union: From the above discussion we can see that from 1940s, the mining industries and the government were faced with the problem of how to tackle these various demands from labour and Berom peasants. The Tin industries and the government of the colonial state employed various strategies and so many political manipulations to arrest the unionist demand from blowing beyond control. The first step the colonial government took with the formation of the first labour union in 1941 was to give it recognition. No wonder, by the end of the 1940s, the colonial government established a Labour Department. The first labour Inspector on the plateau, C.H Croasdale, tried to convince the mines manager in 1941 that unions were a natural development whose recognition would avoid disorder and industrial action. (NAK/JosProf/iv/1941)

By 1944, Sir Arthur Richard visited plateau and he made it clear that administrative encouragement of the unions came on orders from London. He also stressed that it was the “reasonable sane” unions which ought to be brought to the fore. (Freund, B: 180) By implication the recognition of the trade unions itself was a political strategy by the colonial government. In this sphere, Priority will be given to reasonable unions i. e. those they can control and use against the nationalistic and vibrant unions. This goes in line with what Trotsky wrote on labour organization in colonies and semi colonies.

“In as much as imperialism creates both in colonies and semi – colonies a stratum of labour aristocracy and bureaucracy, the latter requires the support of colonial and semi – colonial governments as protector, patrons and sometimes as arbitrators. This constitutes the most important social basis for the Bonapartist and semi-Bonapartist character of government in the colonies and in backward countries generally they likewise constitute the basis for the dependence of reformist union upon the state”. (Freund B,:180)

The first mines workers union seemed to be dominated by the southerners and other people from West Africa. The mining companies took advantage of this kind of formation. By 1942, ATMN union branch claimed it wanted the return of pay levels to pre– depression levels, with increment for inflation, over – time pay after a regular 45 hour work a week, annual leave then provided only for workers with seven years seniority, sick pay and health facilities to be made available even in bush camps; an end to instant dismissals, the only ones then recognized, and finally compensation and reparation payments for good service after retirement, retrenchment or dismissal. Later two themes started to reoccur frequently in list of union demands. Concern for the system of grading skilled work, thus preserving extreme differentials but allowing possibilities of pay increases and parity with the government wage scale accepted as the yardstick of a fair wage.(NAK/JosProf/709/1947) For instance in 1944 the GBMM workers union proposed a salary scale giving an ordinary clerk four times and a four-man or chief clerk ten times the wage of an ordinary labourer.(NAK/JosProf/17/1947) An elaborate grading scheme suggested by the Nigerian African Mines Workers Union in the late 1940s demanded 3s 3d to 7s 6d a day for different categories of paddock labourers 35s to 50s a week for the highest level of African clerical workers, thus imposing differentials of up to 11:1 within the African labour force.(Freund B.:179) This kind of big difference among the skilled, semi - skilled and unskilled labour was to serve the company’s interest in labour control.To contend with the union demand and pressure in 1944, the best known leader of the period, Patrick Umunna, a dragline operator with ATMN, a high skilled worker, was transferred to a GBMM and then, unlike the rest of his team who were re-hired by ATMN.(NAK/JosProf/IIIc 220/1945-6) This transfer was aimed at disorganizing Umunna from the leadership of the trade unions. It was a new strategy never before in the mines, a company transferring its labour to another company. By this act, union’s strength in the period became very low. In that year GBMM staff talked of strike but because of what happened to Ummuna, the strike could not materialize as everyone was afraid of being put in Umunna’s fate. Union weakness persisted after the end of the war since workers feared the effects of the fall in tin demand and employment among artisans on the plateau. For this factor tin workers did not participate in the Nigerian General Strike of July 1945, despite widespread general sympathy for the strikes.(Freund,B.1979) The members of the union noted as “outsiders” and southerners who could not adequately represent the Northern majority of workers. T.K. Wreford, a colonial official in 1945 protested against the unrepresentative character of the unions, and expressed open hostility to Igbo “agitators” whom he saw as inciting the “innocent” Northern labourers, the management also confirmed this. (NAK/JosProf/17/14/39435/1945) This development was to usher in a new

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strategy in the control of labour i.e gathering the Northern labourers, inciting them and made them saw the unions as a southern thing. With the tour of NCNC's Azikiwe and Imoudu in 1946, a major development took place, the amalgamation of the various companies' workers to form the Nigeria Unions of Mines Workers (NUM). The emergency of this amalgamation came with a major weakness i.e. it clearly laid emphasis on the wage increment of top wage workers. Worst still, NCNC tour visit was made to be a southern thing from the south to protect the interest of Southern labourers by the colonial government and Tin companies. Despite this, the impact of their visit was enormous for it culminated in the first strike in the mines in 1947. But this time around, the union insisted on raising the wages of all, this made the union to win a very meaningful support among unskilled Northern labourers. (NAK/JosProf/III/8319/S.I 1953-4)

To put the situation under control, the government now sent one Mr. Curry to arrest the situation. The union now foolishly allowed him patronage. Under Curry's patronage, a new amalgamation of company unions occurred, NAMU worsened the situation for its showed the evidence for sustenance on a government who wanted above all to channel it into limited prescribed direction.(NAK/JosProf/1707/1954) The struggle of unionists continued with the coming of NAMU on board. In 1949, it declared for strike action and a partial strike flared briefly at ATMN. NAMU's demands at this time were characteristics of the needs of Nigeria skilled workers automatic gratuities, along leave (30 – 60 days every two years were called for), sick leave, over time payment and fixed prices for tributes. Conference arrangement by the administration in June of that year did not settle workers' grievances. The tin companies remained hostile to government arbitration and blamed labour problems on the "artificial" import into Nigeria of a British trade union system. Tension continued to grow up to the 1950s.

Fragmentation of the Trade Union: By 1954, tin workers unionism took a very different shape. It became highly characterized by ethnicity, personality conflict, distrust and regionalism. Trade Union and political parties came to be the same thing in the mining camps. This was because by 1954, a new trade union was established, Northern Mines – Workers Union (NMU). Before 1950, Northern Element Progressive Union, the only northern political party that was radical just likes NCNC against the activities of the tin companies on the plateau, yet it was in opposition to control over the North by Southerners. But by 1951, the NPC was formed in response to the already existing NCNC and AG of the south. Politics took on firmly the shape of regional, religious and ethnic antagonism. In reaction to Action Group and Northern People Congress activities, the National Council of Nigerians Cameroons adopted an increasingly regional and Igbo – centric cast. As far as NPC was concerned the trade unions in the tin fields were a thing for the southerners, the owners of NCNC and AG. Though before 1951, NEPU enjoyed large northern followership, it was too harsh on the status quo. (NAK/JosProf/17/4.39435/S.31954)

Bill Freund attributed the development of NMU to the appearance of Mallam Adudu Danladi, a graduate of Barewa College, Zaria, the training institution par excellence of the northern elite and had been employed in Zaria by the Gaskiya Corporation a government run Hausa publishing company where he was an official of the African Staff Union. Danladi arrived on the Plateau in 1951 became welfare officer at the Bisichi Tin Company and soon emerged as the central agitator for a separate northern union that would back the NPC Danladi's closest collaborator was a contractor, Alhaji Isa Haruna. The NMU moved to develop into the mainstay of NPC political strength on the plateau. (Freund,B.: 162-163)

However, the field work of the present writer revealed that NMU was not formed by Mallam Danladi but Alhaji Isa Haruna. The plan for a northern union was already in place before the

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appearance of Danladi. This was because Haruna was a contractor who claimed to have up 500 labourers under him at the Bisichi mines. In an interview with him, he said him together with one Mallam Mohammed, were called by ATMN union for a meeting at Bisichi his mining area. In the meeting, discussions were dominated by Igbos and others and that only two of them were northerners. This and other reasons made them to walk out of the meeting hall without taking permission. Another meeting was held in the following week though he said he had headache and could not attend. The essence of Haruna's behaviour was that it made the union members concluded that he had connived with the tin companies. After the meeting, the union members in the meeting made for his house where they booed him and his family. In defence his family members came out with sticks and pestles, said his wife. But Haruna stopped them from the violent decision. This singular development, according to the aged Haruna, made him to establish the NMU, after meeting with Danladi. (Dudly, B.:293) When I asked him whether he was in support of the proposed strike by ATMN union, he said he never wanted the strike because being a contractor and a tributer, he will lose his labourers and never wanted to go back to the rigours of seeking labour should the strike disperse them. Other informants from Barkin Ladi, and Gindin Akwati said the same thing. (Alhaji Isa Haruna July 2006)

During the 1950 strikes, there was accusation by NAMU of mining companies trying to have a separate deal with northern labourers. (NAK/Jos/Prof/1950) At the end of that year, the labour force, in a memorandum fully accepted NAMU's accusation that the employers were scheming to create a Northern alternative to the Union. This happened some months before Danladi appeared on the scene. The British themselves were anti – southerners because after the formation of the NMU the labour Department reported blatantly that NMU could effectively represent the bulk of the unskilled worker on the mines if only by tribal ties (unskilled labourers being predominantly Hausa). Following the struggle between tin companies and trade unions, in the words of Freund, NMU appeared as a good send to capital on the mines field. The management now drew a dividing line between the bulk of the labourers i.e. northerners and the Southerners. Throughout this period, NMU continued to sabotage any industrial action by trade union as it became very decisive owing to its number. Danladi taking advantage of Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo continued to write, inciting the northerner against NAMU and its leaders. Amidst the storm, in 1958, Berom formed a separate union i.e. Middle Belt Mine workers, and backed the UMBC party for a Middle Belt Region. This development seemed to be a future check to any possibility of NMU excesses. The creation of NMU which owed its beginning in Bisichi played a role in trade unionism in Jos Division. To have a strong hold Haruna usually called all the labour contractors of NMU for a weekly meeting and sometimes monthly meeting. (Freund, B.:186) They also toured Ex- land, Barkin Ladi, Gana Ropp, Dorowa, Tenti and Foron inciting and encouraging the northern workers to see themselves distinct from the southerners who never had any respect for authority, something a northerner is known for. Also, the northerners constituted the real labourers who were engaged in rivers, paddocks, open fields in direct tin extraction, so priority should be given to them and that is what NMU opts to offer and represent. Unlike the NAMU which only talks on the welfare of skilled workers who are always in office buildings or standing and giving directives to labourers who got soaked and painted with muddle water in the paddocks. This development helped in brewing anti – south sentiments and also anti Hausa sentiments by southerners and the local people with the creation of middle Belt mines workers union.

All these divisive policies were caused by the colonizers and their agents. They used NMU in controlling labour demand not minding of the future consequences on this people who for long have been brought to stay together with most of them without the hope of going somewhere because

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the mines camps became a home where they were born and bred. (Field Notes Mining Camps July 2006)

With the Berom protest movement which started in 1947, the colonizers took a swift move by appointing Rwang Pam as the Chief of Jos, an office held by the Hausa since about 1915 this development created tension between the Berom and the Hausa who both interpreted this development differently. This development also opened opportunities to the Berom elite who now stopped wasting time on tin mines workers union, and dabbled into politics, trade and even labour contracting. The Land Reclamation Scheme by the government and companies which came to be established did not achieve anything much. Rather it was just a mere strategy to cope with the Berom peasant's resistances. In a nutshell the politics of labour control in Jos plateau led to anti-group or anti ethnic sentiments in the area.

Party Politics: From the period 1945–1960, the following forces came to dominate the politics of Northern Nigeria with the weakening in strength of colonial power, the emergence of new ethnic groups struggling to have a different identity, the contest among regionally based political parties, the struggle to have a share or control on the foreseen colonial left over. Immediately after the WWII, the impact of NCNC was felt in the Jos – Plateau and other towns of Nigeria. This was possible to some extent because of the impact of Second World War and the presence of tribal unions in the camps. These unions helped in strengthening NCNC owing to the substantial southern population already organized under tribal unions. This situation replicated with the later appearance of AG, NPC and other political parties. one important thing we have to know is that these political parties led to straining of relationship among the people in the mining camps. (Sha C.1986) Besides this, political associations also emerged in the plateau among the local people. To have a comprehensive understanding of what these political associations stood for, we will have to go back a little.

The Missionary Factor: Mangvwat, is able to explain this phenomenon. According to him, the missionary had to find ways to survive in a restricted environment. As early as 1910 and 1913 the idea existed of how the missions could forge a common ground against further threat to Christianity. The various Christians missionary bodies had come to the realization that colonialism would not last long. The missionary now viewed Islam with great fear. With these kinds of feelings, the mission made sure that they trained the “pagans” if not for salvation, at least for the safety of the work they had started. The period 1930s to 1940s saw the training of “pagans” against the “enemy”, Islam. (Mangvwat Y.M.) In the Jos area, the SUM stations in Vom and Gindiri did the job for them in Pankyam and Pankshin area. By 1938, three African Pastors were ordained on the plateau, all by SUM David D.V Lot (Sura), Toma T. Bot (Berom), Bali Falang (Tarok). In the same period they started the Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade followed in 1948. These formations were of great political significance, since they served as a medium through which the future generation will be trained in respect to politics. (Mangvwat Y.M.)

According to Mangvwat, these persons had no numerical significance because they were located in few places. But in terms of the role which they played in socializing and mobilizing people, not only into Christianity but also into the social milieu of colonial province, they were of substantial consequences; for they became crucial in interpreting to the various communities from which they sprang the new and changing goals of the society and to how to succeed in pursuing them. They also inherited the missionary apprehension and fears of Muslim domination in which they constituted only a minority. Islam which they saw as the same with Hausa domination was thus seen to be the ultimate enemy of the plateau people. The church became a strong social base for many political

The Politics of Labour Control and Inter-Group Relations in the ... Borok A. M., Suleiman A., Charles Azgaku parties / associations. It was from this social and political association that the local people's political movement owed its ideology when it started in late 1950s and in the 1950s. By late 1950s it became clear that some of the tribal chiefs were involved in the Indirect Rule. This made them to start using the type of the chieftaincy regalia the emirs used. This development influenced them and started Islamizing some of them. Good examples of these were the cases of the District Heads of Daffo and Manguna. The District chief of Daffo whose name was Mahanan Arandong changed to Abubakr Arandong. The chief of Manguna whose name was Mayat Yayi changed to Ahmadu Yayi. In fact, this became more pronounced when Sardauna started his Northernization Policy. These developments became a serious challenge and created tension among the Christians in the mining camps for it was seen as Islamisation mission. The missions counteracted this through the Boys Brigade which always mobilized the local people mostly youths through the quarterly and annual campaigns their gleaming uniforms and drumming were said to be very appealing to the youth. The struggle against the growth of Islam became more, as the Berom progressive Union joined in the fight. (Maxwell J. Cited Mangvwat Y.M.)

Muslims Backlash: Though Mangvwat did his best to bring out the anti-Islamic movement among the Christians and the “pagans”, he showed no effort to show if there was any counter move against this development. In 1949, there was a debate in the Northern Regional House of Assembly in relation to grants to voluntary agencies, which at this time meant Christians missionaries. In opposing the motion, speaker after speaker repeatedly expressed their suspicion, as did the colonial regime against the missionary activities. One speaker, who was apparently Muslim, argued that once allowed, these voluntary agencies would build hospitals to convert patients to Christians. Most “alarming” to the missionaries and by extension to Northern Christians was the argument of one speaker representing Jos that:

“In this country (North) we do not appreciate the work these voluntary agencies are doing mainly on the religious grounds because they interfere with our religion. These agencies are against our religion and as long as they are against our religion we shall not cultivate any friendship with them”(NRCHA Debate 1949) This counter move seemed to make the mission to redouble their effort in seeing their future relevance and activities in this area at independence. For the first time the mission began to encourage indigenous Christians to get involved in the politics of transition especially the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). Perhaps due to the debate a few months later, the northern Nigerian Non – Muslim League was formed to protect the religion and customs of the Northern Christians. This was later changed to Middle Zone league (MZL) with Pastor David Lot as its president. This was again changed to the United Middle Belt congress (UMBC). This is enough to show that politically rather than denominationally, the Christians missionaries ensured that Christianity became the basis for the Middle Belt state. For example, a delegation sent representing the major protestant Christians mission in the north met with the Lt. Governor in a secret session, Bishop Sherwood Jones, the spokesman reviewed the political trend in the north and expressed the anxiety and worry developing among the non – Muslims of the Region. He argued that the non – Muslims were badly underrepresented in the legislature and subtly urged the British colonial officials to ensure that before departing Nigeria; a Middle Belt State was created.(Maxwell J.C.1958)

The widening struggle: In this area two movements took place, the Berom Progressive Union and the UMBC which co-opted the BPU later to for a larger struggle. With the introduction of NPC in 1951, One Abdulkadir Abubakar Koguna brought it to Barkin – Ladi Surprisingly, they first gathered in First Baptist church Barkin Ladi. The development seems to reflect earlier relations

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among groups. He delivered a long speech that NPC wanted to bring all the northern youth male and female together, that they do not want NEPU politics which was combined with Igbos and their likes that do not have respect for traditional authority. All these activities of the NPC were to be opposed by the BPU, NPC suffered a stiff resistance because Patrick Dokotri, BPU secretary and later UMBC, came from kurra – falls a town located a few miles to the South of Barkin Ladi. (Field Notes Barkin Ladi/September/2006)

In the course of this opposition, NPC, already enjoying the presence of its leader in the Plateau in the person of Alhaji Isa Haruna, who was sardauna's friend. He became strong because he was enjoying the support of the Native Authority and the mining companies. He devised ways to ensure the strength of the NPC in the neighbouring camps. Meetings and rallies were held in a rotational manner i.e each mining town hosted meetings and rallies but Jos town, Bukuru, Barkin Ladi and Gana Ropp played a more or less central role. This strategy shook UMBC and it had to start going round in like manner showing to people that they are made to suffer double suppression that of Hausa and mining companies. NPC hated the NEPU members more than members from other political parties. They were seen as sell outs to the Igbos the NPC seemed to have its campaigns easier because of the control it had over Northern Mines workers and labourers as well. There were cases of victimization of NEPU members. One Alhaji Tanko Daura was made the District Secretary (i.e comprising all the mines around Barkin Ladi) of NMU and, made sure that any northerner who was a NEPU follower was sacked from the tin industries. This came to be implemented with vigour during the Northernization Policy. The mining companies helped in achieving this owing to the low demand of tin in the international market in the 1950s. With the booning in 1953 of Sardauna by Lagosian crowd shortly after House of Representatives session in Lagos, when he rejected the self-government motion by an AG member. The Sardauna Vanguard was formed in the camps to protect the integrity of the Premier. The group never took it easy with any man who made bad utterance against the premier in the name of politics. The activities of these people were aided by Yandoka who worked for the Native Authorities Policies. Alhaji Datti, an interviewee who was one of these men, explained how he used to flog or whip any anti Sardauna element on some occasions. This was supported by another informant. The peak of NPC and UMBC contest came when Patrick Dokotri of UMBC and Isa Haruna of NPC stood for election as member Federal House of Representatives. The contest was hot because the two of them stood for different ethnic groups and Trade Unions i.e. Hausa NMU and Berom BMW amidst this political tussle, the AG at first were not seen as serious threat until it later formed an alliance with UMBC. The weakness of AG in the mining towns, according to one informant, was that the Yorubas were divided into two, the northern and western. The northern Yoruba in the town, who were predominantly Muslims, were in support of NPC while the western Yoruba were in support of NPC while the western Yoruba were in support of AG. (Field Notes Barkin Ladi/September/2006)

Northernization Policy: By the end of 1950s, the Northern Region Government embarked on Northernization Policy. This was to replace all southern workers in the Northern Regional Civil Service with the northerners. This was because the predominance of Southerners in the civil service and the private sector in the north seemed to give NCNC and AG an upper hand in the politics of independence. Nigerians were employed because of the Africanization of all these sectors after the WWII. The southerners benefited a lot by this policy because of the availability of skilled and semi-skilled population they had in the tin fields. As far as Sardauna was concerned, Africanization was nothing more than southernization. To reverse this situation in the 1950s the Northern Regional Government formulated the policy of Northernization which set out to: "Northernise the Northern

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Region Public Service as soon as possible, ensure for northerners a responsible proportion of posts in the Federal public service, to ensure statutory corporations to ensure the number of northerners on commercial, industrial, banking and trading concerns in the region".(John P.1986:225)

The key item in the development strategy was manpower development. The overriding concerns for Sardauna was how the North could train enough people quickly to replace the British in skilled and semi-skilled occupation, without hiring these jobs over to coastal Nigeria who it was felt, would lock them up in perpetuity. When the two – man commission for Nigerianization (Adegbo and Philipson) visited the north in the early 1950s, they reportedly found Sardauna hostile.

In Jos Division, the development led to a lot of tension as NEPU, UMBC and non – northerners were targeted. By 1950s, a substantial number of northerners of kanuri and Hausa stock were sent abroad to acquire skills in mining. Some of these were: Alhaji Sule Sale Bimma and Mallam Musa Mamman. Apart from that, northernization seemed to give NPC members an upper hand in the economy and politics of the area. In terms of contract award, in 1957 a contractors Union was formed. The application had an explicit political tone as can be seen from the following excerpts.

“ as we gathered ourselves as detailed below and formed a plateau northerners’ contractors union of which all of us are NPC members(NAK/JosProf/4/14JTC/1956-66)

It appears that the term Plateau Northerners contractors did not include the Plateau local people. It seems to have applied to people who were northerners of Hausa, Fulani and related stock in the area, since the plateau group was particularly noted for their sympathy for the opposition. Other groups that exhibited such sentiment included the Yakasai Brothers. While applying for contracts with the N.A, they posited that:

“-----as the first northerners who grouped themselves together to lay out such objectives, we will be grateful should you encourage our undertaking by giving us first trial” (NAK/JosProf/4/14JTC/1956-66)

These tendencies generated anti –Hausa feelings, among the local people, most especially, among the emerging elite in the mining camps and towns. Northernization now seemed to take the shape of NPCisation of the public and private sectors, people like Alhaji Tanko Daura and NPC disciple was made the District Secretary in charge of this programme in the ATMN mining industry at Barkin Ladi, Bisichi, Ex-lands, Tenti, Gana Ropp and Dorowa. He personally disclosed that he made sure that all anti NPC elements were eradicated in the mining sector. It was done so as to make them financially handicapped.“Don aga adon karuwa ba zani” as he put it in Hausa. (Field Notes Barkin Ladi/September/2006) This situation came to be interpreted as Hausa domination of all lucrative political and economic areas. In fact, many non – NPC members had to rush for party baptism to the NPC in order to have a place in the new dispensation. This development fanned the flame of resentment among the Berom and other community. For the Hausa were seen as another group “Colonizers”, but this time around black “Colonizers”. Owing to the proximity of these mining camps to the interior villages, these anti Hausa feelings now spread to the interior. Without taking into consideration the manner in which the Northernization Policy was implemented in our area of study, some people interpreted it as a step to ensure the Unity of this country. According to Shehu Shagari in reference to the Northernization policy it was to: “Emancipate the northerners from the clutches of southern domination. Yet Sardauna was a nationalist. His main preoccupation was to catch up with the south to keep Nigeria as one. His northernisation policy was intended to unite Nigeria, not to divide it. To uplift the north, it was the only guarantee of unity. But no southerners saw it at that time. The Sardauna thought of everything in the context of north– south. He wanted to catch up in all fields. (John, P.:256)

Conclusion: In conclusion, from the issues discussed above we can deduce that the contemporary Jos–Plateau crisis had its roots from the mining camps as a result of the mining industries and colonial state politics of labour control in order to use labour for the maximization of profit and delay of independence.

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Alhaji Tanko Daura is 74 years old, 9/9/2013. His father came to Plateau from Daura during labour conscription. He served as a headman and driver with ATMN. When he joined NPC, he was made in charge of short listing any anti-NPC in ATMN during the Northernization Policy. The interview took place in his room. Alhaji Mohammed Datti is 77 years old 9/9/2013. He is a Pyam man and lives in Gana-ropp. He was a truck driver with ATMN. He later joined the Yondoka-Native Authority Police. During this time, they fought and suppressed any anti NPC and Sardauna in the Bisichi, Gana-Ropp, Dorowa and Barkin Ladi Mining Camps.

Alhaji Isa Haruna is about 96 years old 13/8/2013. His parents came from Kano and settled at Mai Idon Toro and later moved to Bisichi. He was trained as an Arabic teacher but later became a labour contractor and a tributer with the Bisichi tin mines. He was also made NPC leader in the former Plateau Province. He contested for election member representing the constituency at Kaduna and won. In fact, was a close friend of Sardauna.
