



Socialist Bulletin



A monthly publication from Socialist Labour

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Prospects for 2021... will NLC/TUC lead a fight against poverty?

Recent events in the US have increased fears of insecurity across the world. Trump's policies consisted of ultra-nationalism, cavalier capitalism and do-it-yourself wealth generation. This gives hope to all other nationalists and ethnic chauvinists, but also encourages bandits and kidnappers. If Trump can break or bend the laws to become rich, why shouldn't they? Calls for armed protests on the day of the inauguration of the new president will only make matters worse.

Governments in Nigeria, far from helping their citizens to survive Covid-19, are only making matters worse. This is not necessary. Recent increases in the international price of oil and devaluation of the naira mean that government oil revenue is now almost 50% higher than predicted in the budget for 2021.

Despite this, the New Year greeted us with yet another threat of huge electricity price increases. The weakness of the government was again demonstrated with their quick denial or postponement of such increases. But why is the government even considering another increase in the price of electricity? There is talk of the return of lockdowns as a reaction to Covid-19, this can only be possible with palliatives – not increasing prices. The privatised electricity sector is still not providing constant light – so why should they be rewarded?

By law, the minimum wage should be increased every five years. In contrast, electricity prices are increased twice a year! And the minimum wage is not even increased when due. The last increase was in 2011, so the increase to N30,000 should have taken place in 2016, but five years later it has not been implemented in many states. In Kebbi State, the NLC and TUC led a two-day strike in December over the minimum wage. Similar action was threatened in Ekiti State. Worse still, Kano State Government is threatening to reverse the increase to N30,000 – we can only hope that the NLC and TUC will actually lead action to stop this outrage.

But the trade union leadership needs to go far further. We need firm action to secure another increase in the minimum wage in 2021. We also need clear moves towards annual increases. When inflation is 15%, the minimum wage would have to be doubled every five years to maintain its real value. That is why it is only now worth half of its purchasing power in 1998.

The lessons we should take from the US are also ones of hope that another world is possible. The socialist Bernie Sanders nearly won the Democratic nomination and so could now have been becoming the next president of the US. This hope led 60,000 people to join the Democratic Socialists of America. We need to learn from that experience. We need the NLC and TUC to lead resolute strike action, but also to lead a united progressive and socialist alternative for the next elections in 2023.

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2021: BUILDING THE RESISTANCE, RETAKING THE INITIATIVE, MARCHING TOWARDS A RADICAL POLITICAL ALTERNATIVE. BY JAYE GASKIA

Towards the end of 2019, the regime at the Federal Level initiated a new practice of introducing to the National Assembly, along with the proposals for the 2020 Federal budget, a Finance Bill which addressed the revenue source to fund the 2020 budget. Both bills eventually became the 2020 Appropriation Act and the 2020 Finance Act. This has been repeated for 2021.

Why are these important policies that we must reckon with? The answer is simple really. The first, the Appropriation Act, lays out the public expenditure and investment framework of the regime for 2021. The second lays out the framework for addressing some of the revenue challenges to fund the expenditure for the same year.

And because the regime, and the entire ruling class, have concluded that the economy has a revenue crisis, the focus of the regime has been towards increasing sources of revenue by increasing taxes. This has a vastly disproportionate, deleterious and impoverishing impact on ordinary citizens. It is also proposing to significantly increase user fees and tariffs for basic services with the same result.

The alternative could have been blocking revenue leakages, ensuring returns on investment and sanctioning financial mismanagement in government owned enterprises. These have, for instance failed to pay into the Federation Account more than N10tn in statutory surplus remittances (that by themselves would pay for all government spending in 2020). Existing laws could also be implemented to collect revenues and corporate taxes that are being owed to the Government by profitable companies.

The whole essence of the Finance Act is to squeeze revenue out of the meagre earnings and economic conditions of the working people. This includes the so-called deregulation of the downstream petroleum sector and the consequent permanent upward rise in prices of fuel and other petroleum products. It also includes the so-called deregulation of the power sector, and the consequent periodic hiking of electricity tariff.

The over all impact is that the quality of life of ordinary citizens have been witnessing constant and steep decline; with inflation rising consistently over more than

18 months and reaching new highs of nearly 15% in November 2020.

Additionally, composite unemployment rate among the general population rose to over 50% at the end of the second quarter of 2020, with the percentage among youth aged 15 to 35 years rising to over 63% over the same period. Thus, on the average 1 in 2 Nigerians are out of work, while 3 in 5 youths are out of work.

It is no wonder that poverty has continued to rise steeply, with more than 40% of the population, that is more than 80 million people, living in abject poverty at the end of March 2020, according to government figures. Additionally, and according to government official figures, there are nearly 120 million citizens living in poor or inhumane housing conditions or are actually homeless.

What history has shown however, and this was clearly demonstrated with the #EndSARS Youth Rebellion of October 2020, is that as exploitation and oppression deepens, resistance intensifies, and repression is further consolidated.

The left, the activist movement, need to consolidate our organising and mobilising activities, all through the year, coordinating our interventions in the struggles of our people, building solidarity, and enabling increasingly greater and more potent collective popular mass action of the working people, and the toiling masses.

The transition from 2020 to 2021 has already given an indication of the nature and trajectory of the class struggle in 2021. There will be more workers strike actions, more organised protests actions on the part of the disillusioned and increasingly angry popular masses, across the country.

Building the resistance, will involve consolidating all these struggles, politically focusing the anger, enabling the emergence of an Alternative Political process and Platform.

So, this is the year that we should not hesitate to take strike action, to unleash workers power, to organise collective action, and to energise a new radical politics, and engender a new radical and revolutionary political alternative.

ASCAB Alternative Political Summit:

The second *Consultative Meeting of the Expanded Planning Committee of the Alternative Political Summit* process met virtually on Wednesday, 13th January 2021. The meeting adopted the Mobilisation document for the Alternative Political Summit, and also set up necessary committees to prepare for the summit - including, a Central Organising Committee; and Mobilisation, Media Outreach, Labour Outreach, Women Outreach, Professional Associations Outreach, and Youth and Student Outreach subcommittees.

The meeting also fixed the week of the 21st to the 27th of March 2021 as date for the *Alternative Political Summit*, while also selecting Abuja as host city for the summit. For more details, please contact the ASCAB National Secretary, Ade Atambi <adeatambi@gmail.com>

How do we organise to stop sexual harassment?

By Tina Ndi

Recent media cases have again reminded us of the issue of sexual harassment. In Ogun state, the Commissioner for Environment was suspended for the attempted rape of a 16-year-old girl. The Deeper Life High School saga in Akwa Bom State shows that this is not just a case of harassment of women and girls, although it is usually. This follows from the rape and murder of a young woman in a church in Benin City last year and many other cases.

The international campaign #MeToo has raised the issue, but sexual harassment isn't just a problem for celebrities. It's happening all over the place, including in ordinary workplaces everywhere – especially where the bosses have so much power.

It's not just about punishing cases of rape with harsh sentences, most cases of rape and sexual harassment go unreported. Even when reported, few result in a conviction. We have to try and stop such incidents happening in the first place. We have to work together and try to change the culture of our work places and organise against the blatant lack of respect and care for women and girls.

It's a common occurrence. The results of [a survey published by NOI Polls](#) in July 2019 suggested that up to one in every three girls and young women living in Nigeria have experienced at least one form of sexual assault by the time they reach 25. Most Nigerians (85%) believe that there is a high prevalence of rape. This is confirmed by the Minister for Women Affairs and Social Development who claimed late in 2019 that about

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two million women and girls are raped every year.

[BBC Africa Eye](#) sent undercover journalists posing as students inside the universities of Lagos and Ghana in late 2019. Reporter Kiki Mordi revealed how sexual harassment of students is the norm in these institutions.

Sexual harassment is also a key issue related to insecurity as both Boko Haram and the army have used rape as part of their war in the North East. Women and girls in IDP camps are also particularly at risk. A recent survey showed that the chance of being sexually exploited was higher after women took refuge in IDP camps, with over 80% suffering this within a year of being in a camp. But it is also an issue within families as many women are raped by their husbands or boyfriends.

About 1 in 4 women in Nigeria have experienced intimate partner violence, and nearly half of children are married before the age of 18 and perhaps a quarter by their 16th birthday.

The fight against sexual harassment and rape is the responsibility of all women *and* men. We need to complain against sexist or degrading language and behaviour that treats women as sex objects. We have to try and change our work places to ensure such language and

behaviour is seen as unacceptable. But sexual harassment is particularly rife in unequal social or economic situations. Any action that reduces economic inequality or social power relations will reduce this curse.

In 2019, Fakhriyyah Hashim coined the hashtag #ArewaMeToo, to highlight the gravity of domestic and gender-based violence in northern Nigeria. In February 2019, her friend, Awaisu was arrested by the Abuja unit of SARS for her involvement in the #ArewaMeToo movement. Due to a mass campaign by Amnesty International and others she was released the next day. #ArewaMeToo has evolved into a multi-pronged movement that continues to fight sexual violence throughout northern Nigeria via social media, peaceful protests, and outreach programs to



Protesters in front of the Niger State House of Assembly, Minna, November 22, 2019. Photo: Ismail Suleiman

schools as well as parents in rural communities.

In December 2018, under the banner "market march", women walked around Yaba Market in Lagos to protest against



Protesters at Yaba market in Lagos.
Photograph: Seyi Olusanya/Market March

harassment, groping and catcalling. This first march was a small group, numbering about 20, but throughout the day tens of thousands of people sent their support. An online petition (<https://tinyurl.com/y6371ysf>) against harassment has already collected over 70,000 signatories. Organisers are planning to have similar protests in other markets.

Women were active in the #EndSARS movement and the *Feminist Collective* provided important leadership and organised financial support. In one of the protests to #ENDSARS in Edo State, three Benin women were raped by men believed to be men protesting against the brutality of SARS – although they may have been hired thugs. In Lagos, there were numerous stories of women being molested, harassed and even punched in the face by male protesters who explicitly said, “We will not let a woman lead us”. We need to ensure that this does not happen again.

We also need action in all work places to ensure everyone knows that sexism or sexual harassment are not acceptable. The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) organised its second march and symposium on gender based violence and harassment at work at the end of March 2019. NLC has conducted extensive education and awareness training among members, a process that has mobilized members to confront gender based violence at their workplaces through collective action.

All socialists need to join this campaign to make sure that any form of sexism or sexual harassment is clearly not accepted in our work places.

REIGN OF TYRANNY AT THE CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION HEADQUARTERS ABUJA

Benjamin Anthony, President AUPCTRE



There has been serious crisis arising from the tyrannical operation of the Registrar General of the Corporate Affairs Commission, Alhaji Garba Abubakar, and his management team. As a result, there has been maladministration and workers struggle between the management and the workers' trade union, the Amalgamated Union of Public Corporations, Civil Service Technical and Recreational Services Employees (AUPCTRE).

In the recent past, management actions have included:

- taking unilateral decisions on so many policy issues which goes contrary to the provision of the *Public Service Rules*
- restricting staff promotions for certain categories of workers
- irregular payment and stoppage of staff salary unilaterally by the

Registrar General

- vindictive disciplinary procedures and issuance of queries to staff by the Registrar General without due process
- introducing a reign of tyranny and dictatorship in the running of the Commission administration by oppressing, suppressing and subjugation of staff and union executives through, harassment and witch hunting
- banning of customers who have genuine business transactions from entering the premises of the Commission in Abuja and Lagos. This drastically reduced the revenue of the Commission and led to protests by some lawyers and customers at the Abuja offices.

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AUPCTRE demands

The trade union operating in the Commission, AUPCTRE, in its patriotic moves to save the Commission from imminent collapse wrote a lot of letters over the vindictive disciplinary procedures which the Registrar General ignored. The trade union therefore demanded for the following:

- (i) computer-based examinations for drivers should stop because drivers don't have any basis for doing such examinations
- (ii) restorative justice should be given to victims of suppression of freedom of expression, vindictiveness and dictatorship
- (iii) all anti-staff and negative public policy decision should be reversed
- (iv) the Commission should harness its resources towards sustaining, diversifying and improving its services thereby generating more revenue to settle its obligations
- (v) Management should conduct the affairs of the Commission according to the laid-down procedures and laws
- (vi) all promotion arrears should be paid to deserving members of staff of the Commission.

All the above demands of the Union are patriotic because the Corporate Affairs Commission is a strategic Government agency. The Union concerns itself not only with the welfare of its members, but also with the success and the survival of the Agency. The success of the Agency should benefit both Management and staff.

The Registrar General's reaction

The Registrar General failed to accept the above demands of the Union. In fact, he went further and rolled out further anti-worker directives like the vindictive transfer of the trade union leaders at the Commission. Finally, he announced, at a briefing in Abuja, that AUPCTRE is no longer recognized by the Corporate Affairs Commission. He directed workers to join another appropriate union for senior staff. He also dissolved the AUPCTRE Executive at the Corporate Affairs Commission and implemented other anti-worker activities.

The implication of this directive is that it is the right of management to direct workers to contract in or out of a trade union. This is contrary to the Trade Unions Act as amended in 2005 which provides for voluntarism and section 40 of the Nigeria Constitution as well as the trade union structure provided in Part B, Third Schedule to the Trade Unions Act. From all indications, it is the capitalist tendencies of the Registrar General that are making him to be stiff-necked. This is despite a directive from the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment to maintain the status-quo and reverse all actions initiated against the Corporate Affairs Commission branch of the trade union, AUPCTRE.

Ideological Dimension to The Crisis

The ideological dimension to the crisis in the Corporate Affairs Commission can be viewed within the context of the class struggle between the capitalist state and the working class. From this point of view, the developments at the Corporate Affairs Commission are part of the measures taken by capital to subjugate labour.

Again, the class character of the administration in the Corporate Affairs Commission also plays a prominent role in the way the crisis in the Commission is developing.



AUPCTRE stands for social justice for the working class and the masses. That is why we have moved away from being just a Trade Union to a Labour Movement. AUPCTRE believes in the right of all workers to join the trade union of their choice and to organize effectively.

We also believe in social partnership. Management and staff, through their trade union should work together for the success of their organization. We will continue to work to ensure that this approach is re-introduced at the Corporate Affairs Commission.

Amalgamated Union of Public Corporations, Civil Service Technical and Recreational Services Employees (AUPCTRE).

COMRADE HASSAN ADEBAYO SUNMONU: A LABOUR ICON IS 80 Part 1.

Comrade Salisu Nuhu Muhammad, the former Acting General Secretary of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC).

Until his voluntary retirement from active trade unionism a few years ago, the pioneer president of



Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), had been the longest serving Secretary General of the Accra-based,

Organization of African Trade Unions Unity (OATUU), the workers' apex continental body.

Comrade Hassan Adebayo Sunmonu is a truly iconic personality whose exceptional leadership qualities continue to inspire and radiate hope in the ranks of the hard toiling classes the world over. His ideas also fertilize and nourish the inexhaustible reservoir of wisdom that illuminates the difficult paths along which workers and the oppressed poor carry out their collective actions, selfless sacrifices, epic battles and heroic struggles.

On January 7th, 2021, the labour top brass from far and near, old associates, close friends and family members hurriedly organized a virtual reception to celebrate the eightieth birthday of the famous Nigerian twin brothers from Osogbo, Hassan and Wasilat.

Participants at the memorable Zoom labour gathering, as if in an open contest for a prize competition, could be seen frantically taxing their sharp brains to quickly remember and instantly share some interesting, cherished experiences and comradely encounters they had, at one time or the other, had with the duo of the celebrants.

The oft-repeated affirmations concerning the trustworthiness of comrade Hassan A. Sunmonu as a labour leader, was yet traced to another illustrious doyen of the labour movement, in the person of the late Comrade Wahab Goodluck, under whose able and enviable mentorship our celebrant cut his teeth.

As a student, Hassan A. Sunmonu was elected to a leadership position at Yaba College of Technology. He was then endorsed as a high ranking leader in the youthful cabinet of the national students' body, the National Union of Nigerian Students (NUNS).

Sunmonu came to the national limelight in 1962 when he, along with a handful of other campus colleagues, mobilized the entire membership of the national students body to denounce and compel the immediate cancellation of the Anglo-Nigeria Defense Pact, by the then just elected conservative government of Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.

In the Federal Ministry of Works, where he secured employment as an Engineering Field Works Senior Supervisor, he confided in his twin brother his firm resolve to make the defense and promotion of the interests and rights of the rank and file workers in the ministry, his top organizational priority.

This resolution brought him into open confrontation with some powerful groups occupying managerial cadre inside the ministry. They were busy perverting the cause of justice by immersing themselves in dirty financial deals and some unpleasant and clearly anti-labour practices.

Under Sunmonu's dynamic and able branch leadership, the Federal Ministry of Works, to the manifest annoyance of all its highest management officials, became a beehive of radical labour activism.

The unquestioned superiority of Comrade Sunmonu's preferred socialist model of trade union organizing was eloquently demonstrated when a multitude of workers started trooping to join the in-house unions. This was in total defiance of a standing directive from the ministry's top hierarchy, prohibiting all workers from taking such a radical step.

The contagion effects of this good leadership soon spread to other ministries, where workers enthusiastically moved in droves to join and fortify the fledgling trade unions structures. Comrade Wahab Goodluck then head hunted him for a more challenging labour task.

The Murtala/Obasanjo military regime came to power by ousting the government of General Yakubu Gowon in 1975. Barely two years later it was caught in a powerful raging labour storm.

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There was an unhealthy rivalry between the leaders of the then four (4) registered central labour organizations, i.e, the Nigeria Trade Unions Congress (NTUC), United Labour Congress (ULC), Labour United Front (LUF), and Nigerian Workers Council (WC). This was confounding the ongoing crisis of national instability for which the ruling military junta seemed to lack any workable solution.

Similarly, all efforts on the side of the rival centers to fuse into one united and stronger national labour

umbrella, as agreed at the Apena Cemetery Declaration, failed to come to fruition.

The Federal Government, being fearful of the consequences of these moves towards trade union unity, decided to intervene by setting up the Adebisi Tribunal of Inquiry. It was at the instance of some of the recommendations made by this notorious Tribunal, that rare opportunities arose for the workers to strive to actualize their dream of establishing a durable Labour Centre to which all the newly re-organized trade unions could eventually be affiliated.

Covid-19 Vaccination - What Should We Be Worried About? An opinion by Drew Povey

The Covid-19 continues to hit the headlines and



many people are now discussing vaccination against the pandemic. Several vaccines have now completed their medical trials and are being rolled out in a number of countries. Some people have raised fears about the safety of these vaccines and whether vaccines developed in industrialised countries will be safe for Nigerians. But the real concern could be how quickly 60% of Nigerians can be vaccinated (for herd immunity) - or at least vaccinate the high risk groups, health care workers and the elderly.

Fears about vaccines do have firm foundations in the history of Nigeria. This is mainly based on the notorious Pfizer's Trovan trial undertaken in Kano in 1996. During a serious outbreak of meningitis, Pfizer, an American company, undertook a trial of a new anti-biotic they had developed. 200 children were involved in this trial. One hundred children were given the new drug and the rest the best known cure for meningitis. Eleven of the children involved in this trial unfortunately died, five who had received the new drug. After many contested court cases in Nigeria and US, Pfizer eventually reached

an out of court settlement with Kano State Government worth \$75 million in 2009.

But it is not just African babies that the pharmacy companies have put at risk. Thalidomide was licensed in July 1956 for over-the-counter sale (no doctor's prescription was needed) and was then used in many countries. It is estimated that over 10,000 babies were affected by the drug worldwide in the six years of its use. Around half died within months of being born but many suffered from their deformities all their lives. Court settlements were eventually made over the following decade to compensate the victims. No-one was found guilty of any crimes. But it did lead to greatly increased testing of all new drugs.

In 2003 three states (Kano, Kaduna and Zamfara) boycotted the polio vaccine. Those campaigning for the boycott claimed the vaccines were contaminated with anti-fertility drugs, HIV or cancerous agents. But the loss of public trust after the Pfizer trial and the US/British invasion of Iraq of that year played their parts. As a result, thousands of children may have contracted polio and so become disabled. By 2006 80% of global polio cases were in Nigeria (with over a thousand cases) half of the global cases were still found here in 2012. Four years later Nigeria was said to be free of polio, with the last case identified in Borno State in 2016.

The same Pfizer company involved in the Trovan case in Kano is now to provide the first 10,000 doses of the Covid-19 vaccine by the end of January. The international donor body, Covax, hopes to provide sufficient doses to inoculate 20% of the population and the Federal Government has pledged N540 billion for further vaccines which would probably

reach the 60% level for herd immunity. But Prof. Usman Yusuf, former head of the National Health Insurance Scheme, questions why the equivalent of the whole annual Federal health budget should be spent on one disease. Officially Covid-19 has led to less than 1,500 deaths in Nigeria in total, compared to an estimated 2,000 who die each week from malaria. With a limited health budget many more lives could be saved if action was taken on the key diseases of poor people, like neonatal conditions, diarrhoeal diseases, tuberculosis, malaria and air pollution.

Frontline health workers, first responders, the elderly, national leaders, and people who are vulnerable to the coronavirus are said to be going to receive the vaccine first. Why are national leaders included in this list? Are they really so vital? It appears that the rich, as usual, will receive the vaccine leaving the poor majority to stand in line. Ex-Vice President Atiku

Abubakar became the first Nigerian citizen to receive a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). How many of us can afford to fly to Dubai to get the vaccine?

The health worker trade unions organised in JOHESU need to add the demand for vaccination of all health workers to their list of five demands for their planned strike. They also need to ensure that the vaccines are held and transported under the proper conditions to ensure that the vaccines remain effective.

We all need to campaign for the vaccine for the poor majority on a proper risk basis, so there must be no fees for the vaccines and they must only be provided with full consent. We also need to demand that lockdowns are not re-introduced without proper support for the poor and those working in the informal economy.

Strikes during December to January 2021

The NLC and TUC in Kebbi State held a two day general strike in Kebbi over minimum wage implementation, unpaid leave grant among other demands. The strike was on Tuesday 5th December and Wednesday 6th December. The state Chair of NLC, Alhaji Halidu Alhassan said: "We also suspended the strike because of the payment of gratuities. Secondly, we received assurance on the payment of leave grants. On Wednesday, we also received a letter from the State Head of Service for a meeting on the consequential adjustment, with a promise that the government will pay annual increment and others." *Socialist Labour* hopes that all the promises made will be implemented including payments due to pensioners.

An indefinite strike at **Ibadan Polytechnic** started on Monday, 11th January, 2021 by academic and non-academic workers. The strike is in connection with the continued failure of the in the state government to implement the new minimum wage of N30, 000 for workers in the institution.

Akwa Ibom university lecturers, members of ASUU at Akwa Ibom State University began a strike from the 4th January, but suspended it after a day as University promised to pay 25% of arrears of salary for three of the 11 months.

IPPIS, Earned Allowances, other Issues: NASU, SSANU embarked on 3-Day national protest from Tuesday January 12. The Joint Action Committee (JAC) of both Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU) and Senior Staff Association of Nigeria Universities (SSANU) called the strike due to the failure of the Federal Government to implement the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) reached by both parties signed in October 2020. A decision to precede on indefinite strike will be taken by the jac on 21st of January



NIMC workers commenced a national strike on Thursday 7th January over funding and exposure to COVID-19.

Suspended after two days after a promise of a meeting with the Minister of Communications and Digital Economy.

Doctors in Zamfara State started an indefinite strike from the end of November. The strike was over the non-implementation of their new hazard and call duty allowances by the state government. All other members of the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) in Zamfara State joined the strike from Thursday 10th December. The strike was suspended on Tuesday 15th December following the approval of the restoration of call duty allowances to doctors working with the government.

NIPOST Workers held three-day warning strike. The Senior Staff Association of Statutory Corporations and Government Owned Companies {SSACGOC} and the National Union of Postal and Telecommunications' Employees {NUPTE} embarked on a 3-day warning strike, starting from Monday 21st December, 2020. The strike was due to the unwillingness of the Nigeria Postal Service to adhere to the agreement and total concerns of worker's welfare.



INTEL'S workers, member of Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria protested the sack of 700 workers without benefits. There were protests from 8th December as over 700 workers were sacked without benefits from an INTELS company. Atiku Abubakar recently sold his stake in the company for \$100 million (N38 billion).


INTEL workers' protest

Socialist Labour calls on all its members to support these and any other strikes. We would like to receive details of any strikes in your state or community to include in future editions of **Socialist Bulletin**.

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We are socialists and Marxists

The economic, environmental and Covid-19 crises have made clear that capitalism is a conflict between two classes: the vast majority who create the wealth, and a tiny minority who profit from it. Attempts to reform capitalism have failed: the only solution is to replace it with a truly democratic socialist society. Capitalist rulers will only give up power if forced to do so. We need a mass democratic movement to bring about socialism. Events, such as the Russian Revolution of 1917, January 2012 in Nigeria and the uprisings in Sudan and Algeria last year, show what is needed.

Socialist Labour- JOIN US

The organised working class is the central force for change

We believe that the organised working class (rank and file members of NLC/TUC) is the central force that can fight capitalism and build socialism. As Marx said, "the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself", so we do not believe that countries like China or the former USSR are socialist. We need the organised working class to lead the struggle for socialism, supported by the wider popular classes, the informal sector and market women.

We fight all forms of oppression

Capitalist society rests on exploitation and economic injustice, but also generates oppression, including sexism and racism. We are committed to fighting for the full social and economic equality of women and building a movement where the fight against any form of oppression is at the centre of the struggle for socialism.

We are internationalists, not nationalists

Capitalism seeks to divide us along lines of race, ethnicity, nationality and religion. We reject such divisions: we stand in solidarity with working people worldwide. We oppose imperialist wars and interference. We want a fairer world not just to develop the Nigerian economy. Issues like the environmental crisis and Covid-19 can only be addressed by pooling resources on a world scale.

A living and changing tradition

We draw on the tradition of past socialists like Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg. But the world is constantly changing. We need to discuss how those ideas should be reinterpreted and developed for the twenty-first century.

Space for discussion and action

We aim to create space where ideas are discussed and acted on. We reject any sectarianism, or any claim that a small number of activists can substitute for a larger movement. We use the opportunities provided by social media to organise better. We want to create a group with a lively and democratic internal culture. We want to

discover, use and develop every member's skills. We aim to be accessible to people new to socialist ideas.

Working with others and learning from them

We encourage our members to work in popular campaigns (like ASCAB) and, where possible, to organise joint activities with other left groups. We learn from mass protests and other writers and activists. We don't have all the answers. We expect all our members to be active in their trade unions and to actively support struggles of unions other organisations of the oppressed strata of society in support of demands including the following:

- minimum wage of N30,000 to be implemented and raised annually as inflation rises
- no job or wage cuts allowed in current circumstances
- palliatives to be provided to all those affected by the lockdowns including basic income for informal workers
- adequate funding to provide healthcare and education for all and personal protection equipment (PPE) for all workers
- opposition to medical tourism by top public officers at public expense
- opposition to privatisation of public enterprises, we demand the reversal of past disposals of public assets.

We welcome everyone who hates capitalism and oppression

Everyone who agrees with our basic principles above is welcome to join Socialist Labour. We are more interested in men and women campaigning and discussing ideas than just joining us. In order to reach wider layers of society with our ideas, we will collaborate with other socialists in protests, social movements, alliances, campaigns and workplace struggles.

If you would like to join Socialist Labour, then please submit the following details:

Name:

Email:

WhatsApp number:

Workplace address/university/school:

Trade union:

State:

Minimum suggested monthly subscription levels are:

Employed – N1,000

Well paid – N5,000

Unemployed/student – N500

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