

WORKERS STRIKES DURING SEPTEMBER 2022

We need your assistance to ensure that this monthly report is comprehensive. Please submit details of any strikes or other protests in your state or community to tpapsnigeria@gmail.com [All these strikes and protests need our support and solidarity. We call on all trade union branches to send messages of support and to organise solidarity visits to any strikes in their localities.](#)

Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has been on strike since 14th February. They have not been paid since the end of February. ASUU made its strike indefinite from 29th August. The strike is over the refusal of the Federal Government to implement the Memorandum of Agreement reached with ASUU to end its nine month strike in December 2020 and includes the following demands:

- Finalisation of re-negotiation of the 2009 Agreement
- Establishing visitation panels and publication of their results
- Replace the Integrated Payment Payroll Information System

- (IPPIS) with UTAS
- Funding of University and Tertiary Education Sector
- Earned Allowances for both Academic and Non-Academic Staff of Nigeria's Universities
- End the proliferation of state universities without proper funding
- Payment of lecturers' withheld salaries since March 2022.

Student unions and trade union branches should send messages of support to: Emmanuel Osoodeke, ASUU President - president@asuu.org.ng Chris Piwuna, ASUU Vice President - piwuna01@gmail.com

The strike by the Joint Research and Allied Institutions Sector Unions (JORAISU) continues. This involves members of the Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU) and the Senior Staff Association of Universities Teaching Hospitals Research Institutes and Associated Institutions (SSAUTHRIAI). The indefinite strike has now lasted nearly ten months having

started on 13th October, 2021. Workers in the 67 research institutes nationwide are on strike over the failure by the Federal Government to fully implement an agreement reached with the unions in 2010. Trade union branches should send solidarity messages via WhatsApp to the President (08030933357) or Secretary (08037056585) of JORAISU.

The Joint Union Congress of the Police Service Commission commenced an indefinite strike from August 29 over the management of the Commission and the role of the Chair. This included the Nigeria Civil Service Union (NCSU) and Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN) The strike was suspended on 16th September, 2022 after the Chair resigned.

The Petrol Tank Drivers of the Nigerian Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) in Rivers State refused to load their vehicles from 12th September. This was in protests against incessant harassment by security operatives. The strike was suspended on 16th September

SOCIALIST LABOUR



Join The Resistance

<http://socialistlabour.com.ng>

Editor: Femi Aborisade

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CLIMATE CHANGE

FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IS ESSENTIAL



local economy based on fishing and agriculture. Boko Haram was the direct result. Average temperatures have risen higher in Nigeria than the global average and are higher still for the more northern areas. The Niger Delta and other areas are already suffering flooding as a result of the rise in sea levels. Without change things will only get worse.

Climate change is due to the increased emissions of carbon dioxide and other green house gases, primarily by companies in the industrial countries. However, the most significant contribution to global warming in sub-Saharan Africa is gas flaring in the Niger Delta. Successive Nigerian governments have failed to prevent this and associated environmental damage to local communities.

In 1969 the Government gave the oil companies five years to end gas flaring. During his first time as president, Buhari directed gas flaring to end in 1983 and introduced fines the following year. But this had little impact and flaring continued over the following decades.

The major pledge by Buhari at the Paris Climate Conference, in 2015 and subsequently, was to end gas flaring by 2030 – well over fifty years after it was originally to be eradicated. But until then, Nigeria will remain one of the top seven countries for gas flaring.

The global economic system, capitalism is still firmly based on carbon fuels, oil, gas and coal. It is hard to imagine this changing without fundamental change. This includes in Nigeria where the government is still dependant for half its income on oil and so continues to turn a blind eye to gas flaring and oil spills. Minor reforms will not be enough to prevent the devastation caused by climate change. This is only expected to get worse without a change to an economic system based on human need and planning – that is socialism!

The wonderful rallies in towns and cities across the country in support of the presidential bid by Peter Obi give us hope that change is possible. But at best, moving towards implementation of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) *Charter of Workers Demands*, with the support of effective mass strike action, will not be enough. The threat of further climate change, made worse by poverty and inequality, mean that fundamental change and socialism are essential.

This is what makes the role of *Socialist Labour* so essential. We are arguing for effective, active strikes so those like the university lecturers, ASUU members, are successful. This would give many more people the confidence to vote next year for a Labour Party president. This in turn will raise expectations that greater change is possible. This hope and confidence is necessary to achieve the fundamental changes that are needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

We need far more people to become active and join us in *Socialist Labour*. If you are hoping for change in the elections next year and for the deeper changes that will be necessary to achieve a fairer society that avoids the major impacts of climate change then we need you to join us!

Flooding in Pakistan provides a major reminder of the catastrophic impact of climate change. The increased monsoon rains and glacier melt in northern mountains led to a third of Pakistan being underwater, nearly 1,500 people died and 33 million people have been affected, with 1.7m homes destroyed. Pakistan is one of the countries least responsible for the climate crisis, yet it is the poor people there that are suffering the hardest.

about the dangers since this 1950s, but since the 1980s they have been funding organisations that systematically undermined climate science and the dangers of global warming. Every year that change is delayed means that the necessary change will have to be more dramatic. Until then, the poor across the world are suffering untold consequences.

As a result, not only is the world warming 10 times faster than during any time for the last 65 million years, but several irreversible tipping points are likely to increase this rate further.

These include the collapse of the polar ice sheets that could lead to further sea level rises with huge implications for the Niger Delta. Shifts to the West African Monsoon resulting in further falls to the level and uncertain timings of rainfall in Northern Nigeria. Permafrost thawing in Northern America and Russia with the release of huge amounts of methane and carbon dioxide. And disruption of the Atlantic Gulf Stream. If the critical thresholds are met any of these tipping points could lead to accelerated and irreversible impacts. As a result, temperature rises and other changes are expected to surge rather than just gradually increase.

Global climate change is already having a detrimental impact on many of the poorer people of Nigeria. Lake Chad has shrunk to only 4% of its size in 1960. This destroyed the

The latest annual climate change conference (COP27) will be held in November 2022, in Egypt. The repressive regime the people have suffered for nearly 10 years means that protests cannot actually be held in Egypt unlike with previous such conferences.

These conferences have provided a history of failure. The one in Paris in 2015 agreed to try to keep below two degrees warming and preferably 1.5 degrees. The world is still expected to reach the lower figure within the next few years and the higher figure within two decades. The promises from international governments have not been enough and are not being implemented.

Similarly, in Nigeria, we have suffered the worst floods for 10 years. N'Djamena, the capital of neighbouring Chad has also had horrific unprecedented floods. Climate change has also brought record high temperatures in Europe, forest fires in California and more violent hurricanes in the Caribbean and Florida.

The only answer is unprecedented change to the world's energy systems and a move away from carbon based fuels like oil, gas and coal. This appears to challenge the very logic of capitalism. The oil companies have known

Socialist Labour – JOIN US

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.

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
- pallatives 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
 EMAIL: socialistlabour.ng@gmail.com
 TWITTER: @SocialistLabNg FACEBOOK @socialistlabourng

LABOUR TO COLLABORATE WITH ASUU TO WIN THE STRIKE

-Biodun Olanosu

The strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) was declared in February 2022. Later they were joined by other unions in the university system including non-academic staff unions (NASU and SSANU). But these unions subsequently suspended their strikes leaving ASUU to fight alone.

The history of this strike can be traced to the six month strike from December 2013 over the non-implementation of the 2009 agreement (which should be revised every three years). One of the key concessions from the 2013 strike was for revitalisation of university funding. Based on a survey by a Government committee, it was agreed that N1.3 trillion would be paid over six years. The former government only made one payment of N200 billion and the current government has only made one payment of N50 billion. With inflation over the last decade of up to 20% a year, this revitalisation fund should now be more than five trillion naira.

A further one week warning strike was held by ASUU in November 2016 and another strike from August 2017, for a month. ASUU held another strike from November 2018 that was eventually suspended in February 2019. A further nine months strike was held in 2020 that was eventually suspended with yet another agreement that the Government has again failed to implement.

It would also be noted that the background to these strikes is the very low level of funding for education by the Federal Government. In 2015, when the current Government came to power, education received over 12% of the Federal Budget, this gradually reduced to less than 6% in 2021, although it was increased to 8% for the 2022 budget.

These figures are around half the average level for other governments in sub-Saharan Africa and well below international norms. In 2002, 56 developing country governments, members of the *Global Partnership for Education*, agreed to spend at least of 20 per cent of their total annual budgets on education. This is supported by UNESCO which recommends that governments spend 15-20% of their budgets on education.

In his 2015 manifesto Buhari promised “Targeting up to 20% of our annual budget for this critical sector”. In July 2021, at the Global Education Summit in London, [President Muhammadu Buhari](#) again promised to increase the budget for the education sector by as much as 50 per cent over the next two years. This would still only achieve half of the international norm of 20%.

The Federal Government has set up several committees to review the ASUU demands. After the last strike, a committee led by Prof Munzali Jubril was established and reported in



May 2021. But the Government took a year before it responded.

After the current strike started, the Government inaugurated the Prof Nimi Briggs committee in March 2022. This committee reported three months later, but the Government claimed it did not have the resources to fund its recommendations. On September 6, 2022, the government once again set up another committee which is chaired by the Ministry of Education himself.

- Other grievances spelt out by the striking academics include
- Establishing visitation panels and especially publication of their results
 - Replace the *Integrated Payment Payroll Information System* (IPPIIS) with UTAS
 - Proper funding of University and Tertiary Education Sector
 - Earned Allowances for both Academic and Non-Academic Staff of Nigeria's Universities
 - End the proliferation of state universities without proper funding
 - Payment of lecturers' withheld salaries since March 2022.

Virtually all the public universities have been shut down for any form of academic activities for the past seven months without any hope in sight in government meeting their demands. Some schools had to cancel a whole academic session for reason of the last strike. The situation is likely to repeat itself this session too.

The fact remains that the present government has shown the level of disdain it has for education, the very reason the sector is not seen as a priority area of the government. So

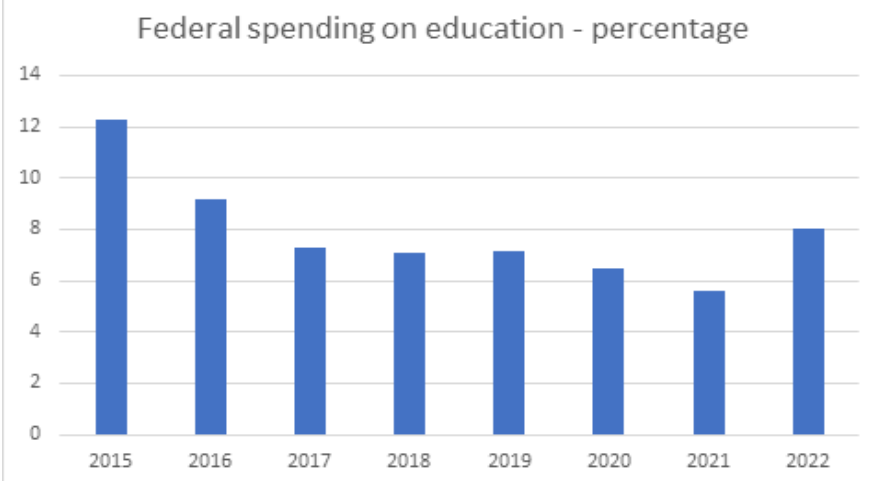
the alternative for the striking academics and other workers in the sector is not to give up in the struggle as the conscience of the society.

The role of the labour movement in general becomes handy here in joining hands with the workers in the sector to see to the end of the crisis being imposed by the ruling elites. The struggle has to be understood from the perspective of class rule and domination. This is against the background that the government proposition to increase school fees in the universities beyond what average income earners could afford and therefore shut the doors of university education to children of the poor. ASUU and others should be acclaimed for their social commitment in this regard as a way of saving public education.

There is therefore the need to mobilise the entire work force to save affordable public education for our own best interests. This agitation has clearly brought home that the poor do not share

the same interests with those of the privileged ruling class that are able to finance the education of their wards in universities abroad and in private universities in Nigeria. Despite this, only five percent of the university students are in the private universities as only few rich could afford the fees. In contrast nearly half of primary and secondary school students are in private schools due to the terrible underfunding of the public schools.

The NLC (with, in some states, the TUC) organised wonderful protests in every state capital in late July. These brought out hundreds of thousands of workers across the country and was a clear indication of the power possessed by the labour movement. Unfortunately, this was not followed up by a promised three day warning strike. This is obviously needed if ASUU is to be victorious and public higher education is to properly funded. If not university education will only be available to students with parents that are rich enough to afford the huge fees.



ASUU STRIKE: HOW CAN WE TIP THE BALANCE IN FAVOUR OF THE TRADE UNIONS?

-Idris Bello Idris

An industrial strike, as is widely known, is the withdrawal of services by workers following protracted disagreements with their employers the only way that workers can demonstrate their power and force the bosses to take their demands seriously. For far too long, different unions and associations have had to use strike action to press home their demands. This is always after they have exhausted all other possible avenues of resolving their dispute with governments/authorities. Even after agreements have been signed with the trade unions these are often not implemented as with the case of the current ASUU strike.

We have witnessed successive governments at federal, state and local government (and including the private sector) sweeping under the carpet any agreement they reached with workers and their organisations. The bosses have gone ahead to even declare war on the workers through their tyrannical

instrument of No-Work-No-Pay. They want workers to be blind and deaf servants who work like donkeys without due regard for their welfare, life and safety. In this article, we shall be looking at what makes authorities audacious, insensitive and comfortable dealing with workers and their organisations.

Problem: Workers total dependence on salary – the vast majority of workers live only on a single income, so whenever their salary is withheld they feel threatened and eventually succumb to the hunger and resume work. Financial support from their trade unions is limited – as with the ASUU strike. **Solution:** trade unions and CSOs need to provide more support to workers when they are on strike. This will stop them being starved back to work and make strikes more successful.

Problem: Some union leaders are complicit - some people just want to join union leadership for personal gain. They will occupy office in various unions but work as agents of the oppressive authorities for their personal enrichment. Some are not even competent enough to confront our oppressors. Some are lazy.



Solution: Workers must organise to find the right people to represent them. Trade unions must be fully democratic with frequent elections and the leaders must be guided by their members. Union members have to play an active role in their unions and ensure the leaders

are responsible for their demands.

Problem: Members Culpability - as members of a union or association, we must control our leaders, guide and support them when they act in the correct way. We must always keep them on their toes by demanding accountability and asking questions. Where they refuse to serve our interest, we must be bold enough to remove them and replace them with better people. **Solution:** union members must always play an active role and regularly attend meetings. Workers should be faithful and committed to the goals and objectives of their unions/professional groups. We must understand that until we do this, we would remain slaves.

Problem: Poor inter-union relationships and interprofessional rivalry – governments try to set one group of workers against another. They suppress us by dividing and ruling us. We allow simple disputes or conflicts between us to keep us apart, so anytime one union or group is being hammered by authorities we simply don't care until the day it is our turn to suffer then we begin to cry. **Solution:** unions and groups (professional or otherwise) must form an alliance to confront and defeat the authorities together. Whenever we take action this should involve all the relevant trade unions. It is unfortunate that ASUU is striking alone when all the higher education unions and indeed all education unions should be involved supported by the NLC and the TUC.

Problem: Civil Society Groups - can guide, support and stimulate unions. We need an alliance and support for trade unions, and especially striking workers, with necessary resources and backing. **Solution:** CSOs should improve this aspect of their service to the people through strengthening their alliance with trade unions.

Problem: Lack of intercommunity dialogue - the relationship between one community and the other is

sometimes poor. This is especially true where leaders favour one community over another. Elders in our communities cannot face leaders to tell them the bitter truth, rather they prefer to be receiving favours from them. **Solution:** the people in a particular community where the political leader comes from can be used to make him/her to do the needful.

Problem: Religious and traditional leader silence - we have palaces, Mosques, Churches, etc, where grassroots leadership can influence through preaching and sermons. But this platform to call for sanity in our country's Leadership. We are only interested in keeping quiet for fear of offending those in power or even engage in sowing inter-religious discord which has not helped us at all in this country. **Solution:** our religious and traditional leaders must develop the boldness to meet political office holders and talk sense to them. This is especially important when there is a burning issue between workers and employers like the ASUU strike.

Problem: Their children are taught abroad - political elites educate their children outside. As it is the education of the children of the masses that is being destroyed by lack of funding, they don't care. It is the loss of the poor. **Solution:** we must demand that any public leader must sign an agreement with the masses to educate his/her children in Nigerian public institutions. Should the person renege on this agreement, we must be prepared to kick him/her out of the office.

Conclusion: We need to understand, accept, and embrace the principles of togetherness or teamwork for workers. We also need to accept that our interests are different from the corrupt elite who run the governments. Whether as individuals or groups, we, the mass of the population, would always be oppressed by our few leaders until we achieve socialism.

The Blood Never Dried : A people's history of the British Empire

By John Newsinger

The Queen represented all the worst aspects of British imperialism and the terror of its state. We are glad this symbol of inequality, oppression and injustice is no more!! This book challenges the claims that the British Empire was a civilising force in the world of imperialism under the Queen. John Newsinger sets out to uncover this neglected history of repression and resistance. To the boast that ""the sun never set on the British Empire"" the 19th Century Chartist Campaigner, Ernest Jones replied ""and the blood never dried.""

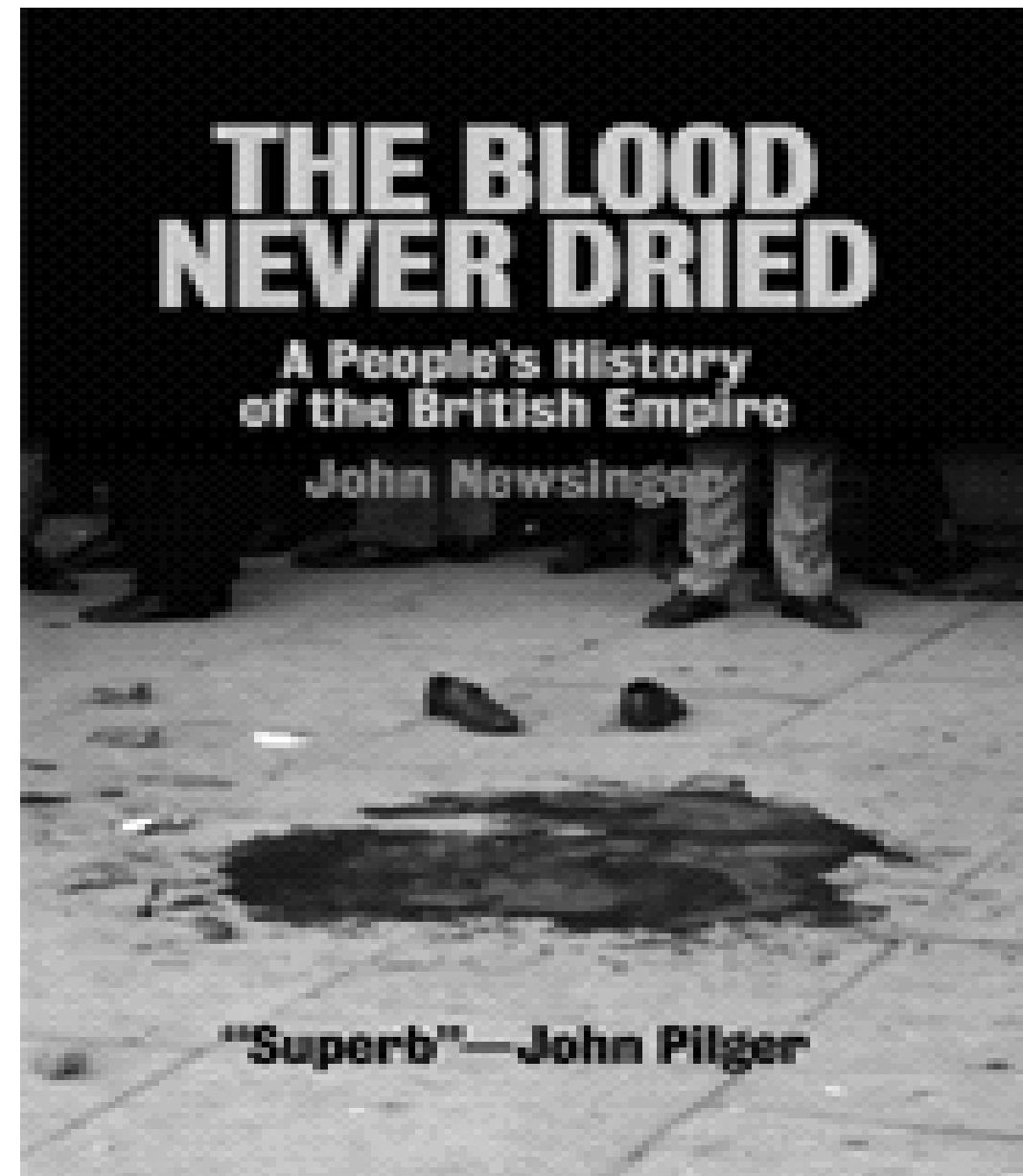
John Newsinger has written a wonderful popular history of key episodes in British imperial history. He pays particular attention to the battles of the colonised to free themselves of its awful rule, in later cases overseen by Queen Elizabeth II. He covers the Rebellion in Jamaica; The Irish Famine; The

Opium Wars; The Great Indian Rebellion; The Conquest of Egypt; Palestine in Revolt; 'Quit India' and the struggle for Independence; Suez; Malaya; Kenya and Rhodesia; and, Britain and American Imperialism.

King Charles represents the continuity of this imperial tradition. His idea of rights is the divine right of kings! He last visited Nigeria just after the massacre of 39 Shiites at Karu Bridge, FCT in 2018. He thus gave his blessing to this act of open state terror.

Read this book and celebrate the many millions who fought back against the worst excesses of inequality, oppression and injustice across the British empire. The struggle continues!

<https://ivavalleybooks.com/2022/09/12/the-blood-never-dried-a-peoples-history-of-the-british-empire-by-john-newsinger/?v=330a840f8637>



INTO THE TEMPEST -

Essays On The New Global Capitalism, WILLIAM I. ROBINSON (2018)

In this book William (who had part of his education at the University of Ibadan) argues, from a Marxist perspective, that national states are no longer useful units of analysis when looking at the political economy of the globe in the 21st Century. He argues that the nature of imperialism has changed fundamentally from the early 20th Century when Lenin described it as competition between national states to protect their national companies.

William argues that the introduction of neoliberal globalisation means that we no longer have national classes but a transnational capitalist class and a global working class. The transnational capitalist class are the owners and senior managers of the transnational corporations that now dominate world trade. They undertake two thirds of international trade and 45% of production globally. They have subcontracted their manufacturing to China and other countries in South Asia. They manage the world together through various global institutions and meet together each year at the global retreat, the World Economic Forum, at Davos each year and various international conferences. He argues that the system wide crisis that we face in the 21st century is not a repeat of the capitalist crises of the 1930s and 1970s because world capitalism is fundamentally different.

William's theory of global capitalism has four aspects. First is the rise of truly transnational capital and a new global production and financial system into which all nations and much of humanity have been integrated, either directly or indirectly. Second is the rise of a Transnational Capitalist Class, a class group that has drawn in contingents from most countries around the world, North and South, and has attempted to position itself as a global ruling class. Third is the rise of Transnational State apparatuses.

The Transnational State is constituted as a loose network made up of trans- and supranational organizations together with national states that functions to organize the



conditions for transnational accumulation and through which the Transnational Capitalist Class attempts to organize and institutionally exercise its class power. Finally are novel relations of inequality, domination, and

exploitation in global society, including an increasing importance of transnational social and class inequalities relative to NorthSouth inequalities that are geographically or territorially conceived.

In terms of the Global South, Williams argues:

“Globalization has brought a vast new round of global enclosures, as hundreds of millions have been uprooted from the Third World countryside and turned into internal and transnational migrants. Some of the uprooted millions are superexploited through incorporation into the global factories, farms, and offices as precarious labor, while others are marginalized and converted into surplus humanity, relegated to a “planet of slums.” Surplus humanity is of no direct use to capital. However, in the larger picture, surplus labor is crucial to global capitalism insofar as it places downward pressure on wages everywhere and allows transnational capital to impose discipline over those who remain active in the labor market.” (page 241)

Global Capitalism may only describe a trend or emerging system whereby individual national capitalist classes are being replaced by a Transnational Capitalist Class. But William's ideas outlined in this book do provide useful arguments against nationalism. The idea that what we need is merely the development of national capitalism in Nigeria. This is opposed to the Marxist idea of a continuous struggle for socialism. This may start at the national level, but as Lenin recognised, will not ultimately be successful until it is victorious at the global level.

For this reason, reading at least chapters one and ten of this book provides an introduction to William's ideas that may better help us to understand the world and so change it.

OUR Imagination, OUR ruination

-Steve Bode

Flying Squirrel!
What shall I call you?
Are you a Flying Bird
Or a Climbing Squirrel?

Mermaid swimming skillfully
From River Niger's North
Down to the Atlantic Ocean
What shall I call you?
Are you a Swimming Fish
Or a Swimming Lady?

What about amorphous me--
I, myself, who am I really?
Who am I not?
Lo! I know not me!

I am in a CONtry
Where's my true country?
When will my unknown tribe
Dumped in a manhole of neglect
Produce the President of my CONtry
So we can celebrate for the first time
Our New Pineapple Festival?
What or where is my country?

The CONtry that claims me citizen
Is one Federal Republic of em-
What are they calling it' o?
Federal Republic of what now...?
What's that your lame name...
That echoes with wild shame?
Now the name echoes in my heart
Its cacophony jarring my eardrums
Its color riots and zigzags etched
On an unfairly zoned map
Daze my brains and eyes with fogs:

Fakederal Reap-Public of Liegeria!
I bow' o! I bow' for you' o!

What species of a NATION are you?
Are you a rowdy AggluteNATION
And therefore a strange nonNATION?
Are you a CondemNATION?
Are you a DamNATION
Are you our mirage ImagiNATION
And Indeed our pathetic ruINATION?

Who'll reset the wet & dry firewood
Some aliens cramped into
This Unnational Oven
To set aglow a Federal Covenant
This Suit-Belching Chimney
Choking-darkening a generation
And scorching the ecosystem!
This Blood-Sucking Demon
And Fire-Spitting Dragon
That sets its lovely children ablaze!

RESPONSES TO DEATH OF THE BRITISH QUEEN

-Izielen Agbon

There have been different response to the death of the British queen by different classes in Nigeria. Members of the ruling class are in mourning and have officially and unofficially expressed their grief and condolences to the royal family. Some of educated middle class Nigerians cannot stop offering their condolences and prayers to the royal family. However, the Nigerian working class and the peasant class have had quite a different reaction. They have dismissed the death of the British queen as an irrelevant incident with no immediate direct impact on their daily life for survival. Some of them have been unsympathetic and called for reparations from Britain for slavery and colonialism. In order to understand the reactions of the different classes to the passing away of the British queen, we need to go back to the teachings of Malcolm X.

In his "Message to the Grassroots" speech, Malcolm X said, "To understand this, you have to go back to what [the] young brother here referred to as the house Negro and the field Negro — back during slavery. There was two kinds of slaves. There was the house Negro and the field Negro. The house Negroes — they lived in the house with master, they dressed pretty good, they ate good 'cause they ate his food — what he left. They lived in the attic or the basement, but still they lived near the master; and they loved their master more than the master loved himself. They would give their life to save the master's house quicker than the master would. The house Negro, if the master said, "We got a good house here," the house Negro would say, "Yeah, we got a good house here." Whenever the master said "we," he said "we." That's how you can tell a house Negro. If the master's house caught on fire, the house Negro would fight harder to put the blaze out than the master would. If the master got sick, the house Negro would say, "What's the matter boss, we sick?" We sick! He identified himself with his master more than his master identified with himself...."

On that same plantation, there was the field Negro. The field Negro — those were the masses. There were always more Negroes in the field than there was Negroes in the house. The Negro in the field caught hell. He ate leftovers. In the house they ate high up on the hog. ... The field Negro was beaten from morning to night. He lived in a shack, in a hut; He wore old, castoff clothes. He hated his master. I say he hated his master. He was intelligent. That house Negro loved his master. But that field Negro — remember, they were in the majority, and they hated the master. When the house caught on fire, he didn't try and put it out; that field Negro prayed for a wind, for a breeze. When the master got sick, the field Negro prayed that he'd die.... You've got field Negroes in America today. I'm a field Negro. The masses are the field Negroes....."

Thus, we find that the different reactions to the death of the queen by members of different classes in Nigeria have a material base as well as a general lack of education on the long term negative impact of the slave trade and colonialism on the development of Africa.

The members of the Nigerian ruling class and their educated supporters have their houses and assets in England and identify with the British monarchy. They live better than the labouring classes in Nigeria. They impose capitalist class relations on the Nigerian labouring classes and help maintain the neocolonial relationships of power between Nigeria and Britain. When they heard that the queen was dead, they cried more than the British. They shouted, "London Bridge has fallen. Our queen is dead".

The Nigerian labouring classes are more grounded. Some said, "their queen don dead, And so? burial ceremony chop go reach you?".



THE HEIRS OF FELA KUTI

In the family of the king of Nigerian afrobeat, there are the sons, Femi and Seun Kuti, the grandson, Made Kuti, and the spiritual son, Ade Bantu.

The heirs of Fela Anikulapo Kuti (1938-1997), "the man who carries death around in his quiver", through pieces by his son Femi, his grandson Made and the Bantu group which, for over twenty years after the death of the inventor of afrobeat, take up his artistic and militant torch by using their music to denounce the social injustices and political corruption that still plague Nigeria.

"PAPAPA", BY FEMI KUTI
"When the government wastes our time, the government wastes our lives," sings Femi Kuti, 58, in Pa Pa Pa, a track released in December last year in which the

saxophonist urges Nigerians to rise up against local politicians' dishonesty. For the founder of the group Positive Force, who actively took part in the EndSARS protests against police violence in Nigeria, Afrobeat remains a resolutely rebellious and politically engaged genre. His most recent album, Stop The Hate, was released in February.

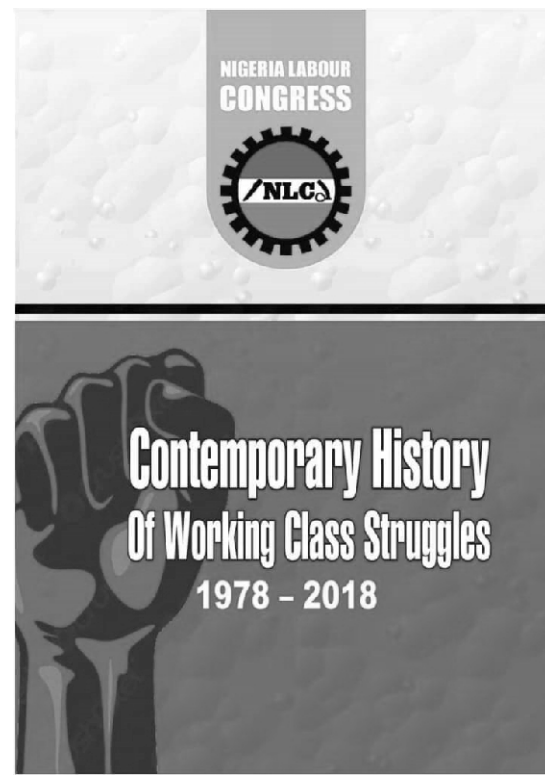
"FREE YOUR MIND", BY MADE KUTI
Fela's grandson, Made Kuti is 25 years old and has released a first opus, For(e)ward, in which he plays all the instruments. It must be said that he went to a good school, having spent most of his childhood on tour with his father, playing bass and saxophone in Positive Force, before leaving for London, where he has been crossing paths for years of musicians from the

new jazz scene — including Kokoroko and Ezra Collective. His album, from which the title Free Your Mind is taken, will be available with that of Femi Kuti in a box set from the Partisan Records label called "Legacy +".

"CASH AND CARRY", BY BANTU
Finally, in the Kuti family, there is Seun, 37 years old. Fela's youngest son is a guest on a track (Yeye Theory) from the Bantu group's new album, Everybody Get Agenda, released at the end of September last year. Composed of thirteen musicians and led by the German-Nigerian singer Adé Bantu (49), this collective also follows in the footsteps of the "king" of Afrobeat, whose spirit it perpetuates, both in substance and form: "They will buy your voice, silence your vote", sings the leader of the group in the title track Cash and Carry.

THE NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF WORKING CLASS STRUGGLES – 1978-2018



This official history of the Nigeria Labour Congress is available for free download from: <https://www.nlc.org/download-nlc-40-publication-for-free/>

READINGS ON TRADE UNIONS, STRIKES AND THE BUREAUCRACY

Rank and File Organisation Is Vital In The Trade Unions (Socialist Labour, About Us)

The most successful rank and file organisations rest on a network of socialists or militants who understand that it is collective trade union action, primarily strikes, that ensures improvements not clever negotiating by trade union leaders. But also that to be successful, strikes need to actively involve all members in regular protests, town hall meetings and calls for solidarity from other trade unions.

Why is it that trade union leaders often need to be pushed into leading active strikes to improve the lives of the majority. How socialists need to organise in trade unions.

How Do We Reform Trade Union To Defeat Neoliberalism? (2022, Nigeria)

Many comrades in the trade union movement became active to change the world, but neoliberalism has defeated too many and they have been changed — for the worse. This is especially the case for the trade union leaders. The combination of the dominant ideas in society, regular meetings with government officials and feeling that they deserve to be rewarded have

eroded their original socialist values.

An activists' guide to trade union leaders and the rank-and-file (2022, Britain)

We need to organise a wider layer of trade union members to encourage the trade union leaders to lead more active strikes and improve democracy in each trade union.

Class Struggle Unionism (2022, US)

The rank and file and the trade union bureaucracy (2014, Britain)

confronted with at the moment in relation to trade unionism is the big gap that exists between the level of workers' anger at austerity and employers' attacks on the one hand, and the lack of rank and file confidence to engage in struggle without a lead from the trade union bureaucracy on the other.

Strike waves, union growth and the rank-and-file/bureaucracy interplay - Britain 1889-1890, 1910-1913 and 1919-1920

The nature of the relationship between strike movements and union membership growth, and the process by which the unions that emerge from periods of radical labour unrest then seek to dampen down worker militancy in order to bargain with employers/state within the confines of capitalism.

Our unions in crisis: how did it come to this? Tom Bramble, drawing on decades of research and active involvement in the Australian labour movement, argues that 35 years of passivity and class collaboration rather than an emphasis on militant, class struggle unionism is the core reason the unions are in crisis. (text and recording)

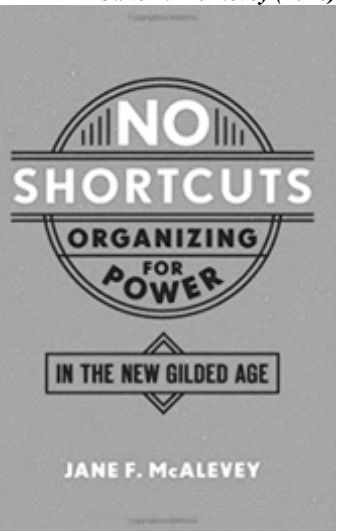
NO SHORTCUTS: ORGANIZING FOR POWER IN THE NEW GILDED AGE

-Jane F. McAlevey (2016)

In *No Shortcuts*, Jane McAlevey argues that progressives can win, but lack the organized power to enact significant change, to outlast their bosses in labor fights, and to hold elected leaders accountable. Drawing upon her experience as a scholar and longtime organizer in the student, environmental, and labor movements, McAlevey examines cases from labor unions and social movements to pinpoint the factors that helped them succeed - or fail - to

accomplish their intended goals. McAlevey makes a compelling case that the great social movements of previous eras gained their power from mass organizing, a strategy today's progressives have mostly abandoned in favor of shallow mobilization or advocacy. She ultimately concludes that, in order to win, progressive movements need strong unions built from bottom-up organizing strategies that place the power for change in the hands of workers and ordinary

people at the community level. Beyond the concrete examples in this book, McAlevey's arguments have direct implications for anyone involved in organizing for social change. Much more than cogent analysis, *No Shortcuts* explains exactly how progressives can go about rebuilding powerful movements at work, in our communities, and at the ballot box.



LESSONS FROM HISTORY - THE STRUGGLES OF NIGERIAN WORKERS AGAINST INFLATION

The inflation rate in Nigeria is currently just over 20% according to the Central Bank of Nigeria. The prices of bread, cereals, potatoes, yam and other tubers, fish, meat, oil and fat have increased dramatically. The Consumer Price Index has increased from 100 in 2009 to 465 in 2022. However, nominal or monetary wages have remained stagnant. The real wages or purchasing power of workers has reduced drastically. Nigerian workers must examine past struggles to learn the strategies and tactics used by workers in the past in their struggles against inflationary trends in the economy. A look at the struggles of Nigerian workers against inflation in 1941 offers important lessons.

Consumer Prices had generally doubled in Lagos between 1939 and 1940. In February of 1941, under the Defence Regulations (Public Notice No. 15) of 1941, the Colonial State imposed price control measures on essential food items in Lagos. The prices of items such as pepper, gari and beans were controlled by the State. In March of 1941, other food items such as egusi (melon seed), rice, beef, mutton and pork were added to the list. The price control measures were also extended to provincial markets.

The reaction of the workers to this war inflation was twofold. First, they fought for the elimination of the hourly employment system and other unfavourable conditions of employment. Secondly, they demanded a cost-of-living allowance (COLA).

In April 1941, the Railway Workers' Union informed Railway Management that a strike would occur from May 1, 1941 if its demands were not met. On April 30, 1941, the General Manager finally met with the union officials. The colonial state gave the union the following concessions:

1. Wages for work on Saturdays since 1931 would be paid.
2. Manual skilled workers who had gone through an apprenticeship program would be included in the permanent establishment of the Railway Department, in future. This would entitle them to all the privileges provided to public sector workers under General Orders.
3. All manual railway workers would be granted full pay for public holidays.
4. Free transport to their point of origin during leave period would be provided for railway workers in the permanent establishment.
5. The union's demand for COLAs was still under consideration.

In addition, the Colonial State imposed new emergency legislation (Defence Regulations, 1941) making strikes illegal until trade disputes had been subject to arbitration. The union accepted the offer and the proposed strike was called off. However, the General Manager never implemented the agreements.

The union again started agitating for the implementation of the decisions of the Colonial State and set a new strike deadline for October 1, 1941, despite the new regulations making strikes illegal. Apart from the strike threat, the union embarked on many other actions. First, it encouraged railway workers to refuse overtime work. Secondly, it prepared all union branches for the proposed October strike by organizing workers at the shop level. Thirdly, the union established an alliance with the African Locomotive Drivers' Union and the African Civil Servants Technical Workers' Union, the Posts & Telegraphs Workers'

Union, the Nigerian Marine Workers' Union and the Public Work Department Union to form a trade union coalition called the African Civil Servants Technical Workers' Union. It also obtained support from the Nigerian newspapers.

The Railway Workers' Union also encouraged railway workers to terminate all contributions to the war relief fund. Finally, it proposed an alternative plan for the implementation of the decisions of the Colonial State and submitted it to the Colonial State through the General Manager of the Railway Department.

On October 1, 1941, Lagos railway workers came to work looking angry. The Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr Wilson, decided to protect the machinery and ordered the mechanical engineering department's gates locked. This essentially was a lock-out which was illegal under the new Defence Regulations banning strikes. The union's response was immediate. The union led the workers on a spontaneous five-mile march to the Governor's house. A new demand surfaced: WILSON MUST GO! Locomotive drivers and railway workers from other departments such as the Running Shed, Carriage and Wagon and Stores also joined the demonstration. Market women, students, the unemployed and the public in general expressed their support as the workers marched.

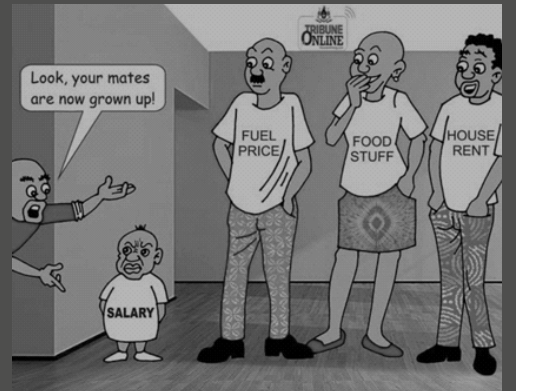
The Colonial State reacted very quickly to this expression of workers' unity. The Colonial State's decisions would be implemented immediately according to the plan drawn up by the union. A Committee of Enquiry to investigate the effect of the price increases on the cost of living would be set up. The hourly system was terminated and the workers were paid all wage losses resulting from the system. 1,800 railway workers from the Mechanical Workshops and Running Shed were transferred to the permanent establishment. The transfer entitled them to an increase in wages, 15 days annual leave with pay and free transportation

as well as better promotion prospects and benefits from the Railway Promotion Fund. It also gave them sick leave with pay and an opportunity to earn merit rises.

The Chief Mechanical Engineer, Wilson, was granted his voluntary request for an immediate transfer out of the country. The Colonial State thus capitulated to all the workers' demands. Six days later, the same benefits were extended to all public sector workers. Private sector employers were forced to give the same benefits to their employees or suffer mass resignations or strikes. Thus, the gains of the struggles of the manual railway workers were circulated throughout the waged sector of the Nigerian working class.

Trade union unity had helped to bring victory to the railway workers and had brought benefits across the working classes. The lessons learned were that (1) a cost-of-living allowance is needed to mitigate against inflation (2) strikes and direct workers actions are needed to fight for a cost-of-living allowance (3) broad unity among unions and citizens is necessary for strikes to succeed (4) the gains from one strikes need to be circulated to other workers and the society in general.

-Izielen Agbon



NATIONAL UNION OF PENSIONERS OR FOR PENSIONERS?

-Abdulkadir Isa

The question of involvement, democratic control and participation by their members provides a good basis to view unions in the context of either being "of" or "for" their members. The franchise in any democratic setting defines in whose interest the structure is administered. Usually, organisations are actually run in the interests of their leaders. Florid claims can't suffice to change this position. The pensioners' union is a registered trade union but with some differences from other registered trade unions. Their members are not workers, but are pensioners. The requirements for registering employer trade unions (as with a pensioner union) are not as restrictive as the ones stipulated for normal worker trade unions. The inhibitions or preclusions are much reduced for pensioner unions compared to worker trade unions.

all retirees. This includes former senior and junior workers. It includes arms and non-arm bearing public servants (the security services and others). Former employees of public and private sectors are all included. Finally, essential or non-essential dichotomies crafted to split and weaken the trade unions are excluded.



In this context, the pensioners union is the organisation where you have highly seasoned and experienced people with whom an appropriate striving against the wage system can be prosecuted.

In view therefore of its composition and the relevant role it can play, time it is for this

advanced conscious contingent of the working class to appreciate how the needed subjective question of the working class can be addressed through the pensioners union.

The working class need concessions, but the primary task is to resolve the contradictions and the antagonisms between wage earners and the wage payers. The former should know and understand the sources of their wages and why they always appear to move to the minimum level.

Similarly, pensioners need to understand the sources of their pensions. These may be from non-contributory schemes and more recently contributory schemes. In both cases pensioners may not be paid their pensions on time.

Trade unions and the pensioners union have the same contradictions between leaders and members. So, for example, pensioners in Borno State are complaining about the automatic deductions of their dues to the National Union of Pensioners without this body taking appropriate action to defend their members rights.

This is part of the process of democratization of trade unions. We need to support this struggle to help to build a vibrant pensioners movement.

What therefore makes the pensioners' union unique, but still viewed as a working class organization are:-

- (1) retirees are visible victims of the wage system and this should be check mated and consequently abolished along with the end of exploitation of the working class
- (2) membership if the pensioners' union covers

MARXISM AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Introduction (2022)

Marxists are famous for declaring the right of oppressed peoples to self-determination. In the early 20th Century, Lenin developed this position to undermine the colonial empires and as part of the democratic mandate of his approach to socialism. But he also supported international solidarity of the working class. For Lenin, independence of the colonies and other oppressed peoples was meant to help to unite the global working class of all countries.

Nationalism is thus mainly reactionary in today's world – as shown by Donald Trump's racism and his slogan "Make America Great Again!".

We have to look carefully at the real world to determine whether we should support the right to independence or self-determination in specific circumstances. Marxists support genuine liberation movements, but we also want a united world. So we see independence as only the first step and a united Africa of a free peoples should be the next, step as part of the struggle for socialism.

The short pamphlet "Marxism and the National Question" written by Alex Callinicos a leading British Marxist, who was born in Zimbabwe, explains the general approach to this issue by Marxists. Below we try to apply these principals to the current situation in Nigeria.

There are few oppressed nations left in the world today, the Palestinians and Western Sahara being the only obvious exceptions. Most Scottish people want independence from the central British state, but within the wider emerging state of the European Union. In Britain socialists also support the reunification of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland.

As Alex says, there are many different types of nationalism. The fight against the European colonial empires in Africa, ending with Apartheid in South Africa, was obviously progressive. But the struggle for equality and democracy was not successfully continued, so for example, South Africa is now a more unequal society than under the Apartheid regime!

As Alex states: "nations don't reflect some "natural" identity but are formed through often violent processes in which minorities are forcibly incorporated and local cultures and languages suppressed to the benefit of those of the dominant group." Nigeria emerged from colonial domination and competition between the English and French imperialists.

This was because with the rise to power of Stalin in Russia, the Communists in South Africa were encouraged to join the African National Congress (ANC) rather than maintaining their independence. As a result, the nationalists were able to gain black majority rule and then impose neoliberal capitalism. A member of the Communist Party of South Africa was even the Minister of Privatisation in an ANC led government!

Today, in Nigeria there are really no clearly oppressed ethnic groups. With the devolution to states of the Federation, all the major nations have several states which they are able to control and some states are controlled by smaller ethnic groups. Independence of any states could lead to oppression of minorities within these states.

In many parts of the world, nationalism has replaced organised religion as the dominant ideology that helps to maintain capitalism.

There are Igbo governors of several states in the South East, there are Hausa and Fulani governors across the north and Yoruba

governors in the South West. All these governors control huge financial resources, but in no cases are these really used to benefit the common people of whatever ethnic group. These governors control primary education, but have hardly introduced teaching in local languages, even in rural areas. Research indicates that this would be of significant benefit to children who do not speak English at home, at least for the first few years of schooling.

The president may be a Fulbe (Fulani), but he has hardly benefited the poorer members of his ethnic group, even in his home state. The fact that he cannot speak his mother tongue indicates the cultural oppression of many town Fulbe people. We do not think that people of the north and the south of Nigeria have different interests. When politicians talk about 'northern dominance' and 'federal character' this is just about sharing the loot between the corrupt elite of the different ethnic groups.

The appalling levels of poverty across all the geopolitical zones of Nigeria has led to violent reaction in many places. The form may be different, but the causes are the same, poverty, inequality and corruption. These fuelled Boko Haram (and now ISWAP) in the north east, bandits in the north west, farmer/herder disputes across the middle belt, IPOB in the south east and robbers and cultists in the south west. They also fuel kidnapping and an increase in criminality across the country. The sudden increase in poverty due to the lockdowns associated with Covid explains the sudden increase in insecurity we have suffered over the last couple of years.

We do not support the various separatist groups in Nigeria. They are all led by terribly reactionary individuals. But at the same time, we do not necessarily protect the 'national unity' of Nigeria. Like all countries in Africa,

Nigeria of today is a historical accident whose borders were determined by European colonialists. We want unity of the working class beyond the borders of the current Nigeria, across Africa and the indeed the whole world.

We recognise that the support for separatist groups is a desperate attempt by many poor people to try and improve their wretched lives. We have to demonstrate in practice that unity of the labouring masses across Nigeria is more effective than uniting with the corrupt elite of individual ethnic groups. The protests in every state capital in solidarity with ASUU and the other education strikers, organised by the NLC in July 2022, shows the possibilities for such working class unity. The general strike of January 2012 also showed the potential for this unity of the labouring classes.

Our main enemy is the corrupt ruling elite, which includes a range of different ethnic groups. Our task is to unite the labouring masses of all ethnic groups so that together we can be successful in our fight against our common ruling elite and to begin to reduce inequality and corruption.

We need to extend this fight across Africa and indeed the world – so we need to unite with other workers across Africa and the world. The Communist Manifesto ends with the words: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Proletarians of all countries, unite!" This is still true 150 and more years after it was written.

The full pamphlet is available for free download from: <https://ivavallebooks.com/2022/10/04/marxism-and-the-national-question/?v=330a840f8637>

-Alex Callinicos (1989)

Does Asking the Government to do More on Security Save Lives? -

-Alex Batubo

Some people are campaigning for the security forces to do more on security. We are facing increased insecurity, but will demanding more from the armed forces really reduce the number of people who are killed?

People have demanded that bandits, kidnappers and others be called 'terrorists' and so allow the army and others to shoot them on sight. Action by the air force in bombing the 'terrorists' has been applauded despite the increasing number of innocent deaths. This has happened here and in other countries.

The term 'terrorist' is used internationally to mean those that take up arms against the US state and its allies. Socialists and other progressive minded people should take great care when using this term. It suggests that we are aligning ourselves on the side of the US in their 'war on terror'. This is despite the American state being the organisation that inflicts more terror on the world than any other organisation.

Afghanistan 1998, 2001-2021	Laos 1964-73	Pakistan 2010
Burma 1994, 1995	Cameroon 1983	Philippines 1989
Cambodia 1969-79	China 1991-2006, 2015-	Pure 1963
China 1963-68	India 1967	Saudi Arabia 1991, 2007-08, 2010-
Congo 1964	Korea 1950-53	Sudan 1988
Cuba 1959-1961	Kuwait 1991	Syria 2011
El Salvador 1980s	Libya 1963, 1984	Tanzania 1961-73
Korea 1950-53	Lebanon 1983, 2011-2018	Yemen 2002, 2009-2021
Guatemala 1954, 1960, 1967-69	Nicaragua 1980s	Yugoslavia 1999
Indonesia 1958	Pakistan 2001, 2006-	

This is a list of the countries bombed and/or invaded by the United States from the end of the Second World War to 2020 (<https://www.maurer.ca/USBombing.html>):

The problem with demanding more action from the army and others to defend us from insecurity is that armies are not trained to do that. They are trained to attack an identifiable enemy in war. Armies across the world who are involved in 'counter insurgency' activity inevitably end up killing far too many innocent people.

As happened in the North East, if the army was attacked, it would go out and massacre a few people in the area where they were attacked. This is what armies across the world do when faced with such attacks. This is what appears to have happened after the recent attack on the Presidential Brigade Guards in the FCT.

After the attack, over 30 people in the Bwari area of FCT were killed by the army. Kawu and Ido villages were cleared and the army says that it recovered three weapons. Who knows who the army killed but they do not seem to have been heavily armed – one weapon for every 10 people killed? The Guards were attacked on Monday night and the retaliation was announced on Thursday. Would insurgents really stay locally after attacking the army?

The Police Commissioner for the FCT has said that they will take "the fight to the bandits and terrorists in their camps which are mostly located in states

boarding the FCT". The problem is who the security forces will be able to tell the difference between local villages and 'bandit camps'.

Many innocent young men appear to be being killed in the South East by the security forces and others. On 25th July, hundreds of women and youths of Oguta local government area, Imo State, staged a protest, calling for the government Ebubeagu security outfit to be banned from operating in Oguta. They said a youth was killed the day before. At least seven others were killed in Oru West Local Government Area the week before. Two-day mass protests were held by all the communities in Oru West who barricaded the Owerri/Onitsha road.

The Nigerian army (like all armies across the world) has been guilty of many massacres. This includes the Lekki Gate killings. According to the panel of Inquiry, at least 48 protestors were shot dead (at least nine) or injured or assaulted. Another three died in the attack on protestors at Alausa, Ikeja the same evening. They also massacred Shiites in Zaira in December 2015 (at least 348) and by Karu Bridge, Abuja in October 2018 (39 dead). In 1999 possibly several hundred were killed in an attack on Odi town, Bayelsa State. This was in retaliation for the killing of 12 police and an ambush of soldiers locally. In April 2013 as many as 200 civilians may have been massacred by the army in Baga a small fishing village in the far north east of Borno State.

The use of air power is likely to result in much more 'collateral damage' as we showed in the following article: <https://socialistlabour.com.ng/2021/09/18/how-can-we-address-insecurity-do-aerial-bombardments-have-any-role-2/>

Since this article was written we have had the Air Force killing in Kaduna and more recently six children were bombed in Niger State.

In the early hours of Saturday, 26th March, 2022, bandits invaded the Kaduna International Airport for twelve hours. 12 people were then killed by the Air Force with a helicopter attack, after one person was killed. The army spokes person said, "On arrival, the bandits were already running away. So, we engaged them through the use of ground forces. Then we called for air strike and a helicopter was deployed and from the air report, about 12 of the bandits were killed."

On 13th April 2022, the air force bombed Kurebe community in the Shiroro area of Niger State, six girls were killed by a bore hole. The Air Force had been informed that there were only bandits in the area. See the Premium Times investigation: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/investigationspecial-reports/545183-investigation-inside-story-of-how-nigeria-air-force-bombed-children-terrorised-by-boko-haram-in->

[niger.html](#)

A military aircraft bombed a village in the north of Togo in the early hours of July 10, 2022, killing seven civilians. It was assumed that they were insurgents, but as usual who knows who was actually killed? The Togolese armed forces admitted on July 14th that they were responsible for the killing of seven civilians and injuring two others. So the total spending has increased from N302 billion in 2015 when Burhari came to power to N907 billion for this year. Buhari has increased the military budget by three times since he came to power, but he only increased the minimum wage once and this has

can be made on the authorities at different levels. We should note that the country is in a situation in which the Left, in groups and as individuals, may ally with or support clear "pro-people" and "progressive" initiatives from outside the movement – the dangers of not having a guide or "compass" notwithstanding. Beyond these steps is the advice to be given directly and continuously to the masses. This popular campaign should always include the insistence that at the root of this "insecurity" and this "threatening state failure" is capitalism, capitalist rule and this particular generation of Nigeria's capitalist ruling class.

Budgetary Allocation to the Nigerian Army, Navy and Air Force (2015-2022)

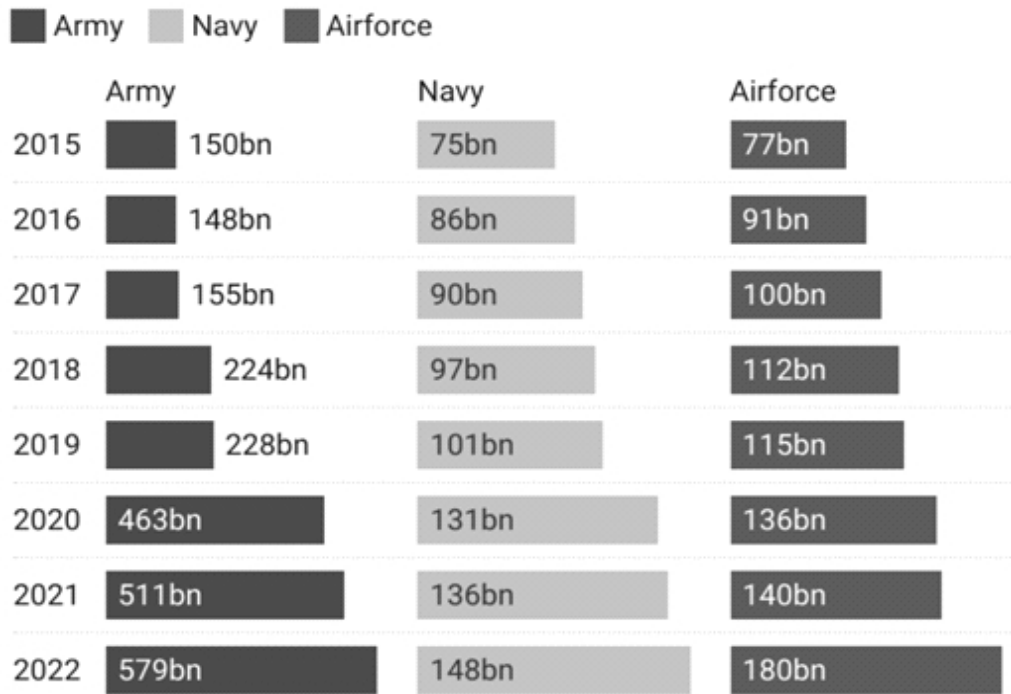


Chart: Dataphyte • Source: Budget Office of the Federation • Created with Datawrapper

not even been implemented in several states. He has not significantly increased the budgets for health and education. As a share of the total budget, the federal education budget was less than half the rate in 2015.

On the subject of insecurity in Nigeria Eddy Madunagu said (in February 2020):

The fundamental demand that should be made on the Nigerian state is that everything should be done within the Constitution to protect the masses – at no extra cost to them, but rather, with a substantial reduction of their current existential burden. No entity (state or non-state) should circumvent or abridge the known basic laws which the Nigerian state and the ruling class claim they are currently using to rule the nation. We must, with clear heads, insist on this because modern history has taught us that one clear sign of rising fascism under capitalism is the increasing inability of the state to govern by its own laws or by its own laws alone.

Beyond this central composite demand on the Nigerian state there are complementary practical demands that

International experience has shown that insecurity on the current scale in Nigeria cannot be defeated by military power and that this only results in more deaths. The underlying social and economic problems of terrible poverty, insecurity and corruption have to be addressed this is the only way to stop future killings and kidnappings. Remember the US were defeated in Vietnam and more recently in Afghanistan, the French were asked to leave Mali, Britain had to negotiate with the IRA and re-build the police in Northern Ireland.

We cannot call for more action from the security services – their guns will inevitably be turned on us and other innocent people. We need to campaign for solidarity with the tertiary education strikes, the implementation of the NLC's Charter of Workers demands (<https://socialistlabour.com.ng/2022/07/15/nlc-charter-of-demands/>) and its adoption by the Labour Party. [Insecurity will only reduce when we have a fairer society.](https://socialistlabour.com.ng/2022/07/15/nlc-charter-of-demands/)

CRITICAL SOCIAL RESEARCH VS. POSITIVISM AND PHENOMENOLOGY IN DIRE NEED FOR HUMAN HEALTH - 1

by Adenike A.O. Ogunshe, Pegasus-Zion Community & Environmental Health.

There are many different causes of death that are peculiar in different countries.

But leading causes of deaths in Nigeria, as in other countries are, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, dementia, diarrhoeal diseases, tuberculosis, respiratory diseases, stroke, diabetes, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, malaria, birth trauma & complications, under-five mortalities, smoking, suicide, homicides, natural disasters, road accidents / injuries, drowning, fire, terrorism etc. However, infectious diseases, which are diseases caused by pathogenic (infectious) microorganisms, are quite devastating and one of the leading causes of death worldwide.

Infectious diseases are caused by bacteria, fungi, parasites, protozoans or viruses. They can infect any of the human systems (respiratory, digestive, nervous, circulatory, reproductive, etc). Infectious Diseases can be transmitted:

- From plants to plants, by insects that feed on plantsap;

- From plants to animals and humans, and also from animals to plants (through urination, defecation, sneezing, spitting, etc.).

- From animals to animals, by blood-sucking insects (e.g., Dengue virus disease, spread by mosquitoes), and from animals to humans.

- From humans to animals, by sexual contact, etc.

- From humans to humans, by coughing and sneezing, (e.g., influenza virus, CoviD-19) not washing hands after using the toilet (e.g., diarrhoea or rotavirus disease); by sexual contact (e.g., HIV-AIDS); by exposure to infected blood (e.g., Hepatitis B) etc.

As succinctly put by Harvey (2022), in effecting **critical social research**, a term that encompasses an approach to social enquiry that attempts to go beneath surface appearance, by critically engaging with prevailing conceptualisations of the social world, it is considered that there are peculiar characteristics of socialist medical care. Deacon (1984)

described a more genuine socialist medical care and health policy, as well as, a conception of ideal socialist and communist medical care and health policy, as a model based on a review of Marxist and allied critiques of capitalist medical

care policy. In deriving the necessity for applicability of *social enquiry that attempts to go beneath surface appearance* in medical care, it is quite critical to call serious attention to a **silent pandemic** that had been with us all the while, even, long before the present century! That *silent pandemic* is **antimicrobial resistance**!!

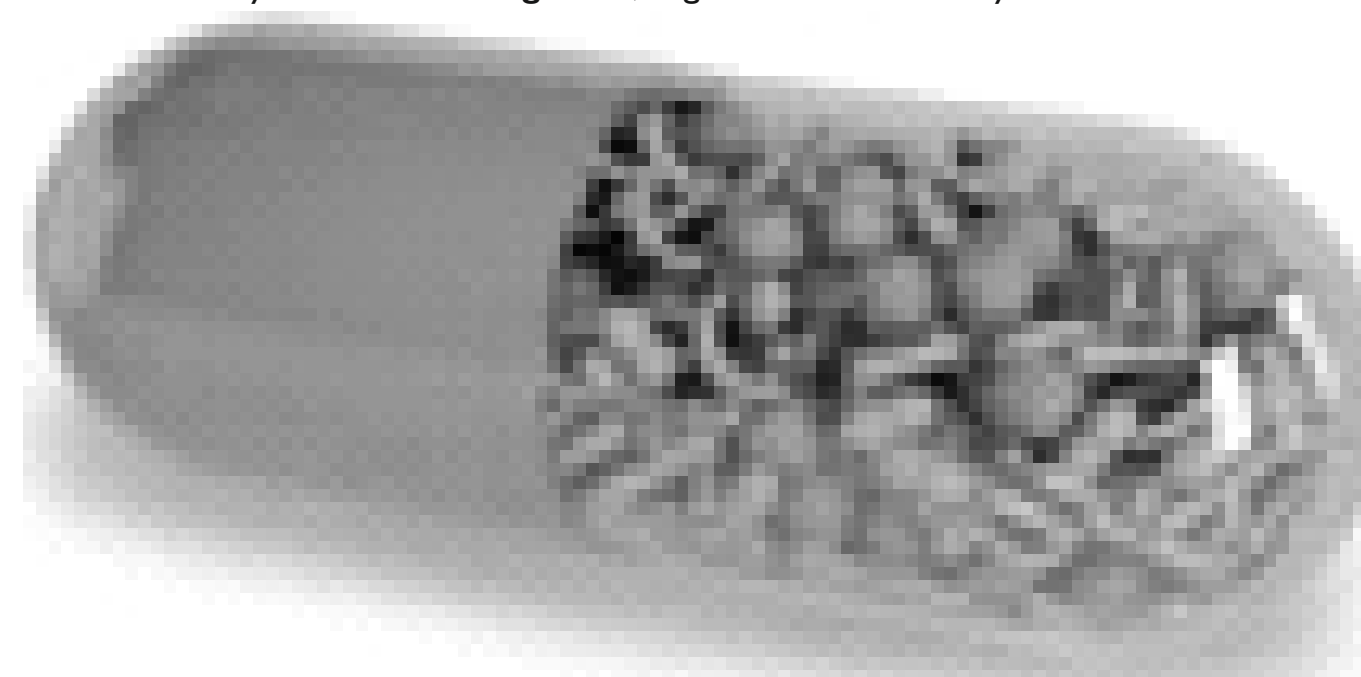
Infectious diseases can be prevented (prophylactic) or treated (therapeutic) with **antimicrobials** like-antibacterials [antibiotics], antifungals and antivirals. Antimicrobial resistance, on the other hand, is when disease-causing (pathogenic) microorganisms develop the ability to survive exposure to antimicrobials designed to kill them or inhibit their growth.

According to some reports, if antibiotic resistance remains unchecked, a near-future global toll of antibiotic resistance of more than three million deaths may occur annually. It may be possible that by 2050, more than 10 million deaths may occur annually in the world, as a result of antimicrobial resistance (O'Neill *et al.*, 2014).

Antimicrobial resistance is also being implicated as co-morbidities in severe cases like, cancer, diabetes, CoviD-19, etc. (Djharuddin *et al.*, 2021; Adab *et al.*, 2022). There is also an estimate that 25% of all deaths in Nigeria could be caused by antibiotic resistance, if resistance trends continue unchecked!

Globally, as at August 25, 2022, there had been 596,119,505 (almost 600 million) confirmed cases of Covid-19. This included 6,457,101 deaths, reported to WHO. This is in spite of various doses of vaccinations, which as of August 17, 2022, had a total administered vaccine doses being 12,409,086,286 (<https://covid19.who.int/>), not to mention vaccination hesitancy (Askarian *et al.*, 2022).

Meanwhile, the case of antimicrobial resistance can be more devastating! So then, what causes antimicrobial resistance; what are the effects of antimicrobial resistance, and how are antimicrobial resistance addressed? [To be continued]



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THE 2023 GENERAL ELECTION: POLITICAL TRANSITION AND THE PROSPECTS OF A NEW DAWN

-Boney Akaeze

The 2023 General Election brings the prospects of change and the possibility of a new dawn for the common people. This is not just because it will bring a replacement for the current disastrous administration. It is essentially because we have hit a decisive phase in our history of democratic aspirations. The future for the mass of poor people is delicately hanging in the balance. They are travelling recklessly buffeted and cannibalized by the corrupt elite in a mammy wagon that is too dangerous for any meaningful journey.

Gross leadership failure to allow decent lives for the masses resonates at every level of the polity. The rampant looting means that there are no resources left for public services like education and health. Abject and declining living conditions and resultant insecurity have become the hallmark of the society. This is the state of affairs that has resulted in the common citizens suffering poverty, alienation, eroded morale and blistering anger.

The real challenge lies squarely with Robert S. Lynd's submission in his forward to Robert A. Brady's book; *Business as a System of Power* where he opined that people, 'have always experienced difficulty in perceiving the thrust of deeper tendencies beneath the surface phenomena of their day, and that particularly when long-established institutional systems have been breaking up under them have they tended to mistake symptom for cause and to greet predictions of major change with incredulity and aversion'.

Thus it is very difficult for a critical mass of the people to understand the objective reality of the social conditions in which they live. This is that the wealth created by the majority is being stolen and monopolised by the tiny corrupt elite and their allies. What options do we have in the face this prevailing moment of danger? We

cannot move towards the emergence of common solidarity and national consensus without a deep struggle.

The political elites, their bureaucratic and big business allies with their traditional oligarchs share a political alignment towards the preservation of a system that delivers their immediate interests. This has resulted in profligate luxury, preposterous flamboyance and the sordid opulence in the

protests in every state capital across the country. They provided plans for a three day warning strike leading to a general strike in solidarity with ASUU, wider funding for education and a move towards a less unequal society. But they failed to follow through with these plans.

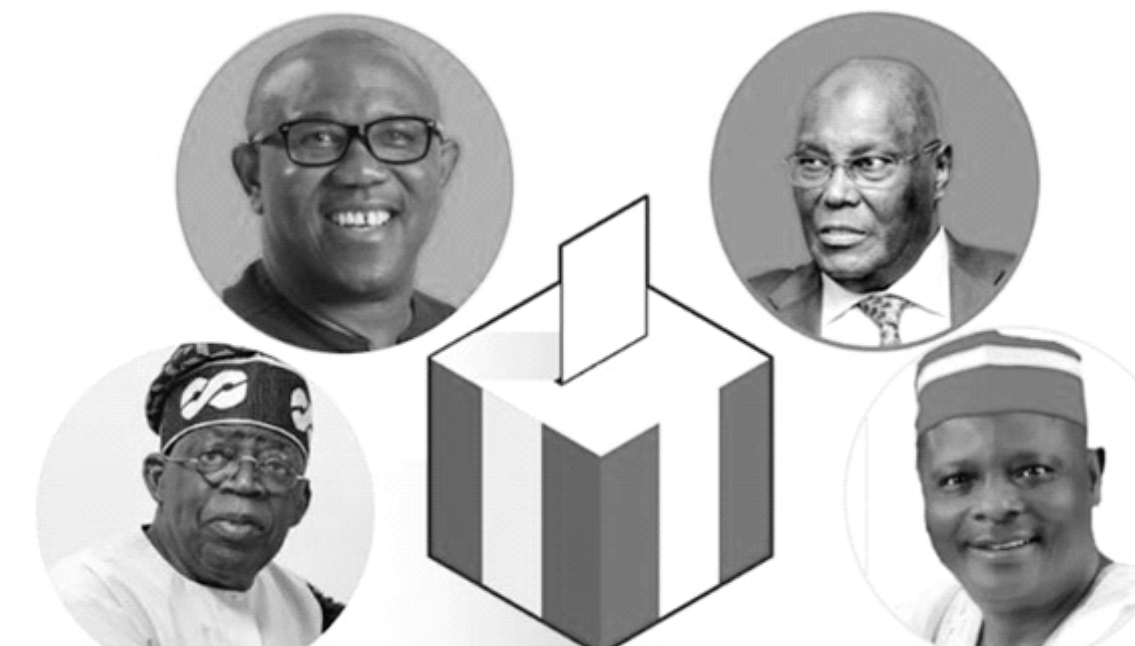
As a result, the anger and desperation of poor majority has turned in a wide variety of different directions. In the north there is

infrastructural development. Their view of socialism is of a strong and decent leader who will oversee planned state led development. For them, socialism will be delivered to a grateful people whose sole role is to vote every four years for leader with the talents to lead the government in the correct direction.

In contrast, real socialism is the self-emancipation of the working peoples. Each workers' strike and collective protest by the poor people is the seed of socialism. The growing consciousness gained from each successful action can demonstrate that together we can begin to build a fairer, more equal and less corrupt society. Collective action and solidarity need to be at the core of our political actions.

Currently, solidarity with the ASUU, and other strikes, needs to be at the centre of our politics. We need messages of solidarity to be sent from all trade union meetings. But we also need these strikes to be active, reaching out to other trade unions and the local communities. We need townhall meetings and protests to be organised each month around each university. We need ASUU delegations to be organised to all trade union meetings in the localities of each university.

The country's decadent political elites by their unbridled recklessness and blind rapacity have awakened in the masses a limited conscious as they interrogate their ever deteriorating living condition. Our role is to emphasise the key role of collective action and strikes. If the ASUU and other strikes are successful, then more people are more likely to make the effort to vote for change next year. If, as seems possible, Peter Obi can be elected president this will give people a huge boost, demonstrating that an alternative to the disaster of the APC/PDP is possible. This will give them confidence to organise widespread strikes and protests that will be needed to actualise the potential for change that a new government will demonstrate.



midst of abject poverty, misery and squalor that is the lot of the majority. This is protected by the shibboleths and facades of religious and ethnic differences. These are strategically deployed as tools of divide rule.

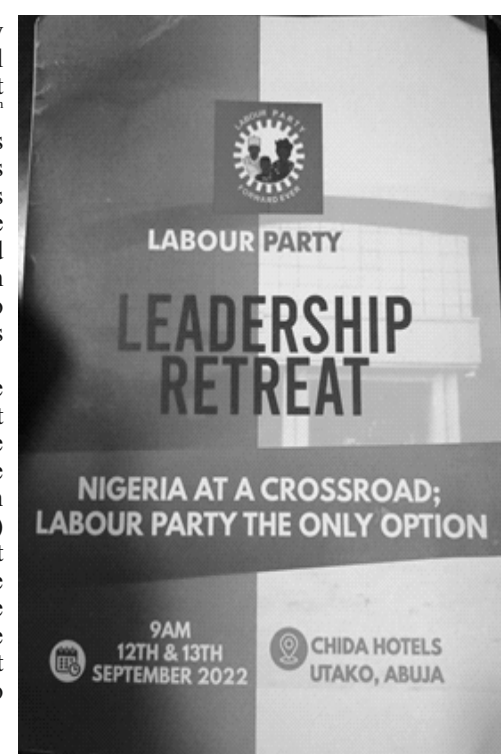
Conservative and reactionary people rationalise the status quo with the establishment bigwigs, bureaucratic collaborators, spokespersons and even their lumpen vassals being unapologetically brash, cocky and cheeky in their defence of the rotten system. The liberals on their part are engrossed in their historical role- of analysing and at most, criticising the state of affairs. The leadership of the trade unions demonstrated yet again, at the end of July, that they have the ability to organised

continued support for Islam and a variety of radical sects including ISWAP, the Shiites and others. In the south the churches maintain their domination. Across society there is a turn to ethnic solutions with the linked turn against the ethnic 'other' and resulting community conflicts. Crime, kidnapping and plunder have become widespread.

Many radicals wear the epithet 'Marxist' as their badge of honour. They hold as sacrosanct and irrepealable their adherence to socialism, Marxist philosophies and theories. But in practice they are reduced to being nationalists, being in awe to western democracies and want to see the development of capitalist society. So they look to leaders who provide any evidence of being able to run relatively less corrupt administrations that will oversee some

LABOUR PARTY - NATIONAL LEADERSHIP RETREAT

The Labour Party held a national leadership retreat in Abuja on 12/13th September. This included all its leadership members, its candidates in the coming elections and representatives from NLC and TUC. It also included supporters from various groups. Peter Obi, said that the Federal Government can meet all the demands of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) with the income it generates from the sale of crude oil in just one month but the government does not have the political will to solve the problem.



The retreat past a range of motions, the most significant of which were the following:

- That Labour Party will form a government that will make Chapter 2 of the Nigeria Constitution justiciable.
- That the [NLC] Workers Charter of Demands must be the driving agenda of the Labour Party and should be implemented on short, medium and long term bases to recapture Nigeria and put it on the path of positive development.
- That the Workers Charter of Demands are clearly that of human development index that measure development.
- That the Workers Charter of Demands is taken and implemented fully to save Nigeria from the current crisis.
- That the Labour Party candidates must begin to visit all organizations' offices, including that of all NLC and TUC Offices, all women organisations and others to ensure that the message is taken down to the grassroots.

We have an opportunity to link up with and work with some wonderful people, if we try and work with Labour Party and Peter Obi supporters. As Boney Akaeze says:

I organised members of the Labour Party in Ward 1 of Aniocha North LGA, Delta State to hear a coordinator of one of the Peter Obi's numerous support groups in the State. These are grassroots people, their focus may just be Peter Obi and the 2023 presidential election, but we can tactically use the political current being generated by them to build the Labour Party at the grassroots. The current climate will definitely evaporate after the elections, hence the strategic necessity to harvest it while it lasts.

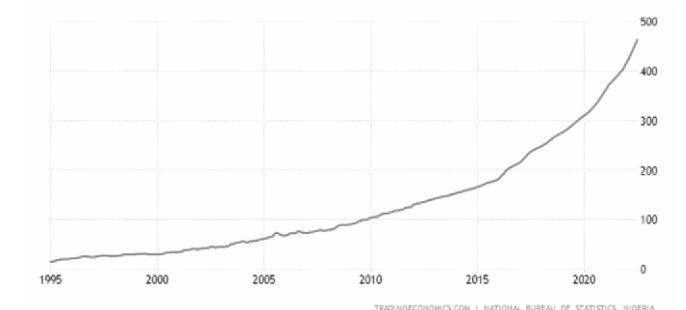
DID THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OFFER A CUT IN REAL WAGES TO ASUU?

-Izielen Agbon

Did the Federal Government really offer a cut in real wages to the members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)? Yes, the Federal Government offered an increase of only N60,000 per month to a new salary of N476,000 per month for a full professor. This would be a massive reduction in their real wages.

need N465 to buy what N100 could buy in 2009. In contrast, professors are now being offered only a 35% increase!

In 2009, when the last Federal Government/ASUU agreement was signed, a full professor earned N416,000 per month. The official exchange rate was \$/N150 while the black market rate was \$1/N159. Since professors have no access to the official exchange rate, we will use the black market exchange rate for our conversion. A full professor



CPI - Nigeria - 1995-2022 was therefore paid \$2,616 a month in 2009. The

agreement was to be renegotiated every five years. The Federal Government has still not re-negotiated

Nominal wages are the wages in the prevailing currency while the real wage is adjusted for inflation. Real wages determine your purchasing power or how much means of subsistence the wages can actually buy. If the rate of inflation or a general increase in prices is greater than the increase in wages, then the purchasing value of wages will fall.

We can capture all these economic effects with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI is a measure of the average change over time in the prices for a basket of consumer goods or means of subsistence. Using a CPI of 100 in 2009, when the 2009 Federal Government/ASUU agreement was signed, the CPI in 2022 is 465. This means that N100 in 2009 is worth N465 today or to put in everyday terms, you now

this agreement, 13 years later!

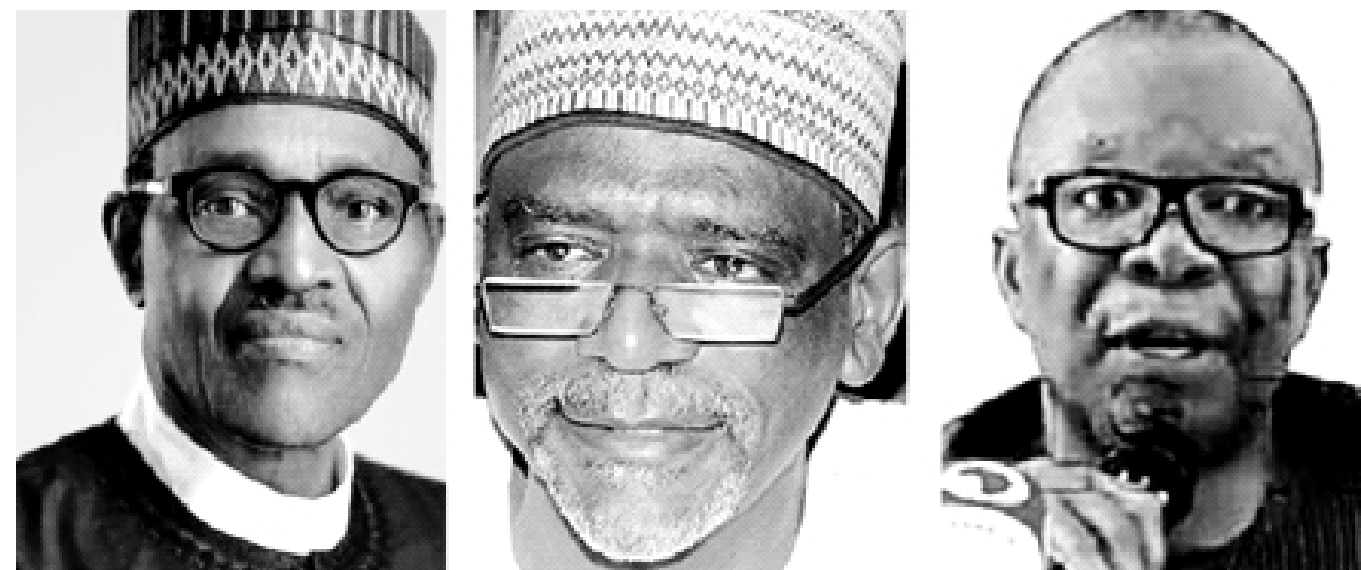
In 2022, the Federal offered ASUU an increase of N60,000 per month in the salary of a full professor. However, N476,000 in 2022 Naira is equivalent to only N102,366 in 2009 naira or \$644 in 2009 dollars. In short, N476,000 today can only buy what N102,366 could buy in 2009 when a professors salary was actually N416,000.

Imagine, a Minister of Education walking majestically into a room, with his entourage in tow, and offering a cut in real wages from N416,000 2009 Naira to N102,365 2009 Naira! Not only this, but this pay cut was offered on a take it or leave it basis after a 6 months strike!!

The Minister was aware of inflationary trends in the economy and the decline in the purchasing power of the Naira since 2009. The ASUU representatives politely rejected the offer of a cut in real wages. We are forced to the conclusion that government officials are either very inept or they are dedicated to destroying public tertiary education in Nigeria.

ASUU STRIKE: THE THREAT OF “NO WORK NO PAY” IS INAPPLICABLE

-By Femi Aborisade



We commend the leadership and members of ASUU for sustaining their strike for over half a year so far. The Government is clearly in a mess and does not know what to do!

where the act of the employer is the cause of strike action, the employees would be entitled to payment of salaries and allowances.

In *Olufeagba v. Abdul-Raheem* (2009) 18 NWLR 384 S. C at 441, the Supreme Court found in favour of the payment of salaries and allowances of the Appellants where '... it was the Respondents who refused to put an end to the impasse... when they refused to comply with the directive of the National Universities Commission – the parent body of the respondents to reinstate the appellants. On the basis of this finding, the Court held that the affected university lecturers were entitled to be reinstated and paid their salaries during the period of the strike.

The ASUU strike is lawful and justifiable. The strike is lawful by Section 30(6)(b) & (c) of the Trade Unions Act, strikes are lawfully protected where the dispute involves dispute of right and fundamental breach of contract or a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). ASUU's strike involves a challenge to the unimplemented 1992 Agreement with the Federal Government, which led to several subsequent Agreements arising from strike actions over the same issues. To that extent, the threat of “NO WORK NO PAY” is inapplicable to the context of ASUU strike.

The Apex Court of Nigeria has established the principle, along the spirit of Section 30(6)(b) & (c) of the Trade Unions Act that

In addition, by virtue of Section 254C(1)(j)(i) of the Constitution, as amended, collective agreements are

enforceable. The ASUU strike is therefore a defence of the Constitution of Nigeria against its contemptuous breach by the Federal Government.

Fundamentally, the essence of the ASUU strike is a strike to realize the provisions of Section 18(3) of the Constitution which guarantee provision of education in public institutions at the expense of the State/government.

Nigeria has more than enough resources to provide education for young people at the expense of the State. On a daily basis, we are being inundated with unimaginable amount of resources being consumed in corruption. The challenge therefore lies in what the state prioritises as important – the greed of the rulers or the basic existential needs of the masses.

It is critically important to note that the key to accessing enjoyment of constitutionally and statutorily guaranteed rights is resolute strikes, mass action and peaceful protests as we have seen in the unfolding ASUU strike. In the face of a united strike action supported by the NLC/TUC there is nothing the National Industrial Court nor the Government can do.

THIS LAND IS THEIR LAND:

Reports from a Divided Nation The American socialist and Feminist, Barbara Ehrenreich died in September 2022.

Below we provide reviews and links to two of her many publications **Barbara Ehrenreich**,

When a hospital employee whose hospital-supplied health insurance doesn't cover her hospital-incurred bill finds her wages garnished, where's a political satirist to go for material? Feisty, fearlessly progressive Ehrenreich offers laughter on the way to tears in 62 previously published essays that show “the rich getting richer and poor getting poorer.” She investigates pockets of poverty among undocumented workers, military families and recent college graduates. Ehrenreich's reach is capacious, encompassing not only unemployment, health insurance and inflation, but corporate spying, cancer studies, marriage education, the “abstinence training business” and “Disney's Princess products.” Her passion, compassion and wit keep these excursions lively and timely—even when yesterday's headlines provide the immediate provocation, e.g., JetBlue's “snow snafu.” The vignettes go down a bit like eating peanuts—too many at one time palls, but they're not unhealthy, unless you have an allergic reaction to Ehrenreich's message: “America is being polarized between the superrich few and the subrich everyone else.” Entertaining Ehrenreich certainly is, but she raises a hard, serious question: “How many 'wake-up calls' do we need, people...?”



WHAT IS SOCIALIST FEMINISM?

BARBARA EHRENRICH (1976)

At some level, perhaps not too well articulated, socialist feminism has been around for a long time. You are a woman in a capitalist society. You get pissed off: about the job, about the bills, about your husband (or ex), about the kids' school, the housework, being pretty, not being pretty, being looked at, not being look at (and either way, not listened to), etc. If you think about all these things and how they fit together and what has to be changed, and then you look around for some words to hold all these thoughts together in abbreviated form, you'd almost have to come up with “socialist feminism.” ...

1. The Marxist/feminist understanding that class and sex domination rest ultimately on force is correct, and this remains the most devastating critique of sexist/capitalist society. But there is a lot to that “ultimately.” In a day to day sense, most people acquiesce to sex and class domination without being held in line by the threat of violence, and often without even the threat of material deprivation.

2. It is very important, then, to figure out what it is, if not the direct application of force, that keeps things going. In the case of class, a great deal has been written already about why the US working class lacks militant class consciousness. Certainly ethnic divisions, especially the black/white division, are a key part of the answer. But I would argue, in addition to being divided, the working class has been socially atomized. Working class neighborhoods have been destroyed and are allowed to decay; life has become increasingly privatized and inward-looking; skills once possessed by the working class have been expropriated by the capitalist class; and capitalist controlled “mass culture” has edged out almost all indigenous working class culture and institutions. Instead of collectivity and self-reliance as a class, there is mutual isolation and collective dependency on the capitalist class.

3. The subjugation of women, in the ways which are characteristic of late capitalist society, has been key to this process of class atomization. To put it another way, the forces which have atomized working class life and promoted cultural/material dependence on the capitalist class are the same forces which have served to perpetuate the subjugation of women. It is women who are most isolated in what has become an increasingly privatized family existence (even when they work outside the home too). It is, in many key instances, women's skills (productive skills, healing, midwifery, etc.) which have been discredited or banned to make way for commodities. It is, above all, women who are encouraged to be utterly passive/uncritical/dependent (i.e. “feminine”) in the face of the pervasive capitalist penetration of private life. Historically, late capitalist penetration of working class life has singled out women as prime targets of pacification/“feminization” – because women are the culture-bearers of their class.

4. It follows that there is a fundamental interconnection between women's struggle and what is traditionally conceived as class struggle. Not all women's struggles have an inherently anti-capitalist thrust (particularly not those which seek only to advance the power and wealth of special groups of women), but all those which build collectivity and collective confidence among women are vitally important to the building of class consciousness. Conversely, not all class struggles have an inherently anti-sexist thrust (especially not those that cling to pre-industrial patriarchal values) but all those which seek to build the social and cultural autonomy of the working class are necessarily linked to the struggle for women's liberation.

The full pamphlet is available for free download from: <https://www.marxists.org/subject/women/authors/ehrenreich-barbara/socialist-feminism.htm>

OCTOBER - ‘REVOLUTION IS THE CHOICE OF THE PEOPLE:’

- China Miéville

In October 1917, the Bolsheviks led the working class to power in Russia. They removed a feudal regime from the head of a massive, but economically poor empire. This was the first time that a working class had taken state power at the national level and so it remains a model for us today.

Multi-award-winning author China Miéville captures the drama of the Russian Revolution in this “engaging retelling of the events that rocked the foundations of the twentieth century” (Village Voice)

In February of 1917 Russia was a backward, autocratic, monarchy, mired in an unpopular war; by October, after not one but two revolutions, it had become the world's first workers' state, straining to be at the vanguard of global revolution.

How did this unimaginable transformation take place? In a panoramic sweep, stretching from St. Petersburg and Moscow to the remotest villages of a sprawling empire, Miéville uncovers the catastrophes, intrigues and inspirations of 1917, in all their passion, drama and strangeness.

Intervening in long-standing historical debates, but told with the reader new to the topic especially in mind, here is a breathtaking story of humanity at its greatest and most desperate; of a turning point for civilization that still resonates loudly today. The link to download the book, October - <https://ivavalleybooks.com/2022/08/15/october-by-china-mievill/?v=330a840f8637>



‘REVOLUTION IS THE CHOICE OF THE PEOPLE:’

Crisis and revolt in the middle east and north africa'

Below the website ROAPE shares an extract from 'Revolution is the choice of the people: crisis and revolt in the Middle East and North Africa' by Anne Alexander.

The passage deepens our understanding of the complex class structure of the Middle Eastern and North African Societies in which uprisings and revolutions erupted in the 2010s with the Arab Spring.

<https://roape.net/2022/09/20/professionals-and-proletarians-class-struggle-under-neoliberalism/>