

# **“Security” Crisis: Implications for National Integration and Development**

**Omotoye Olorode**  
**Department of Biological Sciences,**  
**University of Abuja, Abuja. FCT.**

## **Introduction**

In recent times, the question of “security” had assumed prominence in public consciousness and discussion. It has become particularly so after the spate of violence (street riots, bombings, killing, arson and other acts of violence against property) in some parts of Nigeria immediately before, and after, the 2011 Elections. Consequently, attention was diverted from the subsisting general violence relating to ethno-nationalist and religious/confessional conflicts and the more specific directly individual/group criminal acts of armed robberies, kidnappings etc. to electoral/party-political conflicts and the accompanying violence across the country. As for the state of violent acts after the 2011 Elections, I have made the point somewhere else that the crisis was not only predictable, it was predicted because the central issues in the campaigns especially the presidential campaigns were about where the president will come from and which God or Gods he/she worship. Whether Jonathan won or lost, there was going to be violence.

Generally then, the overall public apprehension of security crisis and the attendant violence in Nigeria has to do with violence and/or threats of violence on persons and property as the state (governments at different levels) and state agencies (the courts, police and other law-enforcement agencies) and cultural institution (religion, the media, educational institutions etc.) define insecurity and violence.

We need also to put this discussion on “Security Crisis” in a global context. It is not just inside particular countries that there is insecurity and violent conflicts. Violent conflicts and the attendant consequences such as refugee problems, hunger, death, rapes, and various other forms of human tragedy have proliferated across the world especially in the last decade with national and

international dimensions. In many of these national and international theatres of conflict the globalisation of economic and political violence has been implicated.

In *The Clash of Fundamentalism* (Verso, London: p. 3), Tariq Ali (2002) commenting on the ambience of the September 11, 2001 attack (allegedly by Al-Qaeda) of New York, noted:

Capitalism has created a single market, but without erasing the distinctions between the two worlds that face each other across a divide that first appeared in the eighteenth and became institutionalised in the nineteenth century. Most of the twentieth century witnessed several attempts to transcend this division through a process of revolutions, wars of national liberation and a combination of both. But in the end capitalism proved to be more cunning and more resilient.

Capitalism thus triumphed (at least for now) and it had produced dangerously violent consequences across our planet (in Asia, Latin America, Africa, Europe and even inside the hegemonic capitalist states) leading to masses of multiplying and disempowered people characterised succinctly, again, by Tariq Ali (Ibid. p. 3):

A disempowered people are constantly reminded of its own weakness. In the West a common response is to sink into the routines of everyday life. Elsewhere in the world, the people become flustered, feel more and more helpless and nervous. Anger, frustration and despair multiply. They no longer rely on the state [government] for help. The laws favour the rich. So the more desperate among them.....begin to live by their own laws. Willing recruits will never be in short supply.

In the foregoing situation, Ali (2002) further insisted that “Moral outrage has some therapeutic value, but as a political strategy, it is useless”.

Towards the end of the twentieth century therefore, capitalism emerged as the dominant, if not sole, economic fundamentalism along with what is generally called liberal democracy—alleged supremacy of the market and periodic elections where wealthy individuals and corporations control economic and political levers of the world and/of particular elaborate political and economic

international institutions (WTO, GB, IMF, World Bank and even UNO) with USA as, for now, the single most influential political economic, military and cultural entity.

Of course the colonial pillage which created and maintains the current marauding power of capitalism had created not just a history of resistance among those it disempowered, it had intensified anger and hate among the victims. This entrenched hate and anger had renewed various forms of fundamentalisms against the metropolises of capitalism (the imperialist states) their agents, ideological institutions and cultures in the peripheries and satellites like Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Nigeria, Pakistan, etc.

Perhaps one of the most well known, most systematic, of those fundamentalisms against *capitalist fundamentalism* (market-ism and profit-ism) is what becomes known as Islamic fundamentalism. Of course there are also varieties of Christian and other religious fundamentalisms all over the world including various sects that encourage their adherents to commit suicides! *Other fundamentalisms* are various intensities of *nationalism* (Iraqi, Yoruba, Igbo, Chinese, Japanese, Afghan, German, Izon, Ebira, Isoko, Igbo, Ibibio, Hausa, Igala etc.) that many have, at various times, been responding to economic and/or political “marginalisation” or exploitation.

Needless to say, a fundamentalism or nationalism needs not necessarily arise as a result of exploitation, marginalisation or threats of violence or extermination. Fundamentalism also arise from a desire or a felt need for a dominant group to remain dominant; such tendencies arise from genuine fears and/or contrived fears of being swamped as among settlers who become politically, demographically or economically dominant in their new “homes” or occupied territories (Jews in Palestine, Europeans in America, Fulani in Ilorin, Europeans in South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe etc.).

### **“Security” Crisis and Violence: Some definitions**

As we noted above, the dominant perception of insecurity in Nigeria today is that of fears for *personal and private* safety and safety of property arising from violent ethno-nationalist, religious or *purely criminal* activities such as armed or un-armed robbery etc. *The violence* arising from this perception of insecurity is also generally personal, individualised and localised.

However, the concept of insecurity is not as narrow as circumscribed in the last paragraph. Security is general absence of potential and/or actual threats, fear of potential and/or actual violence which may subvert individual or collective physical or psychological well-being or deprive one or a collectivity of livelihood, means of livelihood or property. But it is not a surprise that Nigerians have been forced to define security so narrowly.

It is the duty of our movement, *the labour movement and the spearhead of the oppressed* to define security beyond *law and order frame*. If we do, as we must, we will expand it to include *social security* which of course include the law and order frame and has direct relationship to law and order concerns as we shall demonstrate presently.

Social security is defined as assured means of livelihood—jobs with living wages, means of livelihood when workers are out of work, (unemployment benefit) adequate housing and health provision; compensation for injuries at work, education for children, clean environment, adequate rest and holiday periods, continuing education for workers etc. Whether a society guarantees all these or not, of course, depends on how the resources of the society are produced, the class that allocates the resources, and how.

A society that fails to guarantee and maintain the foregoing cannot have security in the broad sense that security was defined above; and it cannot be free of violence. For, non-provision of social security is itself, violence against the working class!

### **“Insecurity” and violence arising from “Criminal” activities**

As we said above violence and insecurity arising from criminal activities such as robbery, cultism, gang wars, rape, kidnapping etc. arise largely from conditions that breed *parasitism* in society—lack of adequate education, lack of appropriate jobs, lack of social security generally and absence of appropriate cultural facilities that generate and maintain solidarity in society. Clearly, this category of insecurity and violence is also directly related to parasitism on society by members of the ruling class such as stealing of public funds and general corruptive practices that deprive the public of the use of public resources to build appropriate social security facilities that will obviate the parasitism among the oppressed classes as described earlier on. Consequently, a ruling class that is an essential parasite on society is as much a security risk to

that society as poor people who have been forced into robbery, kidnapping, and various other criminal acts.

Generally speaking, the violence relating to criminal activities have random, rather than, specific targets. It does not, therefore, have any political purpose or goal.

### **Insecurity and violence arising from ethnic-nationalist (separatist) agitation.**

Ethnic-nationalist or separatist agitation arise, as we noted earlier on, from *actual* national oppression or from *perceived* marginalisation or simple “belief” that life will be better in a separate sovereign territory of the nationality agitating for such separate state.

This tendency, in Nigeria varies from violent agitation for separate local governments or states to agitations for what they call fiscal federalism, confederacy, or complete secession from the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

At different points organisations like OPC, MASSOB, NDVF were pushing separatist agendas complete with deployment, and threats of violence. Between 1999 and 2008 or so, some of these organisations were characterised by Nigeria’s security agents and their USA mentors as “terrorist” organisations, US was suggesting sending intervention force to Niger Delta and the leaders of some of the organisations (like OPC, Ijaw Youth Council, Arewa Youth Council, Supreme Egbesu Assembly, and MASSOB) were detained for treasonable felony.

These ethnic-nationalist organisations comprise members that are *largely* economically deprived, unemployed or marginally-employed, frustrated young people who were also disgruntled with inequalities in the Nigerian society. The organisations are therefore largely working class and lumpen-proletariat movements. However, the separatist ideology or fundamentalism of the movements are derived from, and are articulated by, ruling class and political and intellectual elements of organisations such as Afenifere, Ohanaeze Ndi Igbo etc. who then use the mutual threats of the militant youth organisations to bargain at the level of the elite while keeping safe distance from the more

violent methods of some of these militant movements. In certain circumstances splits may occur (as in OPC) along what look like class lines. These same patterns are also present in inter-community conflicts *inside* homogenous ethnic groups such as the Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, geographically-homogeneous locations as in the Niger Delta, the Middle Belt, (the now) “South-South,” and other nationalities.

Let us just say here that ethnicity is not being, and cannot be, denied. However, according to Hildyard (1999: In Mohammed Suliman, 1999):

“...the shared values, histories customs and identities that generate ‘ethnicity’ are socially constructed not biologically determined; and [that] at the root, ethnic conflicts result not from blood hatred but from socially generated divisions which, more often than not, reflect deep-seated conflict over power and resources both between groups and (more pertinent still) within groups...Who is ‘us’ and who is ‘them’ is thus forever being subtly redefined as histories are told and retold; traditions invented and denied; statutes ascribed and challenged; allegiances forged and broken and identities claimed and rejected...”.

It is a fact that the levels of hostility, insecurity and violence arising from “Islamic” fundamentalism in the North eastern parts of Nigeria have escalated in the last year and especially since the bloody clamp down on Jama’atu Ahliss-Sunnah Lidda’awati Wal Jihad (derogatorily referred to as Boko Haram in the Nigeria media) in the last two years or so. What is very curious is that the “security problem” in Nigeria is today, thanks to tendentiousness in the Nigerian media and massive US incursions, interventions and propaganda concerning “Al-Qaeda” and the “Islamic extremists” is defined almost entirely and exclusively as problems arising from “Islamic extremists”. As we noted earlier on, until about two years ago, “extremism” was a term reserved almost entirely for the organisations like Supreme Egbesu Assembly (SEA), OPC, MASSOB, Bakassi Boys, Ijaw Youth Council, MEND etc. Indeed, in an anthology titled *Urban Violence Ethnic Militias and the Challenges of Democratic Consolidation* (edited by Tunde Babawale, 2003), no single mention was made of “Islamic” militias because it was not much of an issue at that time.

My opinion is that the current focus on Islamic fundamentalism without inserting it in the general context of other existing and thriving fundamentalisms, serve certain internal and international political and economic agendas that divert popular attention from history and contemporary analyses that will enable oppressed segments of society build solidarity and popular economic and political platforms.

In the foregoing regards, it is instructive that while public attention remain riveted on “Boko Haram”, “Kidnappers”, Islamic Banking, armed robbers etc. and other so-called security problems, very scanty attention is allowed to be allotted to minimum wage, dilapidated educational and health system, roguish emoluments of legislators, the reinforced of IMF and World Bank stranglehold on our country, the auctioning of Nigeria (aka privatisation) and the take-over of Nigeria by imperialist security organisation such as CIA and FBI under the pretext of fighting Al-Qaeda etc. A substantial segment of Nigerian Christians and Muslims are also fully engaged in public arguments about the motives of Islamic Bank advocacy while they are completely silent on the legitimacy of Nigeria’s thieving ruling class, the economic fundamentalism of the World Bank agents ruling Nigeria, low wages, unemployment and the generalised subversion of public purpose.

While it is necessary to understand the global and local origins and development of Islamic fundamentalism, it is important to understand generally that religious fundamentalism (Christian, Islamic and others) have played critical social, political and economic roles in the evolution of many modern states. These fundamentalisms have been pivotal to the creation of United Kingdom, USA, Saudi Arabia, apartheid South Africa, Libya, Iran etc. Religious fundamentalism had been pivotal in the partitions that produced Israel, Pakistan, recent partitions in the Balkans, the violence in Southern Lebanon and the conflicts between the Christian Phalangists and the Palestinian refugees in South Lebanon in the 1980s, and the development of Hamas of Hezbollah! In Nigeria, the ruling class has imposed Christianity and Islam as national religions pretending that indigenous religions do not exist anymore and invoking both in their intra-class negotiations. Religion had thus become a powerful force that can be, and is being, manipulated and politicised. Where ethnic nationalisms follow similar contours as religion, an extremely powerful incendiary for political manipulation and mobilisation arises.

It is not only internal forces contending for economic and political power in a territory that manipulate religion; external forces do too. The BBC throughout the 2011 Elections in Nigeria kept drumming it into the ears of the whole world that “Buhari comes from the Muslim North while Jonathan comes from the Oil-rich Christian South”! The birth of Israel and Pakistan almost simultaneously (both resting largely on exclusivist and religious fundamentalist platforms—Zionism and Islam respectively) were midwifed by western imperialism and have depended on that midwife since; as Tariq Ali (op cit. p.166) noted:

“Conceived in a hurry and delivered prematurely—a last-minute caesarean by doctors tending the British empire—Pakistan emerged in August 1949 its births accompanied by massive loss of blood. In its first year, the new state was deprived of a limb (Kashmia) and then lost its father (Mohammed Ali Jinnah). Then, like its tougher more ruthless confessional twin, Israel, it decided to accept the offer of a permanent nurse. It was assumed that the only route to survival was to become a Cold War patient under the permanent supervision of Western imperialism. As the British Empire faded, the United States assumed responsibility for Pakistan”

The rise of Islamic fundamentalism or what has become known generally as “political” Islam and its Christian backlash needs deeper understanding especially if we are to understand the depth of its influence and work out a working class attitude to the generalised manipulation of faiths and religions. This is important because Islamic fundamentalism, rightfully or wrongly, is the single most monolithic challenge to western capitalist imperialism today being at once theocratic and multinational from the Maghreb to the Middle East, to Southern Europe and the Balkans, to South East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa including substantial parts of East Africa. The antagonisms of the Christian and Islamic civilisations date back to the rapid Islamic religio-economic spread and conquests in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries in North Africa and Southern Europe, the Crusade response, the establishment of the Ottoman (Muslim) Empire and the triumph of European (Christian) imperialism since the 15th century or so. But the triumph of European colonialism did not stop anti-colonial resistance which, in the Muslim world, combined nationalism with religious fervour. This is what has metamorphosed into various manifestations of secular and religious



statecraft that produced the revolutions in Egypt, Algeria, Turkey, Libya, Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

What we are saying then is that Islamic fundamentalism in particular and its various manifestations around the globe need to be apprehended as one of the responses to the globalisation and local cloning of *capitalist fundamentalism* of the market. Capitalist fundamentalism of course builds agencies (Christian and Muslim) around the world and creates victims of global and agency capitalism simultaneously. The resurgence of socialist mass and political movements in Latin America (Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil etc.), the periodic often-violent anti-globalisation demonstrations at G8 meetings (at Genoa, Nice, Seattle, Davos, Windsor, Gleneagles, etc.) and even the so-called Arab Spring are, in many ways like Islamic fundamentalism, responses of the victims of market fundamentalism and the allies of those victims.

**“State terrorism” and the specific context of the rise of religious fundamentalism in Nigeria.**

Any *serious* discussions, as opposed to the propaganda of western imperialism and their agents in the peripheries like Nigeria must insist on counter-posing the increased terror, impunity and multiple standards of western imperialism and their agents, against their so-called “global war on terror”. At the global level, we must counter pose the propaganda of NATO bombing of Libya to the NATO silence in Bahrain and Yemen and drone deaths of civilians in Afghanistan. We must counter pose the western “concerns” about civilians in Libya, Darfur and Syria with Israeli blockade of West Bank and Southern Lebanon and Israeli murders on the unarmed Turkish flotilla that was carrying relief materials to Palestinians. NATO arms anti-Ghadafi forces in Libya but Palestine is forbidden to have an army while Israel possesses even nuclear power!

In Nigeria, state terror and World Bank fundamentalism wreak havoc on law-abiding citizens on a daily basis. The livelihood of thousands of Nigerians are subverted daily and their dwellings erased daily and summarily at Tora Bora, Dei Dei, Lugbe and Kubwa in the FCT (*Daily Trust* Mon. July 4: p.6), Maroko, Oshodi (Lagos). Every excuse is used by the state to wipe out towns such as Odi or turn towns like, Zaki Biam into ghost cities. In the Niger Delta, the violence against ordinary people in many communities (as Sagbama and Gbaramatu, etc., etc.) can only be imagined.

In the specific case of the Islamic sects in some northern parts of our country the last two years have been characterised by arbitrariness and impunity, indiscriminate arrests and executions by Nigeria's so-called law-enforcement agencies. Following the crisis in Bauchi and Bornu in the last two years or so, the whole town of Dar-Ul-Salam near Mokwa was reported to have been sacked completely by the so-called security agents. In the one month or so (June/July 2011) tens of young people women and children are said to have been arrested or killed by "law-enforcement" agencies on the suspicion that they are members of Boko Haram". Many of these are definitely innocent but there is no way of knowing what will happen to the alleged suspects that are currently in the custody of "security forces"!

In all of these, both at global and local levels of state terror, what is certain is that the ranks of those that are disgruntled with the state, and the so-called "international community" in its totality, are bound to swell. *State terror thus reproduces discontent and various colours of fundamentalism—existential, "nationalist" and confessional; and this explains the deepening and proliferation of conflicts inside countries and internationally around the world.*

**The response of the international community, "the state and "state actors" to "insecurity" and "fundamentalism".**

Almost invariably, the response of states and state actors to insecurity and violence is ruled by the desire to assert the authority of the state or what they now call "international community" in the global parlance no matter how illegitimate that authority is. The troop "surge" in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Police Equipment Fund scam under Obasanjo's government, the clamour for more powers for JTF in the Delta and in the North, the handing over of Nigeria's security to foreign security organisations are standard responses of ruling classes and their clubs around the world. These are all because aggrieved and disempowered parties and victims of dominant parties and ideologies are simplistically labelled as *intolerant or extremist groups* who need to be persuaded through the use of "carrot and stick" (which end up being largely "stick" as it is now in Maiduguri) to *embrace tolerance*. In this regard Zizek's (2009) observations are particularly apt:

Why are so many problems today perceived as problems of intolerance rather than as problems of inequality, exploitation, or injustice? Why is the proposed remedy tolerance rather than

emancipation, political struggle, even armed struggle? The immediate answer lies in the liberal multiculturalist's basic, ideological operation: the "culturalisation of politics". Political differences—differences conditioned by political inequalities or economic exploitation—are naturalised and neutralised into 'cultural' differences, that is into different ways of life which are something given, something that cannot be overcome. They can only be "tolerated". This demands a response in the terms that Walter Benjamin offers: from *culturisation of politics* to *politicisation of culture*. The cause of this culturisation is the retreat, the failure of direct political solutions such as the welfare state or various socialist projects. Tolerance is their post-political ersatz.

Of course in all of these, there are all kinds of vultures, adventurers, security consultants, contractors (supplying guns, CCTVs etc.) and plain maniacs who profit materially and politically from the assertion of the authority of the dominant classes.

### **Concretising the point about the political manipulation of various fundamentalisms**

We have noted above that throughout the history of the world and of Nigeria, hegemonic forces have manipulated fundamentalisms ("nationalist" and confessional). Usman (1987), Ibrahim (2000), Mu'azzam and Ibrahim (2000), and Mustapha (2000) did comprehensive studies on this phenomenon in Nigeria. Things have remained pretty much the same since those studies were carried out.

Because Obasanjo and his Yoruba PDP supporters relied on substantial support from the PDP in the North, neither he, nor his supporters were able to publicly denounce the virtual declaration of theocracy in Zamfara, Kano, and Niger States. Public officers carried their religious identities on their heads building churches and mosques with public money in Aso Rock and State Houses; Obasanjo even appointed a Baptist Chaplain for Aso Rock Chapel! The previous [Muslim] National Universities Commission (NUC) built a mosque inside NUC, and when Christian Executive Secretaries of NUC took power, they built an NUC Chapel. Our Universities have been infected, most private Universities are religious fundamentalist institutions while private primary and

secondary educational institutions are “Christian” or “Islamic”. With the progressive withdrawal of public funding from government institution, our children are recruited into youth fundamentalisms from their most impressionable ages!

I have always wondered what will happen if an Ogun devotee becomes President of Nigeria and decides to build an Ogun shrine in Aso Rock complete with a resident Ogun priest and weekly sacrifices of a dog to Ogun in Aso Shrine!

For some of us, the way to remove the perch from the feet of all the forces that manipulate religious antipathies in our country is that *we insist on the secularity of Nigeria*. Our interpretation of this is that religion will be the private affair of individuals and groups and there will be no space for public officers or public offices to parade any religion. And public officers at all levels should defend the concept of Nigeria as a secular state.

As we noted above, virtually all the ethno-nationalist and separatist movements (OPC, MASSOB, IYC, Supreme Egbesu Assembly—SEA) rely very heavily on indigenous religious rituals, objects and symbols for their struggle. To this extent, Islamic fundamentalism shares identities with the ethno-nationalist movements and it is not surprising that at one time or another their struggles have been *culturised* rather than *politicised* ( in the sense of Zizek, op cit.) by the hegemonic groups.

In the foregoing context what do the “apologies” (*Daily Trust* Wed. July 6, 2011: p. 3) to “Boko Haram” by Governor Yuguda of Bauchi State, and former Governors Danjuma Goje of Gombe State and Ali Modu Sheriff of Borno State, mean? The point had been made for example about the former Commissioner (of Religious Affairs?) in Borno State, Muhammed Yusuf, who is alleged to have been executed extra-judicially by police. A report by *Daily Trust* (Friday July 15, 2011: p. 8) titled “Boko Haram: Mandara insists Sheriff is involved” asserted:

“Zana Dujima of Borno, Alhaji Bukar Mandara (member of the Borno Emirate Council) has called on the federal government to put machinery in motion towards prosecuting him [Sheriff]”. “Sheriff on Wednesday [July] described as lies the insinuations

that he formed the sect to advance his political interest insisting that the sect had been there years before he became governor”

What, indeed, do the apologies mean? Ruling class politicians have all manners of exploitative relationships with mass-based organisations with different kinds of fundamentalism. They use them and dump them because they are basically organisations of poor people that have not developed autonomous capacity for seeking to exercise state power on their own behalf. OPC, MASSOB, the Niger Delta militants, “Boko Haram”, Maitasine (1982) may have been similarly used. A few weeks ago, MASSOB, on a front page of *The Sun* threatened to join “Boko Haram”. Since the Independence Day bombing in Abuja in 2010, the battle of words between MEND and the Presidency has not abated; since 1999 in Niger Delta, no politician would dare express political ambition without due acknowledgement of MEND! And in Oyo since 1999, and at least since 2003, NUTRW was the unofficial bodyguard and storm troop of the Oyo state Governors! The opportunistic and exploitative relationship of the ruling class with various fundamentalisms is thus replicated all over the place as these analogies are palpable.

### **Nigeria’s “Security Crisis”, Social Security, National Integration and the Nigeria Labour Movement**

Since various forms of the IMF-World Bank Structural Adjustment was imposed on Nigeria in the early 1980s and largely under military dictatorship. The implementation of the programme with various manifestations of capitalist fundamentalism, as defined earlier on, has created massive private wealth among a few Nigerians and increased hopelessness among the masses of the Nigerian people. In the process, the Nigerian ruling class has maintained its class integrity while it has deployed two main devices to subvert solidarity among the masses of the people.

First, the ruling class has used laws (privatisation, labour laws, pensions laws), state policies (retrenchment, deregulation, deliberate neglect of public investment and institutions), propaganda and media and other cultural institutions (schools, religion etc.) courts and law-enforcement agencies, and corruption of leaders (of popular organisations) to demobilise or totally kill traditional popular movements like the labour unions, the students’ movement, peasants’ movements and organisations of the professionals (NMA, NBA etc). Secondly, the active promotion of ethnic divisions and divisions on the grounds

of faith and religion by the ruling class has weakened the solidarity of Nigeria's working class. Consequently, when they organise what they call "credible, free and fair" elections, all that the oppressed are allowed to do is line up behind their class enemies who have mobilised them along ethnic and religious lines; that was what happened in the 2011 Elections!

The class line that had been drawn very clearly on the new National Minimum Wage Act between Nigeria's ruling class and Nigeria's working class, is very instructive. All the governors, in all the ruling parties (PDP, ACN, ANPP, LP, CPC), Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Fulani, Birom, Edo, Ogoni, Isoko, Tiv etc. insist that they cannot pay N18,000 minimum wage to workers *unless fuel prices are increased*. They are not just going to take back whatever they pay workers, they are going to impose new burdens on non-salaried people, non-unionised workers, market women, students and the unemployed, all of who will now pay more for fuel, electricity, transport, food etc etc.! And all these in a country without any serious social security programme and where, we are told, *legislators take home over ₦6million as monthly allowances alone* (Daily Trust Thur. July 14, 2011: p. 4).

The nexus of all of these ought to be clear. *A ruling class that creates no programme for social security creates conditions for generalised insecurity crisis*. But then, that is all that can happen under the current World Bank-IMF supervised capitalist or neo-liberal fundamentalism. It is the fundamentalism of market ideology that has created the condition, through the instrumentality of a ruling class that is obsessed with primitive private accumulation, for splitting Nigeria's working people along ethnic-nationalist and religious lines and that generated increased crime rates and violence across social class lines!

The Nigerian ruling class is interested in security solely to protect its hegemony and authority and the monopoly of negotiations on how to share power among themselves and how to share the wealth that power confers. So, their motto is *law and order*. However, the working people are interested in civil security, social security and social justice and they articulate these for the working people inside ethnic and religious enclaves and across ethnic and religious divides and especially in the Nigerian Labour Movement.

In the current circumstances, Nigeria's labour movement must seek appropriate knowledge and perspectives of the current "security crisis" to enable them build class solidarity and national integration. The sole reliance of the government on

military force to crush civil disorders is counter-productive and subversive of national integration and enduring peace. The Nigerian labour movement must put pressure on government to dialogue with aggrieved social groups. We must note that the European Union and USA that advice the FGN not to negotiate with Boko Haram (*The Punch* Saturday 9th July, 2011: p.7) have their own agenda; they said the same about MEND; they may be preparing the ground for the partitioning of Nigeria and the fulfilment of their prophesy that Nigeria will break up! In any case, they are negotiating with the insurgents in Iraq, and the Taliban in Afghanistan. This is why Senator Ibrahim Mohammed Ida may be right when he observed (Daily Trust. Saturday July 9, 2011: p. 55):

“...it [Boko Haram] is a sect that was set up by educated youth some of them are more educated than you and I. They had thought that going to school will take them out of poverty but what they realised is that there are people who were their classmates, who by sheer luck of birth, have risen. They started reading the literature and saw that Islam has outlined a way by which society should be run, an egalitarian society wherein the rich take care of the poor.”

The Nigerian ruling class is bankrupt. It is a slave of imperialism. It cannot do better than it is doing. And the Nigerian Labour Congress apprehended this degeneracy long ago but the situation remains hopeless. On July 10, 1986 a memo by the NLC to the Babangida Political Bureau titled: *Towards a Viable and Genuinely Democratic Future* identified inter-alia:

The problems of unemployment, insecurity of employment, retrenchment, factory closures, high cost of living, inability to control rent, exorbitant medical care, taxation, excessive school fees and all forms of deprivation”.

The numerous problems facing Nigerian workers rural and urban have their origin in politics. Thus, it is clear that the problems of Nigerian workers have become multi-dimensional and as such cannot be resolved within the framework of industrial relations practice.

To bring about a better integrated and more secure society with drastically reduced crime rate and with guaranteed social security, Nigeria must be rescued

from the current ruling class. To do this, the labour movement needs to build a political platform or party of working people with a vision which I tried to articulate in my lecture to the 10<sup>th</sup> Delegates' Conference of the NLC at Abuja on March 2, 2011 as follows:

In broad outline, and flowing from the heritage of Nigeria's nationalist movement, the vision of the proposed working people's organization or movement must be guided by three central commitments. The first is commitment to a united Nigeria with a united people who are genuinely sovereign. The second is commitment to an economic order in which the welfare of the people is the primary goal, in which the resources of our land and their exploitation and allocation are under the full control of the toiling people thus immediately enabling the minimum of a welfare state and incremental socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange. The third commitment of the movement will be the pursuit of a social and cultural policy that promotes cultural freedom and solidarity among our people, and frees their minds from superstitions and from ethnic and confessional prejudices.

The task is enormous! Since about 1985 especially, the ideology of the working class—socialism--has been under attack and retreat. But we know that as long as the deprivation of the working class subsists, the ideology of working people's liberation is not dead. Today, just over two decades thereafter, the economic crisis of capitalism (bankruptcies, bank failures, imperialist wars all over the globe, return of racism and nationalisms) have resurfaced. And in the USA, Europe and the peripheries like Nigeria, they have resorted to state power to rescue capitalist enterprises and corporations. But the crisis of capitalist fundamentalism will not reduce. Neither will the various types of insecurities it generates.

**A re-instatement of the working class ideology is the answer and only a genuine organisation of Nigeria's working people can proceed toward that answer. This task is urgent and it is only our movement that is placed historically and strategically to carry out the task.**



## Reference and Bibliography

- Ali, Tariq. 2002. *The Clash of Fundamentalism: Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*. Verso. London.
- Ali, Tariq. 2003. *Bush in Babylon: The Recolonisation of Iraq*. Verso. London.
- Amadiume, I. & A. An-Na'im.(Eds.). 2000. *The Politics of Memory: Truth, Healing and Social Justice*. Zed. London.
- Amin, Samir. 2004. *The Liberal Virus: Permanent War and the Americanisation of the World*. Pluto Press. London.
- Babawale, Tunde (Ed.) 2003. *Urban Violence, Ethnic Militias and the Challenge of Democratic Consolidation*. Concept Publications Limited, Lagos.
- Bakan, Joel. 2004. *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*. Viking. Canada.
- Bishara, M. 2011. *Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid*. Zed. London & Fernwood Publishing Ltd. Halifax.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1988. *The Culture of Terrorism*. South End Press. Boston.
- Hayes, J.H. & M. Faissler. 1970. *Modern Times: The French Revolution to the Present*. The Macmillan Company. Toronto.
- Hildyard, N. 1999. Blood, Babies and Social Roots of Conflicts. In: Suliman, M. (Ed.). *Ecology, Politics & Violent Conflict*. Zed. London. pp. 4-24.
- Ibrahim, J. 2000. The Transformation of Ethno-Regional Identities in Nigeria. In: Jega, A. (Ed.). *Identity Transformation and Identity Politics Under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala and the Center for Research and Documentation, Kano, pp. 45-67.
- Jega, A. (Ed.) 2000. Ibid.
- Klein, Naomi. 2007. *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. Penguin Books. London

- Mamdani, M. 2009. *Saviours and Survivors: Darfur, Politics and the War on Terror*. Malthouse Press Limited. Lagos.
- Mu'azzam, I. & J. Ibrahim. 2000 Religious Identity under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria. In: Jega, A. (Ed.) op cit. pp. 68-93.
- Mustapha. A.R. 2000. Transformation of Minority Identities in Post-Colonial Nigeria. In: Jega, A. (Ed.). Ibid. pp.94-119
- Paes, Wolf-Christian. 2004. Oil Production and National Security in Sub-Saharan Africa. In: Traub-Merz, R. & D. Yates (Eds.) *Oil Policy in the Gulf of Guinea: Security Conflict, Economic Growth, Social Development*. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Bonn
- Olorode, O. 2011. *Building a New Nigeria: The Role of Working Class in National Transformation*. 10th National Delegates Conference Lecture. Nigeria Labour Congress. Abuja.
- Olorode, O. 2011. *Nigeria After the 2011 Election. Problems and Prospects for Popular Power*. Lecture presented at the University of Port Harcourt jointly organised by Social Action Anti-Imperialist Camp and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) UniPort Branch on 21 & 22 June, 2011. Mimeo.
- Olorode, O. Wumi Raji, Jiti Ogunye & T. Oladunjoye (Eds.). 1998. *Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Crisis of the Nigerian State*. Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR). Lagos.
- Quassem, Naim. 2005. *Hezbollah: The Story from within*. SAQI. London
- Suliman, M. (Ed.). 1999. *Ecology, Politics and Violent Conflict*. Zed. London.
- Zizek, Slavoj. 2009. *Violence*. Profile Books. London.