



**LATE DR. LASISI OSUNDE**

**(28TH JULY 1928 - 28TH AUGUST 2008)**



***A SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY,  
INTERNATIONALIST AND  
WORKING CLASS LEADER***



## *A Brief Biography*

**D**r Lasisi Adams Osunde was born in the ancient kingdom of Benin on the 28th of July 1928 to Adams Osunde and Alimotu Guobadia. He started his Education at Baptist School Benin (1937-1938) where he had his elementary education. Then he went to Government School Benin City (1937-1942). He spent a year at Oduduwa College Ile-Ife before transferring to Edo College Benin City (1944-1947) to complete his secondary education.



His work experience began in 1948 when he joined the General Post Office as a first class Postal Officer and Telegraphist. He was trained as a telegraphist and wireless operator in then telegraphic school in Lagos for one year. It was there he joined trade union almost immediately, where he held the following posts between 1948-1960.

\* Secretary of General Post office branch of Union of Posts and Telecommunication

Workers of Nigeria (1950-1952)

\* Secretary Lagos District of Union of Post and Telecommunication Workers of Nigeria (1953- 1960)

\* Acted occasionally for the General Secretary of Union of Post and Telecommunication workers of Nigeria (1955-1960)

\* Member, National Executive Council of Union of Post and Telecommunication workers of Nigeria (1952-1960)

This was the era of the Nationalist Movement with the likes of Nnamdi Azikwe and Obafemi Awolowo. Osunde was introduced to the Socialist Movement through his uncle "Mr. Bankole Akpata who trained in Czechoslovakia and got a PhD in philosophy. While still in school, Osunde started collecting information from the communist movement about what youths were doing around the world to fight imperialism, and the Colonial Government did not take kindly to it.

Because of his activities he rose to be the Assistant General Secretary of the union in charge of the entire Lagos area. People respected him more for his commitment. He was a focal point of the struggle. This gave the colonial government headaches and

someone was sent from Scotland Yard to monitor him. Between 1958-1959, he was arrested for union activities, indicted and had to stop work. He was defended by Amaka Okafor a socialist lawyer trained in Britain and was freed and acquitted by the magistrate.

He was then advised by his Colleagues to leave the Country. It was against this backdrop that he applied for and got a scholarship to study economics and political science in the Friendship University in Moscow . During the opening of the University he was selected to represent the foreign students. His speech caught the attention of the then Premier of the Soviet Union , Nikita Krushev who hugged and kissed him. He became popular with the communist government and through him and some other Colleagues; they brought various Nigerian Students to study in the defunct Soviet Union . After graduation in 1965, he came back home. He was arrested on arrival at the airport and detained. His crime? For "hugging Krushev".

He was employed in the University of Lagos and rose to the position of Senior Lecturer, but was retired in 1975 by the then Murtala/Obasanjo Military Government. While in the



University, he was involved in the socialist movement in Nigeria . Before he joined the NLC, he was already contributing to the labour movement through active participation in workers education via seminars and lectures free of charge.

He became the General Secretary of the Municipal and Local Authority Workers Union of Nigeria in 1976. After the reorganization of trade unions in 1978 he joined the staff of NLC as pioneer Deputy General Secretary. He later succeeded Comrade Aliyu Dangiwa as the 2nd General Secretary of NLC and retired in February,1993.

His tenure in the NLC saw a number of progressive improvements in the struggle for a better Nigeria . Along with other colleagues, he: succeeded in uniting the Nigerian workers against Military regimes,

\*Ensured that the civilian administration of President Shehu Shagari acceded to the demand of workers to make May Day a public holiday.

\* Fought for the enthronement of democracy in the Country.

One of the earliest Labour leaders to attend the Prestigious National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Dr. Osunde

Participated in Senior Executive Course (SEC) 7 of the Institute, from February October 1985. As General Secretary, he led several NLC delegations to the annual conference of the International Labour Organisation in Geneva, where he was a worker delegate. At home, he represented the Congress on the board of the then National Provident Fund (later Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund), the National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) and several other tripartite bodies.

He was also a member of an eight man committee charged with the task of bringing together a cross section of the Nigerian populace to chart the course of Nigeria 's external relations for the next 15 years, under the NIGERIA AND THE WORLD: FOREIGN POLICY OPTIONS TILL THE YEAR 2000. He was detained (among several other detentions) for 11 days along with other Labour Leaders by the Federal Military Government from 4th 13th June 1986 for planning a rally in support of the slain ABU students in Zaria. He was a member of the Study Group on Indirect Taxation in Nigeria , and also served in a 20-member Modified VALUE Added Tax (MVAT) Committee to develop appropriate Machinery for the introduction of MVAT in

Nigeria . He retired from the NLC on the 28th February 1993.

In august 1994, he turned down the appointment of Sole Administrator of PENGASSAN given to him by the military junta of late Sani Abacha, after the latter had dissolved PENGASSAN and NUPENG. Osunde Stated: "for over 45 years I have contributed to the building of the Nigerian labour Movement. It is therefore inappropriate for me to accept a position which is likely to destroy a movement I have spent my life to build".

A dedicated family man, he is survived by a wife Dr Mrs. Adesuwa Safu Lawani-Osunde and four children. Owen, Ighiwiysi, Uwaifiokun and Aibiokunla.

A hero, a rare gem, a pillar of support, a man with a large heart, a father, a mentor, an initiator and a knowledge bank. He celestially answered the call of his creator on the 28th August 2008 exactly a month after his 80th birthday, having successfully ran the race and finished his course.



## **WE HAVE LOST A FATHER FIGURE AND MENTOR NLC**

We have lost a father-figure, leader, mentor, comrade, teacher and friend, Dr Lasisi Osunde, former General Secretary of the NLC.

Dr Osunde, who left the services of the NLC in 1993, was born in Benin-city on July 28, 1928. He was trained as an economist in the USSR and has a doctorate degree in the discipline at the Friendship University, Moscow. He is also an alumnus of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS).

He began his trade union career at the Lagos Area of the Post and Telegraph Department in 1948. Although he was a trained postal officer and telegraphist, his natural habitat was the trade union movement. In 1950, he became Secretary of the General Post Office, Lagos, Branch of the Union of Posts and Telecommunications Workers of Nigeria. Dr Osunde was equally active in the trade union movement in the local government system. He was General Secretary of the Municipal and Local Authority Workers Union, which later became the National Union of Local Government Employees. With the compelling need for sterling technocratic expertise and ideological consistency in the NLC after its registration

in 1978, Dr Osunde became Deputy General Secretary. He retired fourteen years later as substantive general secretary of the NLC.

He also had a rich stint in the academia, having at various times lectured full and part time at the University of Lagos. However, he was booted out of the university system by the military authorities who found him too radical.

Dr Osunde would be remembered most for being instrumental to building an activist NLC secretariat made up of a rich blend of experienced organisers and militants forged in the crucible of radical students' activism in the 1980s.

He believed staunchly that it was the historical mission of the Nigerian working class and other progressive social movements to end the reign of military hegemonists and their civilian collaborators, who converted their business and bureaucratic power to personal advantages. He worked tirelessly in several organisations in realisation of this socially redemptive vision. He was committed to the struggle for social justice and social change. Under the military dictatorship of General Sani Abacha, Dr Osunde declined to serve as an administrator of PENGASSAN, which the military government had taken over.

He was selfless, humane, humble, and modest. He gave the Nigerian trade union movement and the nation all that he had to offer. These qualities became richly reflected especially in the period of the difficult struggle against military rule, when he was General Secretary of the NLC.

He had an unimpeachable moral profile anchored on generosity, respect for family values and industry. In the NLC family, we have lost an irreplaceable leader, mentor, friend and comrade  
Adieu comrade.

**JOHN ODAH, mni**  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS





**SHORT ORATION BY  
NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS NLC  
PRESIDENT ABDULWAHED OMAR  
AT THE LYING-IN-STATE OF  
DR. LASISI OSUNDE,  
ON TUESDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER,  
2008 IN LAGOS .**

We have come here today, fellow comrades, for an historical occasion. We have come here to honour our comrade, Dr. Lasisi Adams Osunde who lies before us. But Osunde was not just any other Nigerian. We have come to honour a fervent Nationalist who put his career on the line in the anti-colonial struggle. An anti-colonialist who was ready to go to jail that our country maybe free. We are here to honour a peoples' academic who inspite of his earning a Doctorate Degree in Economics from Europe preferred to serve the workers rather than using it for personal gains.

We are gathered to do honour to a mass mobiliser who bridged the academic /worker divide; who bridged the campus/town divide to give our people a better future. We are here to honour a worker who for a dozen years laboured in the telecommunications industry as a postal officer and telegraphist. We are here in honour of a consummate labour leader who helped build the labour movement, first as educator at the Patrice Lumumba Labour College , then as the founding General Secretary of the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) and later as General Secretary of the NLC. We are here in honour of a man with a high sense of reward for work done and fair distribution of

national wealth. This led to his championing the FAR and NOW Campaign, that is, The Fight Against Retrenchment And Non-Payment Of Wages. This gathering is about a fighter of the people who with other comrades rejected military misrule, led protests against arbitrary fuel price increases and for justice.

We are here to honour a democrat who rejected military rule, or misrule by civilians and fought for a people-centred government.

We are here for an outstanding patriot who for his sense of duty to his nation suffered spells of detention under the colonialists and military dictators.

We are here gathered to honour a revolutionary who rejected compromise and demanded for justice not just for our country's workers but the people in general. A builder who contributed to the building of the social movement in the country as a strategy to build a broad people's alliance for change.

We are gathered here to honour a man who shunned material wealth and rejected compromise with the oppressor. A man who in a country where people sell their birthright to get political appointments, rejected such an appointment even when thrust on him by the Federal Government.

We are gathered to honour an internationalist both in words and deeds who fought that the working class in all

climes can aspire and attain the basic needs of life.

Comrades, men of integrity, principles and honour like Osunde are few. People with a high sense of duty, responsibility and commitment are rare. Men having a fine sense of history and a good appreciation of the historical mission of the working class are hard to come by. Dr. Osunde was all of these, yet he did not shirk his responsibility to his nuclei family. His dedication to his wife, Dr. (Mrs) Adesuwa Safu Lawani-Osunde and children Owen, Ighiwiyi, Uwaifiokun and Aibiokunla was unwavering as was his dedication to the working class.

Today, the NLC is quite strong and popular because Labour leaders like Osunde laid the necessary foundations. Many of us stand today as leaders of the social movement in the country because we stand on the shoulders of our worthy predecessors like Comrades Michael Imoudu, Haroon Popoola Adebola, Ezekiel Odeyemi, Samuel Udoh Bassey, Wahab Goodluck and of course Lasisi Osunde.

We here should rededicate ourselves to the cause of the working people. This is the best way we can honour our departed hero and ensure that his struggles are not in vain.





**HE WAS THE ENGINE ROOM OF OUR  
STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE  
- ALI CHIROMA**

The hero of trade union intellectualism is no more!

The hero of the war against SAP is gone!

The hero of SAP detention camp is no more!

The engine room of the struggle for social justice is gone!

The dogged fighter is no more!

Today Nigeria is worse off than it has ever been as a consequence of one major blunder. That is the introduction of

Structural Adjustment Programme. Not that we did not fight, Lasisi and his Comrades fought gallantly but lost the war gallantly for two major reasons:

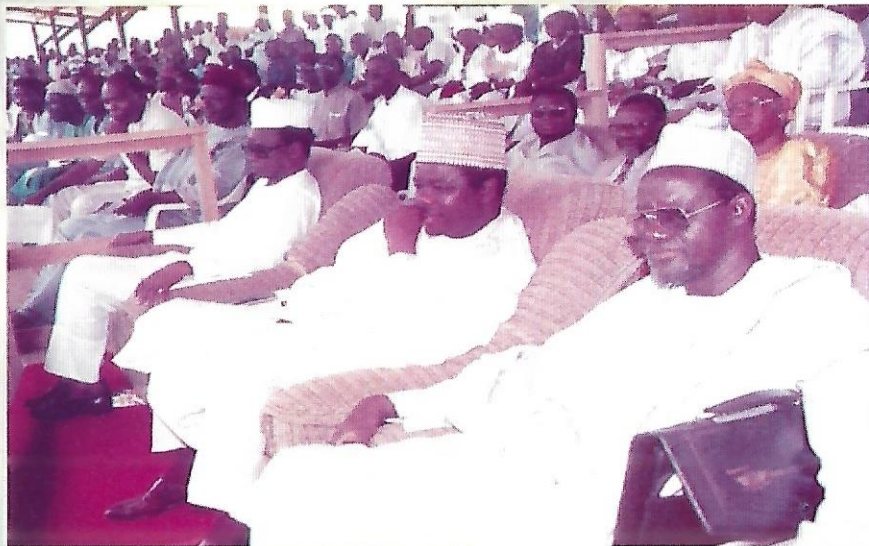
There was naivety in the country. Nobody except the NLC foresaw the consequences of the monster. The rest of Nigeria thought

it was only an NLC war

The government when cornered resorted to unfair labour relations tactics, by caging the NLC and its leaders before forcing the bitter pill down Nigerians' throat.

What finally broke the camel's back to force Comrade Osunde to bow out was when some labour leaders collaborated ... to destroy the soul of the labour movement.

Militancy is the soul of trade unionism. Show me a trade union without it and I will show you a union trade



**PRESIDENT OF NIGERIA LABOUR  
CONGRESS  
(1984 -1988)**

If we are to do honour to his blessed memory, We should all resolve to restore militancy into all our unions. To his family we say: have the courage and Fortitude to bear this great loss

Adieu Lasisi!

Ali Chiroma

**F O R M E R**

**A LABOUR ICON PASSES ON !  
- PASCAL BAFYAU**

When I learnt of the passing away of Comrade Lasisi Osunde, my heart skipped a beat. It suddenly dawned on me that we have not only lost an icon in the Labour Movement, but lost an idea. An idea embodied in honesty, discipline, humility, commitment, ethics, friendship, camaraderia in short, we have lost an ideological basis of the Labour Movement. No one in my long years of serving in the Labour Movement reflected these qualities both in thought and action as Comrade Osunde.

He was a true Marxist-Leninist who symbolized the working class struggle in all its ramifications and gave quality leadership of activism, sacrifice and commitment to the Labour Movement. His work and what he stood for tremendously impacted and guided the Labour Movement through the turbulent years of military rule, and influenced a lot of labour leaders to be steadfast and committed to the struggle at this period.

Though a die-hard communist, Comrade Osunde never discriminated against anybody. As long as you were a labour leader or an activist, he took you as his friend and brother. He was a very friendly man, but not given to frivolities. The only time you find his voice raised or quarreling with someone, it was on ideological basis. He had no religious or ethnic bias. He



related with people based on their ideas and how they relate to the struggle to liberate the working class from poverty and the oppression of money bags.

It was these remarkable sterling qualities displayed by Comrade Osunde that made it possible for Congress under my leadership to have a smooth come back after the crisis

in February 1988 which had pitched the Progressives and Democrats in the Labour Movement in an internecine struggle.

Though unceremonio

usly removed from office for almost one year, Dr. Osunde never asked for backlog of his pay. He did not only run the Secretariat without vindictiveness, but took things in his stride even when there were moves to remove him from office due to his ideological disposition.

This was partly due to his serious critic of labour leaders he saw as sell-outs. He did not only criticize them openly, but engaged them in debates at every meeting of Congress even at the risk of losing his job.

Today, such critics are so rare in the Labour Movement.

To Comrade Osunde, the Labour Movement came first, and for this, he suffered several incarcerations, the last being detention with other labour leaders in 1987 during the initial campaign against increases in fuel prices by the Babangida regime. Despite his commitment to the Labour Movement,

Comrade Osunde was a loving father who was very committed to family life. He balanced his trade union work with family responsibilities through a dint of hard work and tremendous discipline.

Like I said, Comrade Osunde was an idea. To keep his memory alive is to keep this idea alive.

I urge the new leadership of the Secretariat of Congress,

which he had helped recruit and nurtured, to take up this challenge and keep this idea alive. It is only in this way would we do justice to the memory of our indefatigable and dynamic great comrade and ensure that the mantle of progressive leadership is sustained in the Labour Movement.

Adieu, great Comrade!

**PASCAL BAFYAU**

FORMER NLC PRESIDENT

(1988 - 1994)



### OSUNDE GAVE US THE MOTTO:

"LABOUR CREATES WEALTH" DANGIWA

The news of the death of Comrade Dr.

Lasisi Osunde was a rude shock

At the National Secretariat of this Congress (NLC) at its beginning in 1978, as the only senior staff, Dr. Lasisi Osunde, Deputy General Secretary I who eventually succeeded the pioneer General Secretary, utilized his very high qualification with unexpected politeness not only to his superior officers, that is the pioneer Congress President Hassan Sunmonu and pioneer General Secretary, but to all comrades.

Comrade Lasisi (we were first names basis) was our arrangement, used to "Cream" our pioneer National Secretariat meetings. His interest in learning about different things made his inquisitiveness meaningful particularly in enhancing the productivity of the meetings as concrete decisions were taken prior to further necessary action towards their implementation.

At National Secretariat meetings, "Dr." as he was popularly referred to, especially by Pioneer National Treasurer of Congress Comrade "Ero", ensure high the productivity.

One for instance, can never forget the brainstorming on Congress motto at a pioneer National Secretariat (NS) meeting, whilst considering "Labour Produces wealth" as NS recommendation to the



National Executive Council, he confidently and heroically offered "Labour Creates Wealth" and that was it, a relief arrival to which there was No objection.

Comrade Dr. apparently always with "adequacy" in mind, had generally performed his duties purposefully and inspirationally. May the almighty handsomely reward him amen.

While Comrade Lasisi's family have lost their bread-winner, His Royal Highness the Oba of Benin, His Excellency the Governor of Edo State, the Nigerian Labour Movement and Federal Republic of Nigeria have lost a pearl in Comrade Dr. Lasisi Osunde. May we all have the courage and fortitude to bear the irreparable loss-Amen. May his soul rest in perfect peace-Amen

**ALIYU MUSA DANGIWA**  
PIONEER GENERAL SECRETARY

### **LASISI WAS A GREAT - COMRADE OSAGIE**

L . A, as he was fondly called, lived a fulfilled life . A true democrat, a dedicated and committed friend of the working class and its allies. He lived a simple and honest life, rendered selfless services for the cause and struggle of the emancipation of the masses in general and the working class in particular an embodiment of Socialist Culture and Values .As he resisted with vigor Colonial enslavement, so also he fought side by side with other progressive forces for the attainment of Independence .He continued his just struggle against neo-colonial tendencies and policies of successive Military regimes. He first championed the struggle against the removal of the so-called Oil "Subsidy," a cause that earned him and his colleagues detention and torture in the hands of State Security Forces. He was never deterred; hence, he remained a source of courage and steadfastness to ALL his subordinates. He shall always be remembered as a Comrade who led by example, easy going, unassuming though very affable but highly principled.

**COMRADE LAWSON E OSAGIE ESQ .**  
FORMER HEAD OF ADMINISTRATION  
NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS

### **IT IS THE DEPARTURE OF A GREAT -COMRADE OBI**

My deepest sympathy to the Nigeria Labour Congress. It is indeed with a great sense of loss but with gratitude to God that we received this news. It is a departure of a great Comrade I believe in so much. I remember him particularly, on one of his trips abroad, bought a present for me (he treated me like his own child) like he did for other staff too, when I opened mine, I found a golden necklace with a bracelet of an African map. I saw that as a big passage of responsibility and a reminder (who we really are) but not a present. You have qualified him with all he's been to us. Beyond being a mentor, his relationship with staff was that of a father, a friend, and a senior comrade who will give you lectures on Pan-Africanism given any opportunity as you walk into his office with a file. That was how I became his student and tried to learn as much as I could from him before he retired.

**ENE OBI**  
GOVERNANCE TEAM LEADER  
ACTIONAID NIGERIA  
(FORMER STAFF OF NIGERIA LABOUR  
CONGRESS)



## **OSUNDE: THE PATH OF OUR FATHERS OWEI LAKEMFA**

Many who argue that we got our independence on "a platter of gold" ignore the fact that there were genuine struggles in which people died, many were imprisoned, tortured or even went into exile.

Back in 1947 after graduating from the Edo College, Benin, Lasisi Adams Osunde was a 17-year old youth who was sucked into the Nationalism vortex. While the British Colonialists partially tolerated the conformist nationalists, they hounded radicals who were fighting for not just freedom from colonialism but independence outside capitalism. To ensure its hold on post-colonial Nigeria, the British banned all socialist books and literature and made it a criminal offence either to possess them or travel to a socialist country. This was where the young Osunde came in. In 1948, at 18, he secured a job as First Class Postal Officer and Telegrapher. In this position, he sorted out socialist literature in the mail before they could get to the sorting room where British intelligence seized and destroyed them. He then channeled the literature to the Socialist Movement, which distributed them in the country.

Eventually, the British intelligence zeroed in and arrested Osunde in 1958. He was indicted and charged to court for treason but was discharged and acquitted. The Socialist Movement decided that since Osunde's cover had been blown, he had to

leave the country. When in 1960, the country's face was turned towards independence, Osunde faced the Soviet Union where for five years, he studied Economics at the Friendship University, Moscow.

On his return in 1965 with a Masters, he was employed to lecture by the University of Lagos (UNILAG). After three years, he returned to his alma mater where he got a PhD in Economics in 1971. His thesis was on "Foreign Capital in the Nigerian Economy". Osunde returned to UNILAG to teach Economics from 1971 to 1975 before moving full time in 1976 into the Labour Movement as General Secretary of the Municipal and Local Authority Workers Union of Nigeria. The Union after the 1977 re-organisation of unions became the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE). Osunde remained its General Secretary until July 1, 1978 when he moved to the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) as Deputy General Secretary. He acted as General Secretary from January 1982 to December 1983, and subsequently until his confirmation in that post on December 18, 1985. He had graduated from the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) two months earlier.

Beyond being a key figure in the development of Congress, he was instrumental to many of its struggles such as those against arbitrary fuel price

increases and military dictatorship, focusing workers through a Charter of Demands and the May 1981 General Strike which secured for workers a Minimum Wage and Minimum Pension.

Osunde had learnt trade unionism at the feet of the legendary Wahab Omorilewa Goodluck and imbibed the latter's radical politics and socialist beliefs. With Hassan Adebayo Sunmonu, another Goodluck protégée as founding NLC President, they had a team that could firmly root the NLC in National consciousness. But they realized that the NLC's success was reversible especially when at the top of the NLC Secretariat, the strong consciously political elements were mainly Osunde and his Deputy Bernard Obua. So they brought in three new officers; Yahaya Hashim, Salisu Nuhu Mohammed and Lawson Osagie. In 1987 Osunde's leadership brought in another line of officers; Chom Bagu, Chris Uyot, John Odah and Isa Aremu.

So at the NLC under Osunde, there were three layers of leadership that could guarantee the radical traditions of the Labour Movement and withstand nuclear bombardments from enemy forces. Thus, when the Babangida Military regime seized the NLC on February 28, 1988 occupying it for ten months; and when the Abacha Military Regime seized the NLC in 1994 for four years, the NLC's radical foundations could not be destroyed. After Babangida removed Osunde as NLC General Secretary



by Decree, Osunde refused to recognize this, saying only the Congress NEC which appointed him could remove him. While the then NLC President Ali Chiroma complied, Osunde refused to handover. He went on, with other like minds, to get unions and workers to resist; these included court cases up to the Court of Appeal.

After the occupation, he returned as General Secretary. A veteran of detention spells, when he returned from one on December 30, 1978, I interviewed Osunde. He told me:

"My attitude to detention is that it means nothing to me. Personally, I am not ruffled, the issue is objective; personal inconvenience is not the issue". For him workers cannot be divorced from politics because "Politics is essentially a concentrated expression of economics both in form and content". His primary focus he said was to mobilize the populace "... against a regime which has gone beserk".

After many more battles including resisting attempts to enlist NLC's support for General Babangida's endless Transition Programme, Osunde on February 28, 1993 retired. From retirement he continued to make his services and experience available to the Working Class. Once, the very quiet and soft spoken Osunde was very angry. It was in August 1994 when the Federal Government announced his appointment

as Sole Administrator of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association (PENGASSAN). He felt insulted that a military regime could appoint him to administer a union it had seized. He did not even honour the Government with a formal decline of the offer.

Born in Benin City, Osunde's great heart stopped beating on Thursday August 28, 2008 and will be buried this Friday September 26, in the City of his birth. Personally, I feel honoured to have known one of the greatest patriots our country ever produced.

#### **LAKEMFA OWEI**

HEAD OF INFORMATION DEPARTMENT ,  
NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS

#### **OSUNDE'S COMMITMENT WAS TOTAL SSANU**

We have received with great shock but gratitude to God, the passing on of Dr. Lasisi Osunde, a former General Secretary of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC).

We recall, with pride Dr. Lasisi's commitment to the struggle for social justice and social change; he was selfless, humane, humble, and modest. He gave the Nigerian trade union movement and the nation all that he had to offer.

His tenureship as the General Secretary of the Nigeria Labour Congress in the 1980's laid the foundation of today's labour movement.

Although Dr. Osunde has left us in flesh, his life and times as a leader will always serve as inspiration and challenge to those of us in the labour movement.

May his soul rest in perfect peace!

Once again accept our heartfelt condolences.

#### **PROMISE ADEWUSI**

PRESIDENT

SENIOR STAFF ASSOCIATION OF  
NIGERIA UNIVERSITIES  
(SSANU)



### **WE'LL MISS YOU, MAN OF PEACE NUCSSASW**

In our many years of interaction with him, we knew him to be a positive thinker, a non-violent but resolute leader who calmly resolved issues amicably in a stressful and violent-prone environment. His calmness in industrial relations practice during his tenure as NLC General Secretary was worthy of emulation by many right-thinking Labour Leaders.

At his exit from the service after a meritorious service, we never heard him dabble unnecessarily into affairs politically or labour wise.

For all he had done, the Labour Movement in the country will surely miss him- The man of peace

**H. O. AKINWUMIJU**  
FOR: GENERAL SECRETARY  
NIGERIA UNION OF CIVIL SERVICE  
SECRETARIAL AND  
STENOGRAPHIC WORKERS

### **A FIGHTER NEVER DIES -NASU**

His contributions to the nurturing and development of the Labour Movement in Nigeria cannot be quantified. We grieve his painful demise but take solace in the fact that he left an indelible footprint in the checkered history of the Labour Movement in its struggle for the emancipation of the oppressed in Nigeria and beyond.

Therefore, I write on behalf of the entire membership of NASU nation-wide to commiserate with you his family, the good people of Edo State, the Civil Society with whom he had shared ideology from time and the NLC on this monumental loss.

May God grant his soul eternal rest and his family the fortitude to bear the loss (Amen)  
**PETERS ADEYEMI, JP**  
GENERAL SECRETARY.  
NON-ACADEMICA STAFF UNION OF  
EDUCATIONAL AND  
ASSOCIATED INSTITUTIONS (NASU)

### **WE WILL UPHOLD OSUNDE'S LEGACY BANK WORKERS**

There is no further tribute that is all encompassing than the ones reflected in paragraphs 5, 6, and 7 in your letter of notification of Dr. Osunde's Death dated 1st September, 2008 to Industrial Unions.

Drawing inspiration from the lines of the aforementioned paragraphs, it is safe to conclude that Dr. Lasisi Osunde was not only the architect of a radically-based and intellectually-driven Congress Secretariat but, presumably an icon of the modern congress Secretariat imbued with progressive perspectives on contemporary socio-economic and political issues of the time.

Dr. Lasisi Osunde has lived true to his ideological training, received from the hallowed grounds of the Friendship University Moscow.

Dr. Lasisi Osunde lived what he preached all through his momentous career in the social movements, serving as a defining reference point to emerging leaders.

Dr. Lasisi Osunde has made his mark and contribution hence, the greatest tribute and legacy to bequeath to his memory is to continue to uphold those noble and selfless virtues he exhibited while on this earth, and possibly to concretize it by staging an annual lecture in his memory. He deserves no less. May his soul rest in Perfect Peace

**COMRADE E. O. OLA**  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
NATIONAL UNION OF BANKS,  
INSURANCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS  
EMPLOYEES (NUBIFIE)



## **DR. OSUNDE WAS A COLOSSUS ASSBIFI**

The news of the death of comrade (Dr) Lasisi Osunde, mni, former General Secretary of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). came to us at the ASSBIFI Secretariat like a whirlwind.

Dr. Lasisi Osunde was a colossus to the Labour movement in Nigeria and his demise will surely be felt by the Nigerian Labour Movement in general and the NLC in particular.

No doubt, the Nigerian Civil Society has lost an illustrious son in Dr. Lasisi Osunde considering his antecedence in the struggle to free the Nigerian nation from the hands of the military.

As an activist and an academic, Dr. Osunde combined intellect with raw activism to build various trade unions before finally settling with the NLC in 1978.

ASSBIFI wish to salute the efforts of this Labour activist and to sympathise with his family in particular and the Nigerian Labour Movement in general.

Our sincere condolence goes to the Nigeria Labour Congress-NLC as we fervently pray for the soul of Dr. Lasisi Osunde to rest in perfect peace. Fair thee well our fierce Labour activist.

### **AKIN M. OWOYEMI**

Ag. NATIONAL PRESIDENT

### **OBUKESI. P. ORERE**

SECRETARY GENERAL

ASSOCIATION SENIOR STAFF OF BANKS,  
INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL  
INSTITUTES (ASSBIFI)

## **THE BENIN QUADRENNIAL CONFERENCE: CONFIRMED OSUNDE'S RESOLUTENESS TO DEFEND THE CONGRESS CONSTITUTION - TEXTILE UNION**

According to the provision of the NLC constitution, only industrial unions which are up to date in their financial subscription to the Congress are eligible for representation at the central labour organisation's conference. Indeed, Article 6 of the constitution states categorically that the level of representation of unions at the NLC conferences is to be determined by the level of financial contributions which they make to the Congress. The 42 industrial unions in the country derive their income from dues paid by workers based on the compulsory check-off system introduced in 1978 by the Obasanjo administration. All unions are expected to contribute a fixed percentage of the monies they receive through the check-off system to the NLC in order to sustain the latter's activities and its secretariat. Only those unions that were regular and up to date in remitting funds to the NLC would be allowed to participate in its conferences.

The NLC constitution states that the presence and participation of 60 percent of those eligible for representation at the congress' conference attracted the participation of more than two-thirds of the delegates eligible to take part in the proceedings. Out of an expected 452

delegates, 307 were present at the Ogbe Stadium where the conference was held. Also in attendance were representatives from 18 out of the 19 state councils of the NLC (West Africa, 7 March 1988, p.399). The conference was held despite the boycott by 17 of 42 affiliated unions of the NLC. The decision of this group of unions to hold their own meeting was taken in flagrant disregard for the NLC's constitution. The official conference of the Congress had in attendance both national and international observers.

The elections conducted by the congress were, as is the tradition, carried out under the supervision of the four international labour organisations to which the NLC is affiliated. These organisations are the International Labour Organisation (ILO); the Commonwealth Trade Union Council (CTUC); the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) and the Organization of Trade Unions of West Africa (OTUWA). The Shammang group's so-called elections were not supervised by any of these international organizations (West Africa, 7 March 1988, p.400).

To witness the election of officers at the official conference of the NLC were a number of observers representing the Nigeria Employer's Consultative Association (NECA), the Senior Staff Consultative Association of Nigeria, a representative of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and a member of the Presidential



Advisory Council (PAC). None of these witnesses were present at the gathering convened by Shammang and members of his group. When the results of the elections supervised by the ILO, the CTUC, OATUU and OTUWA were released, it was clear that Ali Chiroma had won a convincing victory for a second term of four years. Seventeen other officers were elected to serve on the Executive Council.

The delegates at the conference endorsed the NLC's campaigns against the government's privatisation programme and the policy of raising the domestic price of petroleum products. Quite clearly, the official Benin Conference of the NLC was a legal and constitutional meeting, conducted according to the laid down rules and traditions of the congress. The international organisation which supervised the elections held at the conference attested to the fact that they were free and fair. And when Stephen Faulkner of the CTUC and Abdullahi Diallo of OATUU announced the results of the election, Chiroma polled 280 votes while Shammang in absentia, got four votes.

Yet the then Minister of Employment, Labour and Productivity sought to justify the dissolution of the NLC on the grounds that since it was the federal government (under Obasanjo's leadership) that organised the then existing numerous, weak and conflicting trade unions into one central labour organisation, it also had a duty and interest in ensuring a united, virile, and respectable labour organisation

capable of looking after the genuine interests of the individual workers.

The real reason behind the decision of the state to dissolve the NLC lies in its attempt to crush popular opposition to the economic recovery programme of the Babangida administration. By the time NLC was dissolved in March 1988, most popular organisations whose activities and existence were perceived by the state as capable of obstructing the smooth implementation of SAP had either been placed under siege or, as in the case of the irrepressible National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), been banned outright. The NLC itself had been subjected to a systematic campaign of calumny by government officials.

Given the immense hardship which SAP has imposed on the generality of Nigerians, the Babangida administration was keen to ensure that NLC, the largest mass organisation in the country, did not trigger mass protests against the regime and its economic recovery programme. We can only salute the late Osunde for offering necessary leadership for the Congress at a time that matter. Even though IBB dissolved the NLC executive council just as Abacha dictatorship later did, NLC today survives all these tyrant regimes. Long live Osunde!

ISSA AREMU

GENERAL SECRETARY

- TEXTILE UNION

## **AN EPITAPH TO LATE COM DR. LASISI OSUNDE**

Dr. Lasisi Osunde Secretary of Secretaries  
A one time General Secretary of the  
Congress 1985 -1993

Though you looked simple and gentle  
Yet you gave the military a good fight.  
You rode the Trade Union World like a  
colossus.

We shall miss you but can never forget  
you

You trained as an Economist  
But Trade Unionism took a better part of  
you

Far back in 1948, you embraced Trade  
Unionism

You started from the cradle but ended at  
the pinnacle

The NLC spotted you and tested your  
Ability with the post of General Secretary

## **ONIKOLEASE IRABOR**

PRESIDENT-GENERAL

MARITIME WORKERS UNION OF NIGERIA  
(MWUN)



**DR. OSUNDE WAS A TRUE  
COMMUNIST  
- RAILWAY WORKERS**

The Death of former General Secretary of the NLC DR. LASISI OSUNDE, mni was received with shock by the President General of the Union and the entire membership.

Dr. Laisisi Osunde, in his life time was a true communist to the core and touched many lifes by his teachings and doctrine during the period of his active Trade Unionism.

The Labour Circle has lost an indefatigable Leader. May the Soul of the departed rest in peace. (Amen).

It is our prayer that the Lord give members of the family and loved ones left behind the fortitude to bear the great loss and may the Lord condole and console them.

Eternal Rest Grant DR. LASISI OSUNDE  
O! Lord and let perpetual light shine on him.

**AKINYANJU M. A.**  
SECRETARY GENERAL  
NIGERIA UNION OF RAILWAY WORKERS  
(NURW)

**CELEBRATION OF A FULFILLED LIFE  
NUPENG**

Although, it is usually painful to lose a dear one, more so if the person is a remarkable and distinguished personality like Dr Lasisi Osunde, who distinguished himself with sterling leadership qualities and uncommon commitment to the emancipation of the Nigerian working class, but we will not mourn his passage, rather we shall celebrate his outstanding well spent life and remarkable landmark legacies. In his time as General Secretary of the NLC, he consciously facilitated the training of young Trade Unionists in economic- labour relations and trade union activism in the then Soviet Union and Eastern Europe . His capacity building efforts have helped to sustain the labour movement till date

The Leadership and members of our great Union commiserate with the family and the progressive / working class people all over the world on the transition to the eternal glory of the great leader of the masses and a technocrat of uncommon qualities.

May his soul rest in perfect peace in the bosom of the almighty God, far away from this troubled world.

COMRADE ELIJAH OKOUGBO  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
NATIONAL UNION OF PETROLEUM AND  
NATURAL GAS WORKERS (NUPENG)

**OSUNDE LEFT A VACUUM  
- JIGAWA NLC**

I have been directed to inform you that we received the contents of your letter with great shock, especially as it affects the entire Labour Movement, not only in Nigeria , but to the entire African continent. We believed that Dr. Osunde, mni, left a vacuum which shall hardly be filled within a short period, considering the fact that his elderly advice, guidance and support towards successful Labour Movement are mostly needed now.

We therefore consider it necessary for us to condole you and family of the deceased, on behalf of members of the State Executive Council of the Congress and entire working class of Jigawa State .

We pray his soul to rest in peace and at the same time pray you and his family the fortitude to bear the loss.

**(COM. SULEIMAN ADAMU KIYAWA)**  
STATE SECRETARY  
NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS  
JIGAWA STATE COUNCIL



## **WE MOURN OSUNDE**

### **- TUC**

The death of our great comrade, Dr. Osunde came to us with shock and we pray that the Almighty God will give the family fortitude to bear the loss.

Osunde was one man in a million who understood the struggle and pursued it with his heart. He was selfless, hardworking, honest, diligent, and a role model to many of us labour technocrats.

Dr. Osunde would be remembered for his outspokenness, erudite lectures, administrative capability and forthrightness. He was far ahead of his peers and contemporaries in the Labour Movement and never compromised on his principles.

We mourn him as a comrade who never gave up until the last minute and his wise counsel will never be forgotten. He was a General Secretary of General Secretaries and a scholar of note.

We will miss his rich reservoir of knowledge and may God grant him eternal rest. Adieu great Comrade!

### **CHIEF JOHN KOLAWOLE**

SECRETARY GENERAL

TRADE UNION CONGRESS , NIGERIA

## **OSUNDE'S LOSS IS IRREPARABLE**

### **- NOA**

On behalf of the Management and entire staff of the National Orientation Agency, I write to convey our heartfelt condolences to the family of late Dr. Osunde and the Nigeria Labour Congress for this irreparable loss.

As we mourn the passing away of Dr. Osunde, we pray that the God almighty grant the family, the NLC and the entire Labour movement the fortitude to bear the loss.

Once again, please accept our heartfelt condolences and convey same to the family of the deceased.

**ALH. IDI M. FARUK, MFR**

DIRECTOR GENERAL

NATIONAL ORIENTATION AGENCY (NOA)

## **OSUNDE WAS A REMARKABLE**

### **SOCIAL CRUSADER - BPE**

With deep sorrow and heavy heart, I write on behalf of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), to commiserate with the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), on the sad news of the passing away of one of Nigeria's most illustrious labour veterans, Comrade Dr. Lasisi A. Osunde, former General Secretary, Nigeria Labour Congress.

Dr. Osunde, was a foremost nationalist who dedicated his entire life to the cause of the labouring poor and the underprivileged in the society. For some of us who were fortunate to come into contact with this remarkable social crusader during his active years in the service of Nigerian workers and thus, witnessed at close range, the unsurpassed commitment and singleness of purpose he always brought to bear in the discharge of his duties; the pain we feel today is as unbearable as the loss is irreparable.

While we solemnly mourn the death of this indefatigable champion of freedom and social justice, it is our unwavering conviction that the best way to pay tribute to our late comrade is to, tirelessly and unswervingly continue making the necessary sacrifice towards building an egalitarian Nigeria he envisioned. A vision he shared with some of us, on several occasions, for a Nigeria where all citizens will have equal opportunity to explore and manifest their God-given talents for the



benefits of our beloved country and humanity at large.

Dr. Osunde was a gentleman of refined character and fertile felicity. The exemplary life he lived will continue to inspire future generations, the Nigeria Labour Congress in particular and the International labour movement in general.

We pray that God in His infinite mercy will grant his soul eternal repose and his family the fortitude to bear the loss.

Adieu Comrade!

Yours in Mourning,

**IRENE N. CHIGBUE**

DIRECTOR GENERAL

BUREAU OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (BPE)

### **OSUNDE'S CONTRIBUTIONS ARE LEGENDARY - PENCOM**

Dr. Osunde was indeed a committed labour activist whose contributions to the upliftment of the living standards of the working people in particular and the labour movements as a whole are legendary. He dedicated his entire life to the selfless struggle to better the lot of workers and these contributions would continue to endure and stand the test of time.

On behalf of the Management and Staff of the Commission, I would like to extend our condolences to his family, the NLC and the entire working people of this country. May God Almighty grant his soul eternal rest and his family, the NLC and the entire people of this country the fortitude to bear such an irreparable loss.

MUHAMMAD K. AHMAD

DIRECTOR GENERAL

NATIONAL PENSION COMMISSION (NPC)

### **OSUNDE, A UNIQUE ACTIVIST - TRUSTFUND**

Dr. Lasisi Osunde, a unique activist, was very committed to the noble ideals of the trade union movement. For these who are conversant with labour history, Dr. Osunde was not only a practical trade unionist; he was also a consummate administrator.

We had the greatest respect for him, for his defense of workers rights and pursuit of the welfare of the less privileged. Dr. Lasisi Osunde had a generous spirit and a good sense of humour that made him a rallying point and a source of inspiration to activists, both young and old. His exemplary contributions to national development will be greatly missed.

While we share in your grief, we are however comforted by the fact that he lived a virtuous life. We, therefore, pray that the good Lord will comfort the family and the entire labour movement.

Once more, on behalf of the management and staff of Trustfund Pensions Plc, accept our sympathy and please do express our condolences to the family.

**BERNARD EKWE**

Ag. MANAGING DIRECTOR/CEO  
TRUSTFUND PENSION PLC



## **NIGERIA LAWYERS MOURN OSUNDE**

May I on behalf of the entire members of the Nigeria Bar Association express our heartfelt condolence on the passing away to eternal glory of the former General Secretary of the NLC. We urge you to take heart and comfort in the fact that he is resting in the bosom of our Lord.

May the Almighty God in his infinite goodness and mercies grant NLC the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

Accept our condolences

**OLUWAROTIMI O. AKEREDOLU ESQ. SAN**  
PRESIDENT  
NIGERIA BAR ASSOCIATION

## **OSUNDE WROTE HIS OWN EPITAPH - FRCN**

We express our deep concern over the demise of this national treasure, Dr. Lasisi Osunde, whose life was fully and actively lived across many spheres of human endeavour in the service of our great country.

He was an example of an icon who fully developed his faculties and applied them positively and tirelessly.

Standing tall, he wrote his own epitaph through the services he offered, and the history of the Nigeria Labour Congress will indeed have missing links without chronicling his acts!

We pray that God grants the family and the NLC the fortitude to bear the loss of this Colossus.

**MARIA ODEH**  
FOR: DIRECTOR GENERAL  
RADIO NIGERIA

## **OSUNDE: WAS A RARE GEM - IAP**

We sincerely sympathized with the family of Late Dr. Lasisi Osunde, mni, for his death.

We saw him as a man who felt the pains and agony of the cheated and the deprived. He achieved alot for humanity and mankind and the next generation will continue to ask death why he was snatched away.

Social Justice was in his blood. Boldness was on his face. Redemptive mission was in his heart. Inside out, he was the same man.

May the Almighty God give the family the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss of a father of fathers.

**E.W. EKANEM**  
FOR: CHAIRMAN  
INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION PANEL (IAP)



Comrade Lasisi Osunde was a key supporter/ facilitator of the progressive alliance between NLC and the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) in the mid eighties.

May his soul rest in peace

**LANRE AROGUNDADE**

FORMER PRESIDENT

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIAN STUDENTS (NANS)

COORDINATOR, INTERNATIONAL PRESS CENTER (IPC)

### **FAREWELL OUR DEAR LASISI (L P)**

The entire leadership and membership of the Labour Party sent their heartfelt condolence message on the demise of the Former General Secretary of NLC Dr. Lasisi Osunde who left the mother earth on 28th August 2008. Late comrade Dr. Lasisi Osunde was indeed a very well known leader and uninspirer among the rank and file members of the working people throughout the country. We mourn his death and will indeed miss his great words of wisdom on the pertinent issues of tactics and strategy of the Labour movement and its struggles for social progress and true brotherhood of man. We are proud to state that he actually paid his dues in the various

stages and arenas of the struggles of modern Nigeria Labour movement.

Late Dr. Lasisi Osunde was a unique Labour activist:

A very dependable team player

A well-informed working people scholar

A practitioner of leadership by example

A very humane character

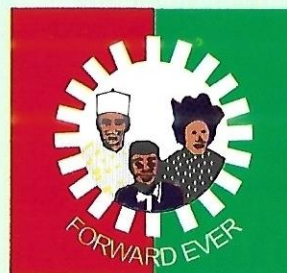
Dr. Lasisi Osunde was very humble and honest in his dealings with fellow comrades and their vanguards. He detested all forms of reactionary behaviours and abhorred social injustice. He was above all a strong believer in the noble vision and mission of a united, progressive great Nigeria , where the working class and all the working people will play leading roles in shaping and managing the destinies of Nigerian People and Country.

Farewell our dear Lasisi, you lived a very fulfilled life.

**A. A. SALAM (BARADEN PAIKO)**

NATIONAL SECRETARY

LABOUR PARTY (LP)



**LABOUR PARTY (LP)**

### **WE ARE SADDENED BY OSUNDE'S DEMISE - FES**

At FES Nigeria, we are deeply saddened to hear about the death of NLC's former General Secretary, Dr. Lasisi Osunde. This is definitely a difficult time for his family, friends and in particular the Nigeria Labour Congress, an organization he contributed his quota to build, especially during the hard period of military rule.

Although I never met him, I hear he was a focused, committed, disciplined and forthright labour leader who brought fresh perspectives to labour struggles in Nigeria and contributed in no small measure to the rights of workers and the struggle for democratization of the polity, especially during the dark ages of military incursion in politics.

He will no doubt be missed by all, I encourage you all at this difficult time to draw your strength from the legacy he left behind at the NLC.

Please accept our heartfelt condolence.

On behalf of both FES offices in Lagos and Abuja .

MICHAEL ROLL

RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE FES

NIGERIA

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG ( FES )



**OSUNDE WILL BE REMEMBERED FOR  
HIS DEDICATION TO WORKERS  
CAUSE - OATUU**

The late Dr. Osunde was a vibrant, intelligent, hard-working and a committed union leader of high integrity. He was very instrumental in the struggle for social justice and democracy in Nigeria, which was in the iron-grip of successive military dictatorship. He was an intellectual trade unionist who had his Ph.D in Economics at the Friendship University in Moscow.

His passing away has robbed the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and workers of Nigeria in particular and Africa in general of an exemplary trade union leader. He has left an indelible mark in the history of the NLC. He will forever be remembered for his stubbornness for truth, honesty, hard work and dedication to the cause of workers.

He was a Lecturer in Economics at the University of Lagos and the founding General Secretary of National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE), Nigeria. He was the first Deputy General Secretary of Nigeria Labour Congress and later took over as General Secretary from Comrade Aliyu Dangiwa.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of OATUU and millions of African Workers, we convey our deepest heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the Nigeria Labour

Congress and the Osunde family for the irreplaceable loss of this great son of Africa

May the Almighty God rest his soul in perfect peace and console those he left behind.

HASSAN A. SUNMONU (OON)  
SECRETARY-GENERAL  
ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN TRADE  
UNION UNITY  
(OATUU)

**OSUNDE STRENGTHENED  
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TUC AND  
NLC - BARBER**

We very much appreciate Dr Osunde's contribution to the strengthening of the relations between the TUC and the NLC. He was held in high esteem in the international trade union movement for his outstanding leadership qualities and foresight. Dr Osunde, who played a prominent role in the ILO as head of the NLC delegation to the Conference, defended the interests of working people and promoted their rights during his stewardship of the NLC.

The TUC General Council join me in sending our heart-felt condolences to you and, through you, to his family.

BRENDAN BARBER  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
TRADE UNION CONGRESS (TUC)  
UNITED KINGDOM

**OSUNDE STOOD FOR SOCIAL  
JUSTICE - ILO**

The news of Dr. Osunde's death came as a shock to the ILO, especially to my colleagues who knew him on personal basis.

Indeed, from the chronicle of Dr. Osunde's life, it is evident that he lived a worthy and tireless life that led to promotion of social justice and positive social change in Nigeria

On behalf of the Africa Regional Rirector, Mr. Charles Dan, and the ILO, I would like to express our deepest sympathy to the family of Dr. Osunde, the Nigeria Labour Congress and the people of Nigeria for the irreplaceable loss of this comrade.

Once again, the ILO sends its condolence. Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

SINA CHUMA-MKANDAWIRE (MRS.)  
ILO DIRECTOR  
FOR NIGERIA, GHANA, SIERRA-LEONE  
AND LIBERIA  
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR  
ORGANISATION (ILO)



**WE WILL REMEMBER FOR EVER HIS  
CONTRIBUTIONS - ITUC**

We have learnt with great sadness of the death of Dr. Lasisi Osunde, a former General Secretary of the Nigeria Labour Congress.

Dr. Osunde's services and contribution to the cause of the Nigeria people and the international trade union movement will be remembered forever.

We express our deepest sympathy to all the colleagues of the NLC and would appreciate it if you would also convey our message of condolence to his family.

GUY RYDER

GENERAL SECRETARY  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION  
CONFEDERATION  
(ITUC)

**WE MOURN THE DEATH OF A  
FIGHTER FOR WORKERS RIGHTS -  
ZCTU**

We have received with sadness the news of the untimely death of Dr Lasisi Osunde, the former General Secretary of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC).

We understand Brother Osunde died on August 28th 2008 and that at the time of his death, he had retired from active trade union business.

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) joins the rest of the international

trade union community in mourning the passing on of a gallant fighter for workers rights; a visionary and a unifier. Indeed the labour movement has lost an experienced trade unionist who was well known in instilling a deep sense of activism among young trade unionists.

We express our deepest condolences to the NLC and the trade union fraternity. Our commiseration also goes to Dr Osunde's wife, Dr Adesuwa Osunde and their four children, Owen, Ighwiyisi, Uwaifiokun and Aibiokunla.

May his soul rest in peace.

**WELLINGTON CHIBEBE**  
SECRETARY GENERAL  
ZIMBABWE CONGRESS OF TRADE  
UNIONS (ZCTU)

**OUR SINCERE CONDOLENCES-- FNV**

On behalf of FNV we send our sincere condolences to the family of Dr. Lasisi Osunde, the NLC, and to the workers of Nigeria.

We recognise his important role for the trade union movement and for the NLC especially.

May his sole rest in peace.

**CORRIE ROEPER**  
FEDERATIE NEDERLANDSE  
VAKBEWEGING (FNV)

**WE SHARE THE GRIEF OF THE NLC  
- ITUC AFRICA**

The ITUC-African Regional Organisation joins the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) in mourning the death of Comrade Lasisi Osunde, veteran stalwart of the labour movement and former General Secretary of the NLC.

We share the grief of the NLC, family, relatives and friends of the late Comrade Osunde during this difficult moment.

We will remember his courage and invaluable contributions to the cause of the Nigerian workers and the African trade union movement as a whole.

May Comrade Osunde rest in peace. Please accept our condolences and the renewed assurances of our highest esteem.

Fraternally,

**KWASI ADU-AMANKWAH**

GENERAL SECRETARY  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION  
CONGRESS (ITUC)

-AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANISATION



On behalf of the Executive Secretariat and Presidium of OTM-CS, we send our sincere Condolences to the family of Dr. LASISI OSUNDE, the Nigeria Labour Congress and to the Workers of Nigeria.

We recognise his important role for the African trade union movement and for the Nigeria Labour Congress especially.

May his soul rest in peace, and his beloved ones find consolation.

**ALEXANDRE CANDIDO MUNGUAMBE**  
GENERAL SECRETARY OF OTM-CS  
MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE

**OSUNDE WAS PIVOTAL IN  
RENEWING NIGERIA 'S TRADE  
UNION MOVEMENT IN THE 1980s  
- SOLIDARITY CENTRE**

Late Dr. Osunde was a critical voice for progressive democratic change in Nigeria . His role was pivotal in renewing Nigeria 's trade union movement in the 1980's. Austere in disposition, with a humane but fiercely courageous personality, Dr Osunde, unlike some of his peers, refused to be a tool in the hands of military autocrats bent on undermining free, progressive and independent trade unionism in Nigeria . To

Dr Osunde's eternal credit, stands his stoic refusal to be Sole Administrator of PENGASSAN when the late maximum dictator, General Abacha, dissolved the union after the oil workers' pro-democracy strike in 1994.

May God Almighty grant him eternal peace.

**EDHERUE BENEDICT**

Ag. COUNTRY PROGRAM DIRECTOR,  
AFL-CIO SOLIDARITY CENTER , ABUJA

**COMRADE OSUNDE IS A HERO OF  
OUR MOVEMENT - IYAYI**

If the working class was in control of the Nigerian state, Comrade Lasisi Osunde would have received a state burial. His passing to his final resting place would have been serenaded with 21 gun salutes and a band from the Brigade of Guards would have accompanied the march with songs from the immortal arsenal of his accomplishments. By now, wood would have been cut to form the first scaffolds for erecting a monument to him in our empty public square. We would have done this because like Labour Leader Number One, Late Comrade Michael Imoudu and Comrade Chima Ubani - other immortal comrades before him - Comrade Osunde is a hero of our movement. He gave his all and his life to the cause of the movement of the

working class.

Giving one's life to the cause of the working class is not an easy one anywhere in the world and in Nigeria , given our history; it is an especially difficult one. In our case, it requires shunning the honey of the various plots and pots of bribes that members of the ruling class leave as traps in the most unsuspecting places for leaders of the working class movement. It also requires having a scientist's vision of a future that the doomsday prophets of an impotent capitalist ruling class daily proclaim will never come because as they have recently been shouting from the rooftops of the lottery that is capitalism, 'socialism is dead' and capitalism or 'greed and barbarism are the natural and inescapable destiny of man'. It requires the courage to hope and to dare even in the face of the daily evidence of termites that are eating the, foundation even faster than it is being built.

Comrade Osunde shunned the honey of bribes, he was an irrepressible believer in the ultimate triumph of the working class vision of society. He worked tirelessly to build the hope and reality of a Nigeria that would be led by the working class for the interests of all members of Nigerian society.

Comrade Osunde demonstrated these qualities everywhere: in the struggle to unite intellectuals with the mainstream trade union movement under the umbrella



of the Nigeria Labour Congress; in the struggle against the barbarism of military rule; in the marches against the detention and murder of university students; in the struggle against the detention and abuse of working class and human rights activists; in the struggle to establish a true party of the working class; in the struggle to defend the Nigeria Labour Congress against right wing sectarian ideological and physical violence and intrigues; in the struggle against left-wing and right-wing opportunism in the labour movement; in the struggle for deepening and protecting the rights of workers; in the struggle to defend the socialist ideology against right-wing attacks; in the fight to ensure that workers did not acquire a demoralised self-image of themselves, their movement, their potential and their future.

At the end, like other fallen heroes of our movement before him, Cde Osunde did not live to see a socialist order in Nigeria in his lifetime. While this was a source of concern to him, of greater concern was the fact that conditions in the working class movement had become worse in spite of his seminal contributions.

Comrade Osunde was concerned that many leaders in the trade union movement had become active members of political parties led by the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) that have devalued the lives of Nigerians and ruined the

country. He was concerned that little or no work was going on to build cadres for the working class movement and that trade unions were recruiting their officers, - future leaders of the movement -literarily from the streets. He was concerned that in spite of efforts to build a strong vanguard party in Nigeria , the progressive forces continuously nested in small groups that carried on sometimes hidden and at other times open wars against each other.

But Comrade Osunde was a student of history in general and, of revolutionary history, in particular. He understood that, with time, with the needed efforts, discipline and correct political work on the part of our progressive forces, the problems would be solved and that a vanguard party of the working class would crystallize from the ashes of the small sectarian groups.

His death and that of other comrades before him is a reminder of the task to which Comrade Osunde and others dedicated their lives but which they have bequeathed to us to accomplish: the task of building a truly vanguard party of the working class that can rescue the country from the horde of Draculas masquerading as foreign and indigenous capitalists that have descended on the country and its people and are daily sucking their blood.

We will honour his life, his commitment, and his contribution to our movement by returning to cadre building, by abandoning

the fraudulent and violent political platforms of the enemies of the working class and by deepening the links between all those who are championing the cause of the working class but quartered in different rooms in the same or even different buildings.

It is a task that those of us who have outlived him must dedicate ourselves to accomplishing with renewed energy; with the fresh insight needed to understand and overcome the problems that have held and are holding us back. Undertaking and accomplishing this task is the only way in which we can show that Comrade Osunde is, indeed, worthy of our tears and our solidarity songs.

**DR. FESTUS IYAYI**  
FORMER PRESIDENT  
ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF  
UNIVERSITIES  
(ASUU)



**HE WAS A CONSISTENT LEADER  
- KOLE**

It is a sad news indeed. The Comrade was one of the most articulate and consistent Leaders in the Labour Movement. His activities as the General Secretary of NLC will be remembered by many as a landmark.

May his soul rest in peace.

**DR. KOLE SHETTIMA**  
COUNTRY DIRECTOR  
McArthur Foundation

**THIS IS A COLLECTIVE LOSS  
- EGWU**

This is a collective loss. We mourn, we lament, but we take succour in the fact that he lived a worthy life dedicated to the upliftment of the common man.

PROF. SAM EGWU

It was sad news to hear of the departure of Comrade Osunde. I used to meet with him in the early 1980s.

May his soul rest in peace.

**PROF. BJORN BECKMAN**

**OSUNDE WAS AN HONEST LABOUR  
LEADER - FAWEHINMI**

Dr. Lasisi Osunde was a great Labour Activist.

An outstanding Labour Intellectual.

A tough Labour Negotiator.

An honest Labour Leader.

Totally committed to the Labour Cause

We will miss him very dearly.

**CHIEF GANI FAWEHINMI, LLD, SAN**

GANI FAWEHINMI CHAMBERS

**A GEM IS GONE GLORY**

Although Dr. Lasisi Osunde would be missed, the history of the NLC will be incomplete without the mention of his name. He showed exemplary leadership skills that were admired by all. He will always be remembered by all who live and fight for justice and a just world in which our children and generations yet unborn can call their own. May his soul rest in the perfect peace of the Lord, Amen

**GLORY A. KILANKO**

**HE WAS A SUPERB ROLE MODEL,  
STEADFAST AND PASSIONATE  
ABOUT EDUCATION**

**- FAULKNER**

I hope you will permit me to write a few words in recognition of the contribution that Comrade Osunde made to the cause of the Nigeria working class, drawing upon my experiences of working closely with him through a very difficult time in the Republics evolution.

Comrade Osunde was first and foremost a gentleman. Not in the sense of being impeccably mannered, which he undoubtedly was, but in the very way he managed his position in the NLC, and the relationships he developed with people. He always treated everyone equally and with respect. He managed a very busy office,

and often in near siege conditions given the attacks of the military, with a calm but firm hand, and won the loyalty of all those who benefited from his sober leadership.

He was not however, simply a bureaucrat. His even disposition often disguised a formidable intellectual capacity and a sharp insightfulness. I remember countless briefings he generously provided for me whenever I visited the then HQ in Yaba, and as a result was much more able to comprehend the complexities of the political and economic situation.

He was also courageous: Whenever the military struck, either by disrupting activity, or by arresting key leaders, including himself, he stayed calm and business like, and provided a foundation of rock solid support for those facing the wrath of the men in uniforms.

He was passionate about education, and especially workers education, and understood the power it had to build cadre and take forward the struggle of the working class. Throughout his life, he remained committed to the total emancipation of the working class, and for the liberation of peoples everywhere.

At a time when effective working class leadership globally is needed now more than ever, the example of Comrade Osunde should be embraced by all those who wish to see change. He seamlessly combined



modesty, fearlessness, intellectual inquisitiveness and integrity with a flair for practicality. What an example he left for us to emulate!

To his immediate family and his beloved children that were his pride and joy please accept my own deep condolences, and the hope that your loss will be tempered by the knowledge that his life was lived to the full, and with the very best of intentions. At times I am sure his family must have felt a degree of abandonment from time to time as he wrestled to build and protect the labour movement, but there is no doubt in my mind that you were all very precious to him, and he told me often.

To comrades of the NLC, you have lost a superb role model. Lets commit ourselves, wherever we are, to replicate the steadfastness and many other fine qualities of Comrade Osunde. Our class deserves no less.

On a purely personal note, I am deeply honoured that he regarded me as a friend, and a comrade in arms. I shall remain an activist, a socialist and a defender of the working class for the rest of my days, in no small part because of being befriended and inspired by such a decent and honourable comrade as Comrade Doctor Lasisi Osunde.

Long live the spirit of Comrade Osunde  
Long Live!

Long live the legacy of incorruptibility he has bequeathed us, Long Live!  
Long live leadership that is accountable and courageous, Long Live!  
Long live the mighty Nigeria Labour Congress, Long Live

Aluta Continua!

**STEVE FAULKNER**

FORMERLY OF THE COMMONWEALTH TUC;

### **OSUNDE, THE HUMBLE GIANT IN THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE OF NIGERIA - ABIODUN AREMU**

The achievements of the NLC between 1978 and 1992 when Osunde served in its secretariat, first as Deputy General Secretary and later as General Secretary; cannot be separated from the invaluable contribution of a man, who was indeed a Comrade, and who lived for the organization. As the second person to be appointed the General Secretary of the NLC, Comrade (Dr.) Lasisi Osunde was an embodiment of modesty, discipline, commitment and selflessness. Also, in his retirement, these qualities of his were his hallmarks as he made it a point of duty in the last few years before his demise to attend the Tuesdays' weekly meetings and interact with his other selfless and resilient compatriots in the National Association of Trade Union Veterans (NATUV).

Remembering Osunde is remembering

various popular struggles led by the NLC in the 80s to early 90s. We remember the repressive tribulations the Congress passed through in the era of the ignoble Ibrahim Babangida dictatorship. When the NLC leadership was arrested in the wake of the Congress' declaration of June 4, 1986 as a day of strike/mass action in solidarity with the Nigerian Students over the killings of students under the infamous Ango Abdullahi's administration of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), our comrade Osunde was the live wire in the NLC Secretariat. Similarly when the NLC leadership was arrested in 1987; and the Congress was banned in February 1988 and un-banned in December 1988, Osunde was a constant and reliable figure.

Comrade Osunde was a highly effective and diligent worker in the Congress and he consistently served the NLC under three NLC presidents - Hassan Sunmonu, Ali Chiroma and Pascal Bafyau. Remembering Osunde brings fresh memories of the historical alliance on class lines between NLC, ASUU and NANS for the socialist transformation of Nigeria, which manifested in various struggles such as "NIGERIA NOT FOR SALE (in opposition to IMF and World Bank conditionalities); and the "POLITICAL DEBATE" (in which Nigerians expressed popular opinion for Socialism).

Osunde belonged to the glorious era in the



80s when the highest leadership of the Congress was represented at NANS' Conventions. It is to his glory that he was an organizational person and a team player which shown brilliantly in his 14 years service with the NLC. He mentored some of the best and current hands serving in the NLC and other trades unions today.

We shall always remember Comrade Osunde for his simplicity, fearlessness and philosophical message for the inevitable transition to the eternal space, i.e. "Iku lo ma laja" (death put an end to all earthly struggles).

May his spirit inspire the struggle for the total liberalization of Nigeria from neocolonial enslavement and global capitalism.

**ABIODUN AREMU**

CONVENER, UNITED ACTION FOR  
DEMOCRACY (UAD) &  
SECRETARY, LABOUR AND CIVIL  
SOCIETY COALITION (LASCO)

**OSUNDE WAS AN INSPIRATION TO**

**OTHERS, HE TOUCHED MANY LIVES--  
FUNMI KOMOLAFE**

Dr. Lasisi Osunde, a former general secretary of the Nigeria Labour Congress was a principled Nigerian. He stood for justice for the working people and fought for the cause of the working class. Under his leadership the NLC secretariat published the first response to the military government's claim of subsidising fuel in an article titled "Oil subsidy lies not facts" in 1986. He used the article to debunk the claims of the then military government.

His tenure at the Nigeria Labour Congress which one covered as a labour reporter was the era of stability at the secretariat.

Dr. Osunde encouraged the recruitment of young graduates of various disciplines into the NLC and groomed many of them majority of whom have since attained greater heights.

The secretariat under his leadership made information available to reporters and encouraged training of journalists on labour issues. Labour reporters attended trade union courses at no cost to their employers. From politics to the economy, he was a reporter's delight. Every interview with him brought out a fresh news item. He never saw reporters as intruders.

Doctor as he was fondly called also encouraged gender participation in trade unionism. He made the secretariat available for meetings of the then Womens'

Wing of the NLC.

A good listener, Dr. Lasisi Osunde's fatherly role in the secretariat remains fresh in the minds of all who knew him. He never had any open disagreement with political office holders in the NLC. He accorded them their due respect.

Dr. Osunde despite his failing health in his last interview which he granted me in 2006 expressed his wishes for Organized Labour to play an active role in politics in Nigeria. That dream remains unfulfilled till he died.

Dr. Lasisi Osunde has come and gone but his influence on the lives of many remains.

Adieu Comrade!

Adieu!

**FUNMI KOMOLAFE**  
LABOUR EDITOR  
VANGUARD NEWSPAPER

**I WAS INSPIRED BY DR. OSUNDE'S**



## **HUMILITY**

### **-- ABUBAKAR MOMOH**

While on a whistle-stop visit to the NLC Headquarters in June this year, the first Comrade whose office I visited is Owei Lakemfa's. And after the mandatory complimentary salutation, the first question I asked him was whether anybody was in touch with Comrade

Lasisi Osunde. He told me that he has not visited him in a long time but hoped to do so soon. He then went on the memory lane, narrating to me about the history and struggles of Dr. Osunde.

I then complained to Comrade Lakemfa about how we neglect cadres who made contributions to the cause of the toiling people in Nigeria. I mentioned Comrade Eskor Toyo, as one of those I felt are being neglected, in spite of his selfless commitment to the cause of the working class.

As an undergraduate student at University of Lagos in the early 1980s, NLC was a haven for many of us on the Left. We went there for different reasons-but all connected with our commitment to the cause of the working people and internationalism. Our activities were often always supported by our key cadres in the

NLC, viz Salisu Mohammed and Yahaya Hashim, but mediated by Dr. Lasisi Osunde who provided the leverage. On a personal

note, I was inspired by Dr. Osunde's humility, modesty, internal calmness and equanimity of temper; his high perspicacity, his fatherly disposition and his often-taken-for-granted intellectual depth. He spoke less, but listens more and observes more. Listening to Lakemfa, I conclude that his experience of persecution under colonial Nigeria may have in some measures influenced his attitude and disposition to people and issues.

Dr. Osunde loved knowledge and saw it as the condition-sine-qua-non for workers liberation. He donated his entire books to support the NLC Library, some of those books were pilfered or stolen, he never bothered.

In times like these we should reflect on what kind of Unions we have or what kinds of Unions we are building. There can be no thorough-going trade unionism without workers education. This is one enduring legacy of Dr. Osunde. If we are able to challenge ourselves to introduce working class consciousness into trade unions we would have fulfilled the life-long ambition of Comrade Osunde.

I urge the NLC at 30 Commission to be sensitive to what I will call, for lack of better term, the high mortality of Comrades who are working compendiums on the history of labour in Nigeria. We don't know who is

next, we will only pray that it is not so soon. I am sure that nobody ever got to conduct an in-depth and personal interview with Comrade Osunde for this all-important NLC at 30 project..

I do pray, however, that as a mark of honour and respect NLC seek access to his files and writings on the Nigerian working class and to accordingly publish them, and to similarly avail such materials to the NLC at 30 Commission in order to enrich the well-rounded study it hopes to carry out. Rest well Comrade Osunde, the struggle definitely continues.

**DR. ABUBAKAR MOMOH**

## **OSUNDE THE SOUL OF PROGRESSIVE LABOUR WILL LIVE ON CHOM BAGU**

Dr. Lasisi Osunde was neither a physical giant nor an orator. His presentation skills were not one of his strong points and yet whenever he spoke, no one could afford not to listen. He was not one of those revving labour agitators full of class tantrums and gesticulations, but was a determined trade union fundamentalist representing the soul of the Movement. Often quiet and with little presence, Osunde as we called him, only spoke when there was need to. A man of few words, he spoke and acted from the



heart. His passion for the cause of the working class was such that when speaking he sometimes choked on so many fiery words rushing to make a case for true class justice.

In this tribute, I want to focus on a few events that demonstrate Osunde's contribution to the labour and socialist movement and how his leaving us now when neo-liberalism is at its height will contribute to the "herd" scattering in a thousand directions.

We arrived the Nigeria Labour Congress in 1987 freshly from the university. This was a time of momentous development in the country, when the IMF and Political Bureau debates were fully in the air and government had just adopted the structural adjustment program. Both the economic and political reform process had drawn labour into an active stance and split the movement into two so-called ideological camps. Osunde, as General Secretary brought a focus, a sense and clarity of purpose to the NLC never experienced before.

One of the first actions that the NLC secretariat took was to recruit newly graduated radical students to reinforce the movement and move it in a new direction. This new direction was not just to tilt the movement towards the 'Marxist' group in

the NLC populated by labour aristocrats of the ilk of Sylvester Ejiofor, Pascal Bafyau and Adams Oshiomhole, but to a worker focused and genuinely progressive direction. This was not only a perilous and ambitious gamble, but potent dangers for the movement and Osunde himself. This was so because the so-called Marxists in the movement were foot soldiers for General Babangida's corrupt and vicious regime specializing in taking over popular organizations, undermining democratic leaderships and foisting chameleonic stooges. Osunde foresighted as ever, foresaw that titanic battles were on the shore with internal enemies of the working class in the first place and therefore set about preparing the NLC.

Fortunately or unfortunately, the internal enemies did not give the new emerging force at the NLC any breathing space but forced it in to battle immediately. Osunde was isolated among the so-called Marxists because of his ideological Puritanism and firm stand against socialist opportunists. He was lucky however to have a president and deputy president Alhaji Ali Chiroma and Comrade Lawrence Peterside, who though not ranting ideological Marxist, were individuals of rare personal integrity and core trade union democrats whose words were their bond. These combination of a committed trade union strategist and Marxist activist and

veterans of the working class barricades is what saved the Nigerian labour movement from demolition by the forces of SAP including the government, the so-called "democrats" in the trade unions and agents provocateurs planted deep in the hard disc of the movement.

As any activist will know, it is often easier to fight off ideological opponents, but too difficult to deal with internal enemies and saboteurs. Because of the public image of internal enemies in any struggle, those fighting them have to be careful to take them on one step at a time so as to gradually expose them and their treacherous tactics of duplicity, defensive radicalism and strive to usurp leadership positions from where they manipulate and misdirect the struggle.

A few incidents will go well to show how the battles were waged and how comrade Osunde led his 'boys in the secretariat in confronting the enemies of the working people. The first incident was an interesting debate on whether to allow the new assistant secretaries (Osunde 'boys') to attend meetings of NLC organs like the National Administrative Council, the Central Working Committee and the National Executive Council. Osunde needed these new staff just from the barricades of the students movement to infuse their new and radical spirit into the



deliberation of the inner meetings of the NLC and the best way to do that was to have them not just taking minutes, but participating actively in the debates, bringing their new and uncontaminated perspectives into play. This strategy worked effectively because the new staff did not only participate in the debate, in most cases they influenced decisions. Chiroma and Peterside bought into this strategy and pushed it to its limits. We therefore had a situation where a new force emerged in the NLC secretariat with adequate policy influence and capacity and responsibility to interpret and implement policy.

When the defensive radicals or the internal enemies realized that a new power had emerged, it attempted to hijack it and use it for its counter revolutionary schemes. Ejiofor and Pascal will sneak into the NLC secretariat when they know that principal officers were away and begin to dictate pro-government press statements for the new staff to sign or initiate pro-government political schemes. These of course were resisted on many occasions and gradually the Ejiofor gang started a campaign against these "young boys" as they call them. This campaign got to a stage where during the 1988 congress of the NLC in Benin, the assistant secretaries were refused access to the NLC secretariat where Ejiofor had installed himself to

manipulate the elections in favor of the so-called labour democrats.

Another important incident was when the NLC secretariat was mandated to produce a position paper on the Political Bureau Report which had recommended socialism as Nigeria's national ideology. The secretariat committee set up by the CWC had made good progress on the paper when Ejiofor and Pascal imposed themselves on the committee. Their mission as Babangida's agents was to get labour to oppose the recommendation of socialism so that Labour could be compensated with the registration of the Labour Party. However, things got out of hand when the duo came with prepared papers to substitute the one developed by the mandated committee. This is when Osunde came out in his real element. He did not only lambast them in strong unapologetic terms but threw them out of the committee room. This was the epitome of political courage given the political weight of these individuals in the movement then and their powerful connection to the government of the day.

The treachery of this group was to be fully exposed at the NLC 1988 Congress in Benin. The so-called Marxist/democrat divide in the NLC was manipulated to allow government to take over the movement, change its leadership and political

direction. Ejiofor was the chief strategist who positioned himself as leader of the 'Marxist' group but was secretly using the democrats to set the stage for government to take over of the NLC. Though Chiroma was elected for a second term in a free and fair election at that Congress, a crisis was orchestrated to give the excuse the government needed. As the chief rapporteur of the Congress in Benin, I drove with Osunde over the night to Lagos so that we can write the report of the Congress and start a campaign with international trade union secretariats to defend the independence of the Nigerian Labour movement.

When Chiroma attempted to meet some government functionaries to tell them to back off from their intervention, to his shock, Ejiofor and Pascal had already made the rounds and given the government a report upon which it planned how to ban the NLC and impose an administrator. Having realized the level of treachery by the so-called Marxist kingpins in the government takeover of the NLC, Chiroma decided to handover to Michael Ogunkoya, the sole administrator appointed by the government. What then happened? These renegades organized to kidnap Chiroma to prevent him from handing over hoping that that will then make government to arrest and detain him and deny the workers his moral leadership in the mobilization to fight back.



The Thatcher demonstration in January 1988 presented another opportunity to expose these characters. When the African National Congress representative to Nigeria informed the NLC that he wanted to mobilize for a demonstration against the pro-apartheid policy of the British government during Mrs. Thatcher's visit to Nigeria on January 8, 1988, a big debate started at the NLC. The 'Marxist' pretenders who had no inkling of the plan jumped in to prevent the NLC from participating claiming it was too sudden and that NLC organs had not met and any way, the NLC had no money in hand to do the necessary mobilization. I and Chris Uyt negotiated with the ANC to borrow the NLC money to do what was necessary. This is how the Anti-Thatcher demonstration in Lagos and Kano took place. As usual, the pseudo Marxists quickly mobilized and took the lead, making sure that the cameras got them and the media reported them well.

The fuel strike of April 1988 was the final straw that made Osunde mad and compelled him to open up his heart to us about the treachery he had fought for a decade. The fuel strike started when university of Jos students and some union members demonstrated in opposition to a proposed price increase on petrol and associate products and were attacked and some arrested and detained. The NLC called a meeting and proposed a national strike,

but the union chiefs in Lagos refused to respond. It was only when the strike moved to Kano, then Kaduna and Kwara and when it became clear that if the national unions did not move to support the strike by summoning a national strike, they will be exposed, that our 'Marxists' sluggishly decided to call the strike.

As usual, the Ejiofor group had a hidden agenda. They proposed that to ensure the success of the strike all union leaders should go into hiding to avoid arrest and guarantee the success of the strike. Yet, these 'Marxists' rather than mobilize their members, went on to mobilize for undermining the strike. It was when Osunde realized that the core 'Marxist' unions like the Civil Service Workers Union and the National Union of Railwaymen were not participating in the strike that he decided to visit their national secretariats. Behold! Osunde and his 'boys' found that Ejiofor and his gang had already drafted a press release calling off the strike even before negotiations with the government had taken place. So while they encouraged militant labour leaders like Ademoyero and Peter of Foot wear Union to go into hiding, they were working with government to demobilize and break the strike. It was too much and Osunde broke down into tears and exploded calling them traitors to the labour movement and the Nigerian workers, that is when he sat us down and told us the history of how the compromise of 1977 facilitated treachery to take over the movement.

I have used these events to show how right wing elements and government infiltrators camouflaged and using pretense presented themselves as 'Marxists' and hijacked the Nigerian Labour Movement. They were so clever that they positioned themselves in such a way that they easily grab leadership of labour events and then truncated them to the benefit of government and imperialist forces. The greatness of Osunde lies in the fact that he was one of the very, very few who understood this and waged a persistent battle to expose them. Others were either naïve or lacked the intuitiveness to understand this phenomenon comprehensively and have the courage to fight it. Alone among these political vipers, Osunde had to be tactical and cautious, focusing more on building the forces that will confront them usurpers. Unfortunately, he was aging and about to retire when he found the force to fight and the new forces he found were too new to the movement to step up to the plate. As it were. This is the reason that the Nigerian Labour Movement is still crawling at 30

Osunde will never die! Organize and Educate For Victory!

**CHOM BAGU**

PRESIDENT

COMMUNITY ACTION FOR POPULAR PARTICIPATION



## **OSUNDE'S ASSIDUITY CLARIFIED HIS EDUCATION AS A LEADER OF THE WORKING CLASS - OMOLOJA**

Comrade Lasisi Osunde went up the ladder from a highly motivated school youth to a trade union activist, convert to the Socialist Movement, a fervent student in the Social Sciences with a mastery of Marxism, a Student's leader, leader of the Marxist-Leninist Movement in Nigeria, a Teacher of Economics and a labour leader with commitment to his vocation in his retirement years.

Even before university, Lasisi Osunde was a loyal unionist belonging to the progressive trade union centres led by Comrades Wahab Goodluck and S U Bassey. Proceeding from thence to study in the Soviet Union he thus rose rapidly to be a student leader of both the Nigerian and the African Students Unions in Moscow.

I happened to have attended their Congresses in 1963 carrying messages from the Committee of African Organizations based in London led by Aka Bashorun and the Anti Apartheid Movement in Europe which I served as Organising Secretary. We soon struck a pact of partnership in struggle: Osunde, A A Afilaka (late medical doctor) and myself to fight for a strong union and to intervene in Africa. Being fresh from a theatre of revolution myself which I observed in North Africa I carried their messages of solidarity and partisanship with me.

With Osunde returning to Nigeria as a doctor of economics and teaching at University of Lagos I found myself pairing with him again. He invited me to collaborate with him in writing the syllabus for economic history which we did together as Nigeria economic history as formations.

We veered from the classic of personalities to write of formations of divisions and branches and of production relations, labour relations, capital relations etc. That syllabus seeped into the curriculum for political economy in some bold faculties of the social sciences in Ibadan, Port Harcourt and Ahmadu Bello.

A tireless cadre he was a theoretician of the Marxist Leninist organisations to which he belonged including the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party. I was an organising secretary under Imoudu led Labour Party. Not bothered by the schisms of the time we remained friends, though in different factions. Lasisi Osunde was a steadfast friend.

Through all the crisis on the left and in the labour movement in parallel with the armed crisis of the Nigerian state, Dr Lasisi Osunde grew, leaving the university to become General Secretary of the Nigerian Labour Congress going through a second apprenticeship.

The stage of revolution in Comrade Osunde's active years was for a national democratic revolution led by the labour movement opposed by the ruling castes. His assiduity clarified his education as a working class leader. May such a humble example recur to master the historical crises of the movement.

FROM: BIOGRAPHY OF PA MICHAEL  
IMOUDU VETERAN AGITATOR,  
SOCIALIST, PAN-AFRICANIST AND  
CONTEMPORARY OF DR. LASISI  
OSUNDE,  
BY BABA OMOJOLA  
**A TRIBUTE IN PRAISE OF**

## **DR LASISI OSUNDE**

The Nigerian trade union movement is confronted with Grave Concerns literally defined here as profound increasing crisis of loss of tested and inspiring comrades of sterling qualities. The latest is Comrade Lasisi Osunde, former General Secretary of Nigeria Labour Congress. Today we are encouraged to mourn the death of a Comrade, an Organizer, a Father, a principled fighter and negotiator and a patriot as well as an internationalist. Many in life are motivated to join the bandwagon of the great struggle for justice for working men and women. But very few actually have the staying power spanning almost four decades of resistance, persecution and perseverance as the late General Secretary. Few indeed paraded a remarkable mix of those identified qualities, namely steadfastness, principled stand for justice and fairness for working people, patriotism and internationalism. To this extent, Dr Lasisi Osunde shares these uncommon qualities with departed working class fighters like Alhaji H.P.Adebola, Gogo Nzeribe, Simeon Adebo, Odeyemi, Adio Moses, Amstrung Ogbona, Mpamungo, Wahab Goodluck and of course Micheal Imoudu.

Nelson Mandela once observed that "Men and women of rare qualities are few and hard to come by. And when they depart, the sense of loss is made the more profound and



the more difficult to manage". However Mandela who certainly is also of "rare qualities" consoles us that from the knowledge of the legacies and achievements of the departed comrades flows some comfort for the living comrades. What then are the legacies of the late Lasisi Osunde?

Osunde left worthy legacies that can and must make books for future generations. Dr Osunde was the General Secretary of the Congress at the special period in Nigeria . The period: 1980 to late 1988 (especially the IBB years!) was characterized by brutal military dictatorship, labour repression and labour resistance, economic revisionism (SAP) and mass poverty and struggle for democratization. During this period, Dr Osunde-led Secretariat of NLC under the presidency of Ali Chiroma lived up to the expectations of the working people together with other comrades offering leadership which collectively head-on challenged the dictatorship at the risks of arrests, detention and oppression.

Some of Osunde's landmark struggles have been well documented by myself and my friend Professor Bayo Olukoshi in 1998, (ROAPE NO 43). Interestingly I was recruited together with Comrade John Odah, Chris Uyot and Chom Bagu as graduate organizers at the Congress by Dr Osunde and Ali Chiroma, NLC president

then. I hereby bear witness to reproduce some of these documented struggles mainly with respect to Osunde's defence of the integrity, autonomy and independence of NLC against state sponsored characters, struggle against the removal of petroleum 'subsidy' and defence of human and students' rights.

#### STRUGGLE AGAINST FUEL INCREASE.

Babangida administration not only eroded the standard of living of the working people but has also generated an unprecedented wave of labour repression in the country. Ever since July 1986 when the government formally spelt out the main elements of its Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the battle line had been drawn between the Babangida regime and the trade union movement. Hence, the trade unions prepared themselves for a struggle aimed at preventing the erosion of gains which they had won over the years while the regime displayed a determination to push ahead with the programme.

At every stage of the implementation of the various elements of SAP, especially those aspects that bear directly and immediately on the welfare of the citizenry, the government and the labour unions found themselves locked in a struggle of wills and a war of words which, on a

number of occasions, degenerated into overt attacks on workers and their leaders including Dr Osunde by the state. Labour leaders came to believe, with justification, that SAP, inspired and nurtured by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, was diametrically opposed to the welfare of workers and that only a jettisoning of the programme and its neo-liberal free market, anti-labour philosophy would pave the way for relative industrial peace in Nigeria. While labour unions mounted an active campaign against SAP, the state launched an offensive which entailed the harassment of workers' leaders, the sowing of the seeds of discord and division with the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and ultimately, the dissolution the latter and its state branches. Babangida regime came to office in 27 August 1985. After July 1986 following a controversial debate on IMF loan, the regime embraced the IMF-sponsored SAP (JAC, 1988 mimeo; Olukoshi, 1987). The Babangida administration came to power on a platform that promised to tackle Nigeria's deepening economic crisis in the context of some form of agreement with international financiers. The regime promised to take on board the views of the citizenry and respect the human rights of the people. While being resolute about the need to introduce some far-reaching adjustment measures in the economy, the government declared its



intention to carry everybody, including labour, along (JAC, 1988 mimeo). The regime called for a dialogue with workers' representatives in marked contrast to former Buhari's policy of refusing to give audience to labour leaders. However, as some concrete indications of the regime's blueprint for Nigeria's economic recovery began to emerge, the battle lines between it and the trade union movement began to be drawn.

On 23 September 1985, General Babangida told Nigerian workers to prepare themselves for a continuation of the wage freeze unilaterally introduced by the Buhari regime (Aremu 1987). The labour leaders were outraged and put forward a five-point demand in which they called on the government to:

- (1) discontinue all negotiations with the IMF for a loan;
- (2) un-freeze workers wages;
- (3) end the retrenchment of workers and reinstate those that were sacked by the Buhari regime;
- (4) pay, in full, the wages and benefits of reinstated workers;
- (5) Return to collective bargaining in industrial relations.

However, Babangida argued Nigerians put in the least number of hours per week at

'work' and described the five-point demand of the labour leaders as 'militant' and 'unreasonable'. However, because of the groundswell of opposition which the regime knew existed in the country against the IMF, Babangida proceeded to declare a national debate on the desirability of involving the Fund in the country's adjustment process. The NLC presented a major policy document which enumerated the kinds of hardship the IMF and its conditionalities would impose on the generality of Nigerian. The congress called for a total rejection of the IMF loan and campaigned vigorously against the Fund at a time when many Nigerians were suspicious and rightly too, that the regime had all but decided to conclude a deal. Thanks to the groundwork done by the NLC and other popular organisations the regime could not ignore the level of public opposition to the IMF.

While the national debate on the IMF was going on, the Babangida regime decided to declare a state of national economic emergency to alert Nigerians to the severity of the country's crisis of accumulation. In a broadcast in October 1985, General Babangida announced, *inter alia*, that, as part of the emergency, wages and salaries of all workers in the public and private sector as well as those of the officers and men of the armed forces were to be cut by between two and fifteen per cent with effect from 1 November 1985. The

emergency was to last for 18 months after which workers would be entitled to a refund of the amount cut from their wages and salaries (Olukoshi, 1987; Aremu, 1987).

Given that the wage increases conceded to workers during the 1982 wage negotiations between the government and the NLC had, by 1985, been eroded by spiralling inflation, labour leaders rejected the deductions announced by Babangida in his broadcast. On 5 November 1985 the NLC gave the government a 21-day ultimatum to rescind its unilateral and undemocratic decision or face a nationwide industrial action (Nigeria Standard, 12 December 1985). As the ultimatum approached, the government mobilised policemen to keep watch over the NLC secretariat in Lagos while employing the services of late Professor Ikenna Nzimiro, a member of the Presidential Advisory Council, to prevail on labour leaders to abandon their strike plan. The NLC was adamant that the government rescind its order for a cut in wages and salaries or face a strike. On 21 November 1988, barely four days to the expiry of the ultimatum, the NLC leaders were invited to a meeting with General Babangida to discuss issues arising from the pay cut. Following the discussions, the federal government agreed to consider the NLC's demands which included an end to retrenchment, the removal of tax on gratuity and pension, the extension of the



pay cut to private sector employers and the pursuit of sound economic policies to revitalise the economy.

Although the government managed to avert a strike, the import of the challenge which the NLC mounted against the declaration of a state of national economic emergency was not lost on the Babangida administration, especially as the government, having acquiesced to popular pressure not to take the IMF loan, nevertheless began to put together an adjustment package which had the imprint of the Fund.

A foretaste of what the adjustment package would entail for workers came through the 1986 budget. The government reduced the subsidy on the price of petroleum products by 80 percent thereby further fuelling a hyper-inflationary situation. The freeze on wages was also retained. In the face of the additional hardship which the budget meant for workers, the NLC under the leadership of Osunde renewed its agitation for the lifting of the wage freeze. Numerous pamphlets were issued by the congress and numbers of rallies were addressed by labour leaders to mobilise the working people for a sustained campaign against the government's economic policies.

went one step further to fuel the anger of labour leaders by amending the National Minimum Wage Act of 1982 in such a way as to reverse the outcome of the 1981 general strike that forced the Shagari government to accept a monthly minimum wage of N125 (Â£15) for workers, to be paid all persons employing 50 workers or more.

The 1986 Amendment Order changed this to persons employing 500 workers or more, although most employers have less than 500 workers thus denying about two-thirds of Nigerian workers their right to a minimum wage. It took a sustained campaign by the NLC and the threat of a national strike to get the government to annul the Order and restore the 1982 Act in its entirety.

In May 1986 soon after the dispute over the minimum wage, the government and the NLC clashed when some students of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, were killed by policemen during a demonstration (see ROAPE 37). Capturing the mood of anger that swept across the country over the cold-blooded massacre of defenceless students, the NLC under Osunde declared its solidarity with the students and called for the immediate removal of Vice-Chancellor Ango Abdullahi and the Kaduna State Police Commissioner as well as the trial of the policemen responsible for the fatal shots. The NLC also called on its members to take part in a peaceful procession as a symbolic

gesture of workers' outrage at the shootings and solidarity with Nigeria students.

The government responded by reaffirming an existing ban on all public procession. Police commands all over the country were put on alert while the State Security Service (SSS) arrested a number of prominent labour leaders. The NLC secretariat was once again placed under siege by a detachment of policemen.

Because it could not ignore the depth of popular anger against the Zaria massacre, the government set up an investigation panel headed by retired Major-General Emmanuel Abisoye to establish the root causes of the ABU crisis, apportion blame where appropriate and recommend strategies for preventing a recurrence. The Secretary-General of the NLC, Lasisi Osunde, was asked to serve on the panel but the NLC rejected the invitation arguing that so long as Ango Abdullahi was allowed to keep his position as Vice-Chancellor, no useful purpose would be served by the Abisoye panel. As far as the NLC was concerned, the government's refusal to include members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and a representative of Nigerian students chosen by NANS on the panel meant that it was only interested in covering up the true origins and full extent of the crisis. Instead, the NLC leadership decided to support the separate



investigation process which the ASUU National Secretariat had set in motion. When the Abisoye panel released its report, both ASUU and the NLC insisted that it had engaged only in white-washing exercise. In the aftermath of the Zaria crisis, the government decided to disaffiliate ASUU from the NLC in the belief that the university lecturers union was responsible for radicalising the Congress leadership.

In July 1986, the Babangida administration spelt out the main elements of its SAP. The thrust of the programme centred on the need to be devalued through a foreign exchange market where the forces of demand and supply would operate. In addition, the government committed itself to the privatisation and commercialisation of public enterprises, the liberalisation of trade and payments, rationalisation of the existing tariff structure, the strengthening of the already still demand management policies in the economy and a greater reliance on the forces of the "free" market. The NLC's reaction to the programme was swift. It argued that the will of the Nigerian people as expressed during the 1985 national debate on the IMF had been subverted by the government. The very conditionalities of the IMF which prompted the people to reject the Fund had been introduced by the government under pressure from international financiers and creditors (Aremu, 1987; Olukoshi, 1987).

On every aspect of the programme, the NLC challenge the government's intentions and policies, pointing out the consequences of the massive devaluation of the Naira for the cost of living in the country and the erosion of workers' wages. Periodic bulletins were issued by the congress refuting official claims about the successes of SAP, underlining the consequences of the rising cost of living for the working people and condemning the continuing retrenchment of workers by private sector employers unable to cope with the demands of the adjustment programme. Cartoons were produced by the NLC depicting the plight of the Nigerian workers under SAP and arguing that the policies of the regime were aimed at ensuring that the "monkey" continued to work while the rich few "baboons" continued to "chop"

The 1987 federal budget continued to further the goals of SAP. The NLC stepped up its campaign for an immediate lifting of the wage freeze and the jettisoning of the adjustment programme. As living conditions in the country deteriorated further, the NLC was joined by various professional groups, cooperative organisations and students. Even the Manufacturers' Association of Nigeria (MAN) and the National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) openly

criticised the regime for its lack of sensitivity to the plight of Nigerians under the SAP and its rigid and mechanical application of a programme that might not be well-suited to Nigeria's peculiar situation (Manufacturers' Association of Nigeria (MAN) 1987). The height of the protests came with the November 1987 celebrated speech made by Nigeria's former head of state, General Obasanjo in which he made scathing criticisms of the regime's political and economic policies and called for adjustment with a "human face"

Towards the end of 1987, the government indicated its intention to raise the domestic price of petroleum on the grounds that the 80 percent subsidy removal carried out in 1986 had been eroded by the massive devaluation of the Naira on the government controlled foreign exchange market. The government-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) sponsored paid but unsigned advertisements claiming that the 'subsidy' on oil was indefensible and that if it was removed, the country would save some N6.2 billion which could be used to finance key development programmes and cushion the effects of adjustment. Very few Nigerians were convinced by the government's arguments for the removal of the petroleum subsidy. Indeed, many argued that there was no subsidy whatsoever in existence.



The NLC put out paid advertisements in the major newspapers arguing against the plan to increase the prices of petroleum products and rejected the NNPC's comparison of prices of petroleum products in Nigeria to those non-oil producing countries. According to the congress, a more accurate picture of the price pattern in those countries can only be gained if the wage levels are also considered. Since price levels in those countries are commensurate with higher real income there, their experience cannot be used to argue the case for petroleum price increases in Nigeria where the massive 77 percent devaluation of the Naira has resulted in a drastic decline in real purchasing power in the face of an ever-rising cost of living. The congress insisted that the huge income leakage suffered by the government from the sale of petroleum could be traced to smuggling activities by privileged Nigerians and it is these business men who should be called to order. The NLC campaign was so successful that IBB government opted for repression, arrest and detention of NLC leaders included Osunde ostensibly for subversion. Today's struggle against fuel price increases drew inspiration from the late general Secretary.

34 The repressive labour policies of the Babangida administration are the most drastic and systematic in the country's labour history and form part of the government's overall economic crisis

management strategy. The most despicable and dastardly of this action was the dissolution of the Congress.

The immediate context of the government's decision to dissolve the NLC was the Benin Quadrennial Delegates Conference held on 24-26 February 1988. In the weeks leading up to the conference, a great deal of disagreement had emerged among the NLC's affiliates over the representation of unions and the accreditation of delegates. At the centre of the disagreement was a vociferous state sponsored minority group of unions led by Takai Shammang, styling itself the "democrats". This group of unions was not up to date in its financial obligations to the NLC National Secretariat. Dr Osunde stood firm to defend the rules of the Congress and stop "hot money" from the labour movement. Sensing that its bid to sponsor Shammang for the presidency of the NLC might not succeed, the "democrats" embarked on a well-publicised campaign against Ali Chiroma, the incumbent president and Osunde-led secretariat. Their aims were two-fold: to convince the Nigerian government and people that the Shammang group was a credible faction within the NLC and to draw the attention of the authorities to a "Marxist" grand plan to dominate labour affairs in the country.

The Shammang group addressed press

conferences calling for the equal representation of all unions affiliated to the Congress at the Benin Quadrennial Conference and for the unconditional admission of all conference delegates to the meeting whether or not their unions were up to date in their financial obligations to the Congress. They also visited the Federal Minister of Labour, Employment and Productivity, Alhaji Abubakar Umar, to urge him to intervene. And in a bid to fulfil part of the financial requirements for full participation at the conference, an anonymous sponsor of the group paid in a lump sum of over two million (N2,000,000) into the NLC account under circumstances which were both dubious and mysterious. NLC Secretary-General, Lasisi Osunde, was principled enough to expose the irregularities involved in that form of dubious payment were spelt out by the with the consequence that the Shammang group began to work out its own arrangements for holding its own delegates "conference" in order to disrupt and upstage the Quadrennial Conference. The Shammang group "conference" took place on 22 February 1988, two days before the formal opening of the official NLC Conference and Shammang was declared the new "President" by his small group of supporters

By the time the official NLC conference was getting down to business on 24 February



1988, Shammang was on his way to Lagos from Benin with the declared intention of taking over the Congress' secretariat building in order to set in motion his "presidency". While alerting the authorities and the public to this development, the NLC under the leadership of Chiroma went ahead with its conference in Benin at which the incumbent president was duly elected for a second term of office. However, by the time the Quadrennial Conference ended, the NLC secretariat in Lagos had been sealed up policemen acting on the instruction of the Labour Minister. The policemen were instructed not to allow the Shammang group or the Chiroma led NLC to gain access to the Congress' secretariat. Given that the labour Minister had refused to participate in the official Quadrennial delegate conference of the NLC on the grounds that he was not prepared to side with any faction of the Congress, his decision to deny Ali Chiroma and his officers access to the NLC building dovetailed perfectly with Shammang's strategy of gaining recognition for his group and destroying the NLC of Chiroma could not be dislodged (West Africa, 7 March 1988, pp.399-400).

On 1 March 1988, the Federal Minister of Labour announced that the NLC had been dissolved by President Babangida. The Minister said that the government's decision, following the Benin conference, that the NLC had metamorphosed into two factions along ideological lines', a development which was not in the interest of rank and file workers and which was detrimental to industrial peace. Secondly

the government was of the view that a central labour organisation saddled with mutual intolerance in its ranks was detrimental to the country economic recovery and (political) transition programmes (The Guardian, Lagos, 2 March 1988, p.12). Faced with the fractionalisation of the NLC, the federal government, according to the Minister, had no other option than to dissolve the NLC and its branches in all the states of the federation. The Minister also announced the appointment of an administrator to oversee the affairs of the congress pending the scheduling of fresh elections within six months from the date of dissolution

Following the Minister's broadcast, two orders, signed personally by the President were issued giving legal backing to the dissolution of the Congress. The first order, entitled S.I.3 National Emergency Powers (Nigeria (sic) Labour Congress Order 1988 states that the government did not recognise any of the factions of the Congress, and declared that "conferences held by the factions null and void". It listed the factions as "Nigerian (sic) labour Congress (Marxist Faction)" headed by Ali Chiroma and L.A. Osunde and "Nigerian (sic) Labour Congress (Democrats Faction)" led by Takai Shammang and A.K. Seidu. The order endorsed the appointment of Michael Ogunkoya as administrator to oversee the affairs of the NLC. Ogunkoya was until his appointment, the Personnel Manager of the John Holt Group in Nigeria, a subsidiary of Lonrho, and before that served the Chief Federal Labour Officer.

Under Order S.I.3, Michael Ogunkoya was directed, "after consultation with the Minister (of Labour)", to "administer and organise the affair of the Congress". Manage and protect the funds and properties of the Congress', and to "organise and supervise a conference at which all the 42 industrial unions affiliated to the Congress will participate and elect a new national executive" (The Guardian, Lagos, 2 March 1988, p.12; The Vanguard, 2 March 1988, p.1)

The second Order S.I.4 of 1988 directed that the executive councils of the state branches of the NLC be dissolved in spite of the fact that the tenure of office of the state councils of the NLC unlike that of the national leaders, had not expired. Administrators were appointed to oversee the affairs of the Congress in each state of the federation. With the assumption of office by Ogunkoya on 1 March 1988, the police siege of the NLC national headquarters building was eased and the administrator began discussions with union leaders who were ready to cooperate with him on modalities for convening a fresh conference.

**ISSA AREMU**  
TEXTILE UNION



**OSUNDE IS UNFORGETTABLE-  
MORGAN ANIGGBO**

In this life, you can acquire all the material wealth and run around, but these are not what is important. What is important as Osunde has shown is what you contribute and how you service your fellow human beings.

Osunde has been a very committed comrade. From onset, he was very committed to all Congress ideals. He was a very strong leader, not selfish. He spoke little but he was a very deep thinker and planner.

He contributed immensely to my success in Congress. I openly admit that I benefitted immensely from his advice. He was also committee to his family and has a good wife who was dedicated to him.

He was very honest and unassuming. Even in gatherings you will hardly know that such a great man was present. He listened a lot, thought deeply and acted out of conviction and in the interest of the mass of the people.

Although he has gone, Osunde's name is already written in gold. His good works and contributions to the Nigerian people will ensure that his memory endures. May his soul rest in peace.

**Morgan Anigbo, mni**

Former Ag. General Secretary  
Nigeria Labour Congress.

***Burial Programme***

**LATE DR. LASISI ADAMS OSUNDE  
FORMER GENERAL SECRETARY  
NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS**

**Lagos Programme**

**TUESDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2008:  
LYING IN STATE**

**VENUE: NLC, 29, OLAJUWON STREET ,  
OFF OJUELEGBA ROAD , YABA, LAGOS  
TIME: 11AM - 3PM**

**VENUE: SAM SONIBARE RECREATION  
GROUND, SAM SONIBARE STREET ,  
OFF OLUFEMI STREET , SURULERE, LAGOS**

**TIME: 6PM - 8PM**

**Benin City Programme**

**THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2008:  
VIGIL MASS**

**VENUE: 18A IDAHOSA STREET , BENIN  
CITY  
TIME: 4PM- 6PM**

**FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2008  
FUNERAL REQUIEM MASS  
VENUE: HOLY CROSS CATHEDRAL,  
MISSION ROAD , BENIN CITY  
TIME: 10AM**

**INTERMENT**

**VENUE: HIS RESIDENCE, 18 IDAHOSA  
STREET , BENIN CITY .**

**RECEPTION FOLLOWS IMMEDIATELY.**

**SUNDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER 2008  
THANKSGIVING SERVICE  
VENUE: THE HOLY CROSS CATHEDRAL,  
MISSION ROAD , BENIN CITY .  
TIME: 10AM**

**RECEPTION FOLLOWS THANKSGIVING  
@ HIS RESIDENCE, 18A, IDAHOSA  
STREET BENIN CITY,**



***"Osunde was a strong believer in the noble vision and mission of a united, progressive and great Nigeria, where the working class and all the working people will play leading roles in shaping and managing the destinies of the Nigerian People and Country"***

***- Labour Party***



## *Appreciation*

**T**he Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) on behalf of the Labour Movement and its allies, thank you for your solidarity on this occasion and ask all to re-dedicate themselves to the emancipation of the working class and the mass of the people.

**Aluta Continua!**

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