BRITAIN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEFTIST IDEOLOGY AND
ORGANISATIONS IN WEST AFRICA: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE, 1945-1965

by

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I declare that

**BRITAIN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEFTIST IDEOLOGY AND ORGANISATIONS IN WEST AFRICA: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE, 1945-1965** is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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(Hakeem Ibikunle Tijani)
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Although organised Marxist organisations did not emerge in Nigeria until the mid-1940s, leftist ideology had been prevalent among nationalist and labour leaders since the late 1920s. Both official documents and oral histories indicate deep-rooted support for leftism in Nigeria and anxiety among British colonial officials that this support threatened the Colonial Office’s own timetable for gradual decolonisation. This study analyses the development of leftist ideology and attempts to establish a nationwide leftist organisation in colonial and post-independent Nigeria.

The role of the Zikist movement is retold in light of new evidence, while other leftist organisations are salvaged from the footnotes of Nigeria nationalist history. More importantly, the adaptability of Marxist-Leninist ideology to colonial reality by the different leftist groups in Nigeria is emphasized. The reaction of Anglo-American officials in Lagos and the metropolis towards the Communist Party of Great Britain and other leftist organisations’ sponsorship of Marxist groups in Nigeria are discussed. Lastly, the continuity between the departing colonial power and the Balewa administration is addressed to juxtapose the linkage
between the two governments. The study thus provides a lucid explanation for the failure of leftist ideology and organisations in Nigeria during the twentieth century.

In this eight-chapter thesis I consistently argue, based on official documents from England, Nigeria, and the United States, that the role of Marxists and Soviet Cold War interests in colonial territories are relevant to nationalism and decolonisation in Nigeria; that the issue is not to determine or measure whether or not Anglo-American policies are direct response to Soviet interests; that there are political, economic, and diplomatic policies carried out as part of the transfer of power process; and that the success of these is partly a result of collaboration with local subaltern leaders and official resolve to institutionalise imperial preferences before independence on October 1, 1960.
KEY TERMS

ABBREVIATIONS

AG - Action Group
AMCONGEN - American Consul General
AMCONSUL - American Consulate
ANTUF - All-Nigerian Trade Union Federation
BC - British Consul
BDEEP - British Documents on the end of Empire
Brit. Empr. - British Empire
CO - Colonial Office
COMCOL - Commissioner of the Colony
CPGB - Communist Party of Great Britain
CPN - Communist Party of Nigeria
CSO - Chief Secretary’s Office
DEFE - Defence Department (British)
DOS - Department of State (USA)
FGY - Federation of German Youth
HSU - Henderson State University
HTL - Harry Truman Library
HAUC - House Un-American Committee
ICFTU - International Confederation of Trade Unions
ICS - Institute of Commonwealth Studies
IJAH'S - International Journal of African Historical Studies
ILO - International Labour Organisation
IUS – International Union of Students
JAH – Journal of African History
JHSN – Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria
JMAS – Journal of Modern African Studies
MRM – Moral Re-armament Movement
MSA – Mutual Security Agreement
NA – Native Authority
NAE – National Archive Enugu
NAI – National Archive Ibadan
NARA – National Archives and Record Administration
NCNC – National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon
(later National Council of Nigerian Citizens)
NCTUN – National Council of Trade Unions, Nigeria
NEPU – Northern Element Peoples Union
NLC – Nigeria Labour Congress
NMLHA – National Museum of Labour History Archive
NNSP – Nigerian National Socialist Party
NPC – Northern Peoples Congress
NPV – Nigerian Peoples Voice
NSUDIV –Nsukka Division (Nigerian Archive)
NUS – Nigerian Union of Students
NWU – National Women’s Union
NYC – Nigerian Youth Congress
NYM – Nigerian Youth Movement
OAG – Officer Administering the Government
(Nigeria)
OEA – Overseas Employers’ Association
PCI – Peoples Committee for Independence
PSF – President’s Secretary File (Harry S. Truman Library)
PREM – Prime Minister’s Papers
PRD – Public Relations Department
PRO – Public Record Office
RIIA – Royal Institute of International Affairs
RHL – Rhodes House Library
SWAFP – Socialist Workers and Farmers Party
(Nigeria)
TUC – Trade Union Congress
UK – United Kingdom
UMBA – United Middle Belt Alliance
UNISA – University of South Africa
UPC – Union des Populations du Camerounais
(Cameroon)
UWPP – United Working Peoples Party
USA – United States of America
USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republic
WASN – West African National Secretariat
WIDF – Women’s International Democratic Federation  
(Prague)
WFDY – World Federation of Democratic Youth
WFTU – World Federation of Trade Unions
WO – War Office (Britain)
WP – Working Party
WPCIPC – Working Party for the Colonial Information Policy Committee
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