

27 April 2021

Dear Comrade,

Good day to you. I am not writing to acknowledge receipt of the letter, I am simply writing to point out an error - a deliberate mischief, I should say. I am not ASCAB, I am neither the Interim Chair, nor the Interim Secretary of ASCAB, so find it mischievous that the letter to ASCAB on such an official matter will be communicated through me.

Why do I say that this is mischievous? This is not the first time that SWL has communicated officially with ASCAB, and this isn't SWL's first mail to ASCAB. In the past such correspondence has been through the Secretary either way. Hence, it cannot be said or imagined that the SWL does not know what to do.

Secondly, yes, i am a member of ASCAB CC, and a member of ASCAB representing Take Back Nigeria Movement [TBN], just like the few persons that you have directly written to, nonetheless, Comrade Biodun Olamosu is not a member of ASCAB CC. And this is not the only deliberate error and mischief, the other deliberate mischief lies in the fact that there are about 30 official members of the CC, why single these few out?

The main mischief however lies in the fact of your singling out Socialist Labour. To be clear Socialist Labour [SL] is a member of ASCAB, just like SWL, and members of SL like members of SWL belong to and lead other organisations other than SWL or SL. Are you in doubt? Should we begin to count? What can be more anti-democratic than to insist that members of your organisation can belong to no other organisations, as long as there is ideological and political conflict of interests?

And let me clarify a point that should not have needed any clarification but for the intended and inherent mischief; SL, was formed after ASCAB was formed, and you would know this, or ought to know this because some of the leaders of SL left SWL. The exact time that they left can be ascertained. The announcement of the formation was shared on the ASCAB platforms as it was shared on other platforms, there is thus no way SL's formation could have preceded the formation of ASCAB. Nothing, not even the most malicious imagination of anyone can determine that it was wrong for people who believe in a necessary cause of political action, should come together and work together, and without strings, without conditions, with throwing political tantrums.

As a consequence of the onset of the pandemic, we were convinced of the necessity for organised political action. We reached out to one another, as we did to leaders of SWL, who initially rebuffed all the outreaches.

And yes, as we were convinced of the necessity for a new alliance, we were also convinced of the necessity for some form of Socialist realignment of forces. So, yes, we played key roles in the formation of ASCAB, an alliance that has grown in strength and has now led to the birthing of a process towards a new mass political movement. And of course, some of us also played key roles in the establishment of SL subsequently, and no one can begrudge us for doing that, or arbitrarily deny us that right.

At every turn, since the beginning of the ASCAB process, all that the SWL has done is to wage internal fratricidal wars, to launch deliberately intended debilitating attacks, to call into question the viability of the process and project, and the sincerity of the organisers of the process, while always raising the bogey of anti-democratism. And this from some of the most tendentially authoritarian persons and organisations?

There exists CORE, JAF, ASCAB, and now The Peoples Alternative Political Movement, no one begrudges any organisation from belonging to all at once, if that's their organisational strategic political thrust.

Now, back to ASCAB, members of SWL, representing other organisations like members of SL, who also lead other organisations are in the CC as members. Is this undemocratic? And for the avoidance of doubt, neither SWL nor SL is represented directly on the CC of ASCAB. No one else cries foul and raises the bogey of anti-democratism. Or is a process democratic, only if certain individuals are directly represented in person, and not through their organisation? If the leadership of core socialist platforms have no confidence in their members who represent their interests, or who are parts of the leadership of a front organisation, that is not the problem of the front organisation, it is the problem, the exclusive problem of the socialist platform. It is an internal cancerous problem which no level of democratisation of the front can address or redress.

It is democratic to raise objections, it is also democratic for a majority decision and cause of action to be taken and embarked upon. ASCAB, was not built, and is not being built as a platform for perennial acrimonious tendential battles, nor is it being built as an alliance of socialist tendential platforms. That is a majority view. Period!

I am sure that ASCAB will make its own formal response, after the meeting of its CC.

Now, let me conclude by saying that i can be quoted anywhere, and that no one should be under the impression that anyone else is or can be intimidated by the launching of acerbic cyber warfare and frenzied social media proselytising.

The entire leadership of ASCAB FCT for instance is fully SWL, nobody raises any issues, because there is no issue to be raised for those who do not have ulterior motives.

But did we all play key roles in the formation of ASCAB, yes we did.

I can speak directly for myself because the letter was also addressed to me.

In Solidarity,

Jaye Gaskia

ADDENDUM TO MY FIRST RESPONSE:

Every political alliance or coalition is a deliberate effort, set about to achieve set objectives by its promoters. No political alliance or coalition is neutral - let us be clear about this.

You (SWL) are a member organisation and affiliate of JAF, of ASCAB; as well as a Principal partner and affiliate of CORE.

And you're also now (an affiliate and member organisation of the new political movement established by The Peoples Alternative Political Summit (TPAPS) process, as a Coalition of Coalitions (something which you claim to be a proponent of).

So, what's the exact problem here and now? Unlike the majority of the affiliates of the new movement (T-PAPM), you belong to each of the major coalitions in the coalition of coalitions, just as you're a direct member of the coalition of coalitions.

In what other ways is the end of democracy and Democratic participation expected to be served, other than in this way? Would the end of democratisation be served only if you dominate and conquer in all of the coalitions?

If we are establishing a coalition of coalitions, and you're involved with all of the coalitions as well as also directly involved with the coalition of coalitions; what precisely is the problem and issue at the moment, that should necessitate orchestrating a squabble within one of the coalitions?

You directly control one of the coalitions (CORE), so why can't we channel our energies and efforts into making the coalition of coalitions a success?

And let us be clear, just as when the CORE coalition was established, it was established for a purpose, and other organisations were invited to join, and canvassed to sign on; so was ASCAB established, and other organisations (including SWL) canvassed to join.

ASCAB is a coalition, a voluntary one at that. It is not an organisation. The moment you feel the alliance is no longer serving your interest, given it was set up for definite and specific purposes, the democratic choice to exercise is to opt out, knowing fully well that we can still collaborate within the bounds of the coalition of coalitions.

SWL does not have to be an affiliate of ASCAB. Neither does ASCAB require to accommodate every organisation that seeks to affiliate.

28 April 2021

Dear Comrade Jaye,

Firstly I must say you totally missed the point, the letter was addressed not just to the Ascab Secretariat, also to all affiliates of Ascab. If you clearly comprehend the letter thoroughly you will understand the essence of that. What I found to be very mischievous and disingenuous is an attempt to ignore the meat of the matter hence fabricating non issue for distraction. Could it be you consciously oppose internal democracy in an alliance? That is highly questionable.

You as much as every other persons received the letter first as representative or belonging to an affiliate of ASCAB. Let me say this in clearest of term, the letter wasn't sent to you as Jaye Gaskia, it was sent to you on behalf of TBN. It is totally erroneous to mention that some few persons were single out, because like I pointed out earlier the letter was addressed and sent to ASCAB national secretariat and its affiliates. Of course such error of yours was hurriedly made in attempt to reduce an important call for democratization of the alliance to a personal or tendential acrimony.

Comrade I must say no amount of lies and revisions from you can erode or invalidate the truth. SWL has been actively involved in ASCAB from onset, and contribute qualitatively to its development and formation in one way or the other. Part of that is our insistence on deepening internal democracy within the alliance. Which for us is a precursor to building a formidable force to change the status quo from below. That unfortunately a leading member of new-SL reduced to "tendential battles".

If anyone can be said to hold toxic tendential politics within the alliance it will unarguably be elements from new-SL. Let me remind you that Ascab started as Action Plan which was influenced by SA Covid-19 People's Coalition. SWL was among the foremost organizations that endorsed the Action Plan even even when Drew who was at the time facilitating the action plan and a member of SWL failed to discuss such within the organization. Despite that three leading members of SWL were

deliberately shut off from what now became Ascab-National Whatsapp group. In similar trend, i was thrown out of the Coordinating Committee zoom meeting thrice on september 4. Cde Sola, representing TUC narrowly escaped similar treatment on the same day.

Similarly we got that in response to our September letter to Ascab the committee members resolved that SWL should be welcomed into the CC, till date that wasn't effected. What can be acrimonious or to better put toxic tendential politics than that?

It is a falsehood that SWL rebuffed joining Ascab or that we insist our members should not belong to Ascab or no other "organization", I dare you to substantiate your claim. The truth you refused to say unfortunately is that SWL members were lumped in an unprincipled manner and without informing those member or the league to form what now became Ascab-National Whatsapp group.

What you seems not to grasp comrade is that to make Ascab an alliance of socialist tendency is to deepen internal democracy within the alliance. We have said for umpteenth times, our demand for democratization of the alliance is not simply about SWL. What we have called for is the democratic participation of Affiliates of the alliance. After all Ascab June 5 letter says "Any organisation that is able to provide financial support of at least #20, 000 a year to Ascab will be entitled to one representative on Ascab' steering committee, its supreme body". Again to correct your misconception, Ascab is an alliance of different organizations, so it is not simply about having certain individuals there, it is more about having each and every affiliates of the alliance represented accordingly!

Regards

Lai