NAME: LUPER ANGEL NGUYILAN

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 **QUESTION**

**Write short explanatory notes on: John Rawl’s first principle; the second principle: distributive economic justice; the original position and summarize John Rawl’s ideal of justice.**

**FIRST PRINCIPLE: EQUAL BASIC LIBERTIES**

Rawl’s first principle of justice “Principle of equal basic liberties explains or highlights those fundamental liberties and freedom which all individuals within a given society have right regardless of their status. He further identified the two fundamental powers/ capacities and two high-order interest, the ideals for which he used to explain this principle and is expected that everyone must possess. The two fundamental capacities /powers include: equality and freedom which for him, on attainment, an individual is considered to have reached a sufficient level in his society and is now able to be a fully contributing member of that society. Also these two powers are only visible in a democratic society. On the other hand, we have the two high order interest to include: firstly, having an interest of being able to formulate and live in accordance to some conception of what is good and secondly is “an interest of being able to exercise one’s sense of justice” and also being motivated by it, providing others do same. These two ideals of fundamental powers and correspondingly interest of citizens have come to form the basis of Rawl’s first principle “equal basic liberties”.

He went ahead to highlight which liberties should form part of the “basic constitutional rights” and which will further be used in the achievement of the “two higher-order interest” also referred to as the “ two fundamental cases” ( the conception of the good interest) which is the first case and (the sense of justice interest ) which form the second case. The liberties associated with the first case include; liberty of conscience and freedom of personal association without which the first case or interest won’t be actualized. On the other hand, the liberties associated to the second case or interest include; the freedom of political speech and of assembly without which this interest won’t be achieved. This interest he conceived as being achieved only in a democratic context without which these liberties won’t even exist. In essence , the actualization of this second interest (sense of justice ) is only possible in a democratic society where the political institution and the constitution allows for this liberties of freedom of political speech, political association and assembly without which the interest won’t be actualized.

Asides this Rawl’s highlighted other liberties such as; freedom from torture, assault, and so on which though not associated to any of the two cases are considered by him to form the basic constitutional rights which aren’t form naturally but on the conception of the person and social cooperation which is most likely in congenial to the public political culture of a modern democratic society.

**SECOND PRINCIPLE: DISTRIBUTIVE ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

Rawl’s in explaining this principle began with the expression that yes not in a given society is born with the same status or class and is economically strong nor has the same social circumstances which define them meaning that he agree with the fact that not all are equal given the fact that perhaps some families are more wealthier than other and therefore have a higher rank in the society than the others and are therefore at a more advantageous position than the others which has further created a gap among those in the society. He believes that although absolute equality can never be achieved however, some level of equality should be created to reduce the existing gap among the two classes or hierarchy of people in the society. In his argument on this (filling the gap between the top-most and bottom-most group, the rich and the poor and average class) within the society, he identified three basic ideals that explain how these equality could be promoted to reach an optimum level. The first is the ideal of “democratic equality of opportunities” which includes the first remedial step ;1 the reduction of the initial differences in advantage (inequality) created among individuals from birth by providing state-support primary and secondary education (of good quality and without payment) for the poor which will further help them to be contributing member of their society in the future. The second ideal is the “differences principle which further includes the two other remedial steps of; 2. the ‘principle of everyone's continual benefit, which explains that where there are several efficient options available, 3 we should choose that option which most reduces the resultant inequality in outcome between the topmost and bottom-most groups. These ideals when used continuously alongside its remedies will minimize the differences and inequality gap created and everyone will benefit. For him therefore these social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions; fair equality of opportunities and provision of mutual benefit to the least group of the society which is possible through the aforementioned ideals and remedies.

**ORIGINAL POSITION**

Original position here refers to an arena for deliberation and decision about principles of justice and its various features. 'The idea of the original position is to set up a fair procedure so that any principles agreed to will be just'. There are two main roles of an original position include: screening and ranking. There are certain features that characterize it which include: publicity, unanimity and the veil of ignorance etc.

Having examined the two principles on justice, his original position is that the second principle explains or suites better his ideal of what justice should be like as it tends to promote a more balanced situation and has economic, social, as well as political benefits for all living in a democratic society. The second principle is more preferable as it tend to benefits all with no much losses inquired for either groups be it the bottom-most or the top-most group.

**SUMMARY OF RAWL’S IDEAL OF JUSTICE**

The ideal of justice was initiated by Rawl’s after having experienced the second world war , he was trying to form an ideal which will promote fairness, impartial which he might have believed to be the reason behind the war and disagreement. Rawl’s ideal of justice is one that encourages equality of all irrespective of their status, it encourages mutual benefit of all, it seeks for what will benefit all through social cooperation with one another. This justice he also conceived is only possible in a democratic context where everyone has free and equal right which will further certify them as contributing members of the society. Justice to him can also be served only when the political institutions are equality built on fairness, impartiality, equality and morality. The principle of justice or its ideal is one that seeks to create an optimum balance between the top-most and bottom-most class or group within a democratic society by providing for maximum goods and services to the least group in the society so as to fill the gap of inequality created naturally between the rich and poor, top-most or bottom-most groups that may have left one group at a more advantageous position than the other.