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ASSIGNMENT

In about 2-page review chapter 15, “an overview of the idea of pressure group” in salient issues in government and Nigeria’s politics, pages 194-200.

**ANSWER**

UNDERSTANDING PRESSURE GROUP

Pressure means to persuade or coerce a person into doing something. A pressure group is an organized body with a common interest whose fundamental aim is to put pressure on any governmental institution with the goal influencing government policies and law to its own advantage. The pressure group is referred to as “THE FUNDAMENTAL REPRESENTATIVE”. This is the idea that various pressure groups represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. This is usually done through their occupants or professions. For example, the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) represents the lawyers and solicitors, while the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) represents doctor’s interests. What pressure groups seek to achieve is to ensure that government does their biddings and these groups influence both public policy, administration, and even go a long way to determine political structures of the society and forms of government. Examples of pressure groups; Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Academic Staff Union for University (ASUU), Nigeria labour congress (NLC) etc.

Pressure groups and political parties are sometimes similar but they are different from one another. For instance, political parties seek to gain government power while pressure groups do not seek to gain power. Rather, their aim is to influence political decisions.

However, political parties are more organized than pressure groups. Pressure groups and political parties relate together to achieve certain social changes. Pressure group’s existence is to checkmate and make democracy better for people in the society and in this situation, the voice of a small group of people with narrow interest can become overly influential.

TYPES OF PRESSURE GROUP

* Interest groups: This group is referred to as sectional groups, representing the people in the society. Example, the trade union.
* Cause groups: They are promotion groups, which seek to promote particular causes. Any group that champions social movement is also seen as “cause group”, even though they lack formal structure. The group was aimed at achieving a single objective like protesting about the expansion of airports, seaports, railways etc.
* Insider groups and outsider groups: Insider groups are regularly consulted by the government and have regular access to ministers or legislators. An example of such groups is Nigeria Bar Association (NBA). Outside groups have no access or links to the government and its machineries. They have to use other ways to have impact. Example of this set of groups is the Animal liberation front etc. Groups in this category are radical in nature. The insider group and outsider group changes from time to time based on the party or government in power.
* Anomic groups: Groups in this category have unpredictable actions and behavior as they work based on the moment and situation in the society. They are not guided by an appropriate behavioral style and sometimes act violently.
* Associational groups and non-associational groups: Associational groups are usually registered with appropriate authorities in a state while non-associational groups are pressure groups without a formal organization. Their arrangement and gathering are by virtue of kinship or even family attachment, social traditions, tribal or even race afflictions, etc.

FUNCTONS OF PRESSURE GROUPS

1. Links government to the people
2. Promotes participation in government
3. Serving as sources of information to government.
4. Curtailing of dictatorial tendencies
5. Promotion of the interest of the ministry
6. Influencing legislation
7. Pressure groups’ lobbying