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CHAPTER 15: AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF PRESSURE GROUP.

To ‘pressure’ means to apply force either directly or indirectly on an individual or group of individuals to coerce them into doing something in your favour. Therefore, pressure groups are organized group of people with a common interest with the agenda to force the government into passing laws with would be in their favour. They are also referred to as ‘The Functional Representative’. For example: The Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) for the lawyers etc.

According to Anifowose (1999), Pressure groups are described as interest groups, lobby groups or even protest groups.

You can say that Political parties and pressure groups are of so what similar but are indeed different. Political parties are aimed at getting their hands wrapped around power whereas pressure groups have no interest in power but to influence the activities of the power. Pressure groups checkmate the presidency to flush out tyranny.

* Types of Pressure Groups.
* Interest groups: They are sectional groups that represent a large group of people that are beneath them. Example: The Trade Units.
* Cause groups: Their sole purpose is just to stand and push for a particular cause. Example: Amnesty International who campaign for protection of human rights.
* Insider and Outside group: Insider groups are groups who have their connections to government. They are influenced by proceedings or actions from government. They have personal access to people in power. Examples: NBA. Outsider groups are groups that with no links, connections or whatsoever with government, they impact through other means.
* Anomic groups: They have no one method of behavior or procedure. They work based on moment and situation of the society. At times they could resort to violence.
* Associational and Non-associational groups: Associational groups are registered with the designated authorities and also have their appropriate institutuions, offices etc. Non-associational groups have no formal organization or recognition.
* Functions of Pressure Groups.
* Links government to the people: Serves as a bridge through which the people can communicate their burdens or pleas to the government and vice versa. They are up to date with all news.
* Promotes participation in government: They help to involve the citizenry in more political activities and decision making than they normally do partake in. So as for them to pass across their views to the government.
* Serving as sources of information to government: Being the mouthpiece of the people they bring the plight, views and burdens of the people and saddle them upon the waists of rthe government.
* Curtailing of dictatorial tendencies: They help to curtail dictatorship and they serve as checkmates to them.
* Promotion of the interest of the minority: They also make sure that the views and the demands of the minority are brought to the government and are listened to and upheld.
* Influencing Legislation: They are responsible for the mounting of pressure upon the government so that certain laws or customs that are beneficial to the citizens are passed and upheld.
* Pressure groups’ lobbying: Pressure groups lobby in different ways. They lobby directly, for example; they lobby ministers, legislators and government machineries either through friends, spouses etc.