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ESSAY ON CHAPTER 7: POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

According to the writer, there are as many definitions of political parties as the political theorists. But to mention a few, according to P. H. Gellner, "political party is a group of citizens more or less organized, who act as a political unit and who by the use of political power aim at controlling the government and carrying out its general policies". He also defines his pre-defined political party as "an organized body with voluntary membership, its concerted energy being employed in the pursuit of political power". Finally, a political party is a group of officials or would-be officials who are linked with a sizable group of citizens into an organization; a chief object of this organization is to ensure that its officials obtain power or maintain power. (Shively 2013)

The writer went further into stating the characteristics of political party; some of them include:

1. The major or central feature of political party is to capture government power through constitutional means.
2. Political parties always have a broad program of public policy adopted by its organization which is referred to as party ideology.
3. Every political party must be national-minded.
4. Political parties has party manifestos which guide their conduct during or after winning elections.

Types of political parties

1. Elite/Kadre Parties
2. Mass Parties
3. Ideological Party

4. Other party
5. Christianity in Nigerian Party

Functions of Political Party

1. Political mobilization and recruitment
 2. Political education
 3. Political representation
 4. Interest aggregation
 5. Political stability
- The Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) was regarded as the first political party that was formed in Nigeria.
 - NNPP was led by Herbert Macaulay (regarded as the father of Nigerian nationalism).
 - According to Phillips (1978), two major political parties emerged between 1920 and 1945. These were the African Economic Party (AEP) and the Nigerian People's Congress (NPC).
 - The political parties of the second republic in Nigeria include: The National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP), the United Nigerian Peoples Party (UNPP), the Federal Congress Party (FCP) and the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). Also the Nigerian Advance Party (NAP).
 - The political parties in the third republic (1993) include the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Council (NRC).
 - The political parties in the fourth republic in Nigeria include: The Alliance for Democracy (AD), the Peoples Party (PP), which in 2002 changed its name to All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP).
 - Many more political parties have been registered by 1998 since the inception of the fourth republic.