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CHAPTER 7

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. A political party performs so many tasks in the political process that it is difficult to establish a single definition. It 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 attain power or maintain power.

There are various characteristics of Political Party;

1.) The major or central feature of political party is to capture governmental power through constitutional means.

2.) Political Parties always have a broad principles of public policy adopted by its organization, which is referred to as Party ideology. The party ideology also serves as the basis for classifying parties as either leftists, rightists e.t.c

3.) Political parties are guided by party constitution which direct the conduct of party officials and members within and outside government.

There are also types of political parties;

1.) ELITIST/CADRE PARTIES: It is a political party tat draws its membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in a county. The party boasts of members who are intellectuals like doctors etc.

2.) MASS PARTIES: This is a political party that draw as its members from all sections of the society and have wide membership.

3.) IDEOLOGICAL PARTY: This is a political party formed with political ideology or benefits which form the bases of the party.

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

1. Political mobilization and recruitment
2. Political education
3. Political representation
4. Interest aggregation
5. Political stability

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

The Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) was regarded as the first political party that was formed in Nigeria. The elective principle introduced by Clifford constitution of 1922 gave rise to the formation of NNDP in 1923. It was led by Herbert Macaulay regarded as the father of Nigerian nationalism. It was exclusively based in Lagos and had no national colouration. It won all the three seats allocated to Lagos in the legislative council in the elections of 1923,1928, and 1933. The NYC was formed mainly by its leaders and its political activities and campaigns were aided by a newspaper called Lagos daily news launched in 1925.