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CHAPTER SEVEN

Political parties in Nigeria.

Political parties are an essential feature of politics in the modern age of mass participation. Political parties are an important link between government and the people . In the political process of a given political system, the party is an essential political agency.

Politicians developed the idea of political party at that time as a device to help themselves and like minded friends get elected. But the party proved to have many other uses as well and went on to become a ubiquitous feature of modern politics .

The first modern electoral democracy was the United state of America and it was here the first parties were developed. By 1820s , there were well organized parties.

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalists.

Types of political parties

Elitist / cadre parties; This is a political party that draws its membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in a country. The party boasts of members who are intellectuals.

Mass parties; this is a political party that draws its membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership.

Ideology party; This is a political party formed with political ideology or benefits which form the bases of the party.

Broker party; This is a political party formed with its members drawn from upper and lower classes of the society.

Charismatic or personality party; This Is A political party formed or led by individuals with charisma. It revolves around the personal qualities of the leader.

Functions of a political party would include;

Political education

Political representation

Political stability

Organization of government

Goal formation

And provision of alternative government and policies among others.

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness

and sentiments. The fulcrum for the emergence of parties formation in Nigeria was constitutional development.

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 and was led by Herbert Macaulay.

Problems that confronted pre independence political parties

1. The political parties were without national outlook.
2. Placed much emphasis on personalities rather than issues.

Characteristics of a political party:

- 1: The major or central feature of a political party is to capture governmental powers through constitutional means
- 2: Every political party must be national minded.
- 3: political parties have manifestos which guide their conduct during and after winning elections.