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ASSIGNMENT: DO A TWO PAGE REVIEW OF CHAPTER 8, "CITIZENS ROLES IN DEMOCRACY," IN SALIENT ISSUES IN GOVERNMENT AND NIGERIA'S POLITICS.

CHAPTER 8

The authority government possesses is derived from the will of the people in their choice of these systems, and their rights to take part in the government, including through genuine elections to determine who legitimately occupy governmental offices. These are embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in modern constitutions all over. For democracy to deliver, citizens must become informed about issues that can improve their lives. A symbolic relationship exists between democracies, the citizen's government, made by the citizens for the citizenry is called democracy and it is the involvement or active participations of the people in governance that brings about development.

A citizen has an inherently political meaning that implies a certain relationship between the people and the government. In ancient Rome, it was considered a privilege status to be called a citizen because the status was not accorded to all inhabitants of the Roman Empire. To be a citizen means to enjoy certain liberties and rights as opposed to slaves who could not enjoy them. Citizenship of a state may be acquired by birth or by naturalisation. Citizenship determined by birth is fundamental in the laws of most countries. This is what informed Turner when he opines that citizenship is a formal legal identity that an individual inherits through a collection of legal births and obligations. On the other hand, the process through which a citizen may voluntarily change his/her citizenship of a state to another state is known as naturalisation.

Chapter 111, section 25:1(a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria defines citizenship. Section 26(1) to section 32 stipulates the conditions which any person that is trying to naturalise must fulfil before he or she can be registered as a citizen of Nigeria. Citizenship can be divided into civil citizenship, political citizenship and social citizenship. Civil citizenship refers to the rights necessary to protect individual liberty (e.g the freedom of speech, justice, the freedom to conclude valid contracts); political citizenship is associated with participation in the democratic exercise of political power, either as a member of a political community (e.g voter) or as an individual elected by members of such community (e.g politicians); and social citizenship embodies the claim that citizens ought to have access to those resources that allow them to live a civilized existence in accordance with the standards prevailing in society.

Citizenship does not have just one definitions, it means different things to different people. Glover argues that there are three dimensions of active citizenship: ethical citizenship, integrative citizenship and educative citizenship. Ethical citizenship understands citizenship active participation in a collective strive towards the public good as an essential feature of citizenship. Integrative citizenship needs engagement in a wide sphere of participation that can go beyond formal political practices and institutions. Educative citizenship on its part according to Dagger (1997) refers to the process that develops a moral, practical, and intellectual sense of self in individuals when practice their citizenship.

A right can be defined as a privilege or prerogative conferred by law upon a person or a group. Democracy etymologically is derived from the Greek word "demos" meaning people and "kratos" meaning rule, "That is rule by the people". the idea that all citizens, high or low, within the state are entitled to take part in the running of the affairs of their state was first advocated in England after the great Civil War of the 17th century.

Abraham Lincoln, former American President, perceived democracy as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. In the words of Maxey, he stated that in a democracy, the rights, freedoms and the value of individuals count more than those of the state. The state exists to serve the individual and provide the conditions which make a full and happy life possible.

What can be deduced from all the various definitions of democracy are the following features:

1. The fundamental rights of the citizens is guaranteed
2. Independent and impartial judiciary
3. Existence of rule of law
4. Freedom of press
5. Periodic election that is free and fair

While the state provides rights and liberties, all citizens have duties to the state. Democratic citizens recognise that they not only have rights, they have responsibilities. They include the following:

1. A citizen in a democracy should have the duty to vote.
2. A citizen should be willing to pay taxes, since without taxes to fund a democratic government, there will be no democracy.
3. A good citizen must have the duty to obey the law.
4. A good citizen must refrain from uttering destructive criticisms but must be prepared to offer constructive alternatives to government policies.
5. A good citizen must refrain from interference with the rights of other members of the community.
6. He/she must support public education in every way possible through the payment of taxes, through local volunteer efforts, through according this system the respect to which it should be entitled.

There would be no democracy without the co-operation and commitment of citizens. At the same time, while being critical, citizens must also not lose sight of the pursuit of public interest. A positive attitude should be maintained with development of the state being the priority.