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QUESTION: DO A TWO PAGE REVIEW OF CHAPTER 7, "POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA", IN SALIENT ISSUES IN GOVERNMENT AND NIGERIA'S POLITICS.

To understand what a political party is, we must first know what Politics is. The Greek concept of politics refers to a process by which men debate matters concerning the 'polis', that is, the political community, and take actions in an attempt to realise the public interest or the common good. According to Dickerson and Flanigan, (2002) Political Parties are an essential feature of politics in the modern age of mass participation. In liberal-democratic systems, they help to keep governments accountable to public opinion; even in autocratic system of government, they help the government maintain its hold on power. In either case, political parties are an important link between government and the people.

Political parties in Nigeria developed over time following the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalists' movements in the 1920s. There are as many definitions of political parties as those who aspire to define it. According to R.G Gettel, "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."

On the other hand, Joseph LaPalombra defined political party as "a formal organisation whose self-conscious, primary purpose is to place and maintain in public office person who will control alone or in coalition, the machinery of government."

Shively, (2008) sees a political party as a group of officials or would-be officials who are linked with a suitable group of citizens into an organization; a chief object of this organisation is to ensure that its officials attain power or maintain power.

From all of the definitions above, there is a constant to be inferred. ***A political party is a group of citizens, more or less organised, having some agreement in broad principles of national policy with an effort to capture political power by some constitutional means.***

As with every phenomenon, here are some characteristics of political parties:

1. Political parties are guided by party constitution which directs the conduct of party officials and members within and outside government.
2. Political parties has party manifesto which guide conduct during and after winning the election.
3. The major central feature of political party is to capture governmental powers through constitution means
4. Political parties always have a broad principles of public policy adopted by its organisation, which is referred to as party ideology.
5. Every political party must be national minded in aims and functions ,it must take into consideration the interest of the nation.

Types of political parties:

1. Elitist /Cadre parties
2. Mass parties
3. Ideological parties
4. Broker parties
5. Charismatic or personality parties

Functions of political party;

1. Political mobilisation and recruitment
2. Political education
3. Political representation
4. Political stability
5. Interest aggregation.
6. Conflict management and political integration.

Political parties in Nigeria.

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and sentiments ,and the nationalist movement. According to ikelegbe ,nationalist agitators formed group associations to organise against colonial misrule.

Early political parties

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 this political party in 1923, it was led by Herbert Macaulay regarded as the father of Nigeria nationalism .The party was exclusively based in lagos and no national

colouration .it won all three seats allocated to lagos in the legislative council in the elections of 1923, 1928, and 1933.

The Nigerians Youth Movement (NYM) was formed in 1934 by a group of young Nigerians led Ernest Ikoli, Samuel Akinsanya and Dr Vaughan in the promotion of Nigerian unity and national consciousness and achievement of complete autonomy within the British Empire were among the objectives of the NYM in its charter published in 1938 .

National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon (NCNC)was formed in 1944.it was later renamed to the National Conventions for Nigeria, its first president and General Secretary were Herbert macula and Nnamdi Azikiwe respectively. The party campaigned vigorously against the Richards constitution of 1946.The party was majorly Nigerians party until 1950. Nnamdi Azikiwe became its president in 1946 after Herbert macula death.

Political parties in Nigeria 1950 ..1966

According to Ikelegbe, 2010; two major political parties emerged between 1950 and 1951. These were Action Group (AG)and the Northern People Congress (NPC).These parties emerged from cultural associations because of the prospect of 1951 elections, following the Macpherson constitution. The Action group emerged from the Egbe Omo Oduduwa. Ebge Omo Oduduwa was formed in 1945, as a pan yoruba cultural society .The AG was started as the political wing of Egbe Omo Oduduwa in 1950 .it was formally inaugurated in April, 1951. Its leader was Obafemi Awolowo the general secretary of Egbe Omo Oduduwa .The main aim of the AG was to provide leadership to and capture political power in the Western region .

The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) emerged from the jam'iyya Mutanein Arewa people .The cultural association was formed in 1949 by Dr Dikko ,M Yahaya Gusa ,Amino Kano and Abubakar Oman. The jam'iyya constituted itself into a political party ,the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) in October 1951.The main aim of association /Party was combating ignorance, idleness, injustice in the Northern region and control of government in the North .

Problems that confronted pre-independence political parties:

Political parties before independence in Nigeria were not with some challenges .

1. The political parties were without national outlook .They had regional support and ethnic loyalty
2. The political parties placed much emphasis on personalities rather than issues;
3. Intra-party and inter-party conflicts in most cases polarised the political parties and thereby splitting them into factions.
4. Political party defection weakened or led to collapse of the political parties during era

Political parties in the second Republic in Nigeria:

The ban on politics was lifted in September, 1978. following that, about 53 political associations sought to contest the 1979 general elections. Five of these associations, were registered by Federal Electoral Commission. These were The National Peoples party (NPP),

The Great Nigeria Peoples (GNPP)

National Party of Nigeria (NPN)

Peoples Redemption Party (PRP)

Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN)

A sixth Party, The Nigeria Advance Party (NAP) was registered to contest the 1983 elections.

Political Parties in the Third Republic Nigeria:

General Ibrahim Babangida promulgated the transition to civil rule decree through which two political parties were registered in accordance with the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1989. Thus for the first, Nigeria had a constitutional two Party system. The constitution, objectives, policies and programmes of the two political parties were set up by the military government. The two parties, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC), were established by the government. Party officials were elected afterward, local government and state Congresses and national Convention were directed by government officials.

Political parties in fourth Republic:

Three political parties were registered in preparation towards the fourth Republic in 1998 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) among several political associations that struggled for registrations that struggled for registration as political parties are the;

Alliance for Democracy (AD)

All Peoples Party (APP)

All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP)

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

These parties are organised and administered at the ward, local government area, state, zonal and national levels and have registered offices at all levels. Now there are many more political parties but since the only PDP and APC have been winning the elections.