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**ASSIGNMENT:** Do a two page review of chapter 7, “Political Parties in Nigeria” in Salient issues in Government and Nigeria’s politics.

**REVIEW OF CHAPTER 7**

An essential feature of politics in the modern age of mass participation is the political party. In a democratic or autocratic system of government, political parties serve as an important link between the government and the people. It was developed in the 19th century, in response to the appearance of elections involving large numbers of voters. The first ever political parties were developed in the United State of America. The Democratic Party is the oldest political party in the world. Different scholars such as R.G. Gettel, Herman Finer, Joseph LaPalombara, Agbaje, Edmund Burke, amongst many others have put forth a reasonable definition of a political party.

However, a good definition was given by Shively in 2008. He defied a political party as a group of officials or would-be officials who are linked with a suitable group of citizens into an organization and whose chief objective is to ensure that its officials attain or maintain power. Political parties have certain characteristics amongst which include having a broad public policy referred to as a party ideology, wanting to capture governmental power through constitutional means, they are national minded, should be an organized body, have manifestoes, etc.

Political parties could be classified into five different types namely; Elitist/Cadre political parties, Mass political parties, Charismatic/Personality political parties, Broker political parties, and Ideology political parties. A political party performs variety of functions which include goal formation, political stability, interest aggregation, political representation, political recruitment, political education, organization of government, electoral competition and government, etc.

In Nigeria, political parties were developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalist movements. Hebert Macaulay, Obafemi Awolowo, Nnamdi Azikiwe amongst others, were the precursors of political parties in Nigeria such as the National Congress of British West Africa Territories in 1920, the west African Students Union in 1925 and the Lagos Youth Movement in 1934. The Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) was regarded as the first political party that was formed in Nigeria, in 1923. It was led by Hebert Macaulay who is regarded as the father of Nigerian nationalism. Second political party formed was the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) in 1934, by Ernest Ikoli, Samuel Akinsanya and Dr. J.C. Vaughan. Third political party formed was the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) in 1944 which was renamed the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens, in 1960 when some parts of Cameroon broke out from Nigeria.

Two political parties emerged between 1950 and 1951 (first republic) namely the Action Group

(AG) and the Northern People’s Congress (NPC) from cultural associations. Problems that confronted

pre-independence political parties are they were without national outlook; they placed much emphasis on

personalities rather than issues among other problems. Political parties formed in the second republic

include the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Nigerian People’s Party (NPP), the Great Nigeria

People’s Party (GNPP), etc. Political parties formed in the third republic include the Social Democratic

Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC), etc. Political parties formed in the fourth

republic include the Alliance for Democracy (AD), the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), the All

People’s Party (APP) and the All Nigerian People’s Party (ANPP). Political parties formed in the fifth

republic include the All Grassroots Alliance (AGA), the All Progressive Congress (APC), All Progressive

Grand Alliance (APGA), African People’s Alliance (APA), All Blending Party (ABP) among many

hundreds of other political parties, registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).