Eweiye Ruth Ehinome

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Summary of chapter 7( political parties in Nigeria)

Political parties are an important link between government and the people. They help to keep governments accountable to public opinion, even in automatic system of government, they help the government maintain its hold on power. The first modern electoral democracy was the United State of America, and it was here that the first parties developed. Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalists’ movements in the 1920s.

There are as many definitions of political parties as the political thinkers. 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.” These other thinkers includes; Herman Finer, Joseph LaPalombara, Agbaje, Edmund Burke, Dowse and Hughes, etc.

Characteristics of political parties;

Political party should be an organized body, because it can only derive strength from an effective organizational structure. Such an organization is more necessary to establish rapport with the masses.

Political parties has party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections.

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

Types of political parties include;

Elitist/ Cadre parties

Mass parties

Ideology party

Broker party

Charismatic party

Functions of political party;

Political mobilization and recruitment

Political education

Political representation

Interest aggregation

Political stability, etc.

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness and sentiments, and nationalist movements. The fulcrum for the emergence of parties’ formation in Nigeria was constitutional development. The early political parties in 1920-1950 includes; The Nigerian National Development Party(NNDP),which is regarded as the first political party formed in Nigeria in 1923, The Nigerian Youth Movement(NYM), formed in 1934, The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon(NCNC) in 1944, which was later renamed the National Convention of Nigerian citizen in 1960.

Political parties in 1950-1966 includes; Action Group(1950)(AG), Northern Peoples’ Congress(NPC)(1951). The AG(Action Group) emerged from the Egbe Omo Oduduwa. Also, the Northern Peoples’ Congress emerged from the Jam’iyya Mutanein Arewa, The Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU), both radical and democratic, formed or founded in 1955.

Problems that confronted pre-independence political parties;

The political parties were without national outlook.

The political parties placed much emphasis on personalities.

Intra- party and inter- party conflicts in most cases polarized the political parties and thereby splitting them into factions.

Political party defection weakened or led to the collapse of political parties during this era.

The political parties in the second Republic in Nigeria

After the ban on politics was lifted in 1978, September, up to 53 political associations sought to contest in the 1979 general elections. Five of these associations were registered by Federal Electoral Commission and these five are; The National Party of Nigeria(NPN), The Nigerian Peoples’ Party(NPP), The Great Nigeria Peoples Party(GNPP),the Peoples Redemption Party(PRP) and the Unity Party of Nigeria(UPN).A sixth party, the Nigerian Advance Party(NAP), was then registered to contest in 1983 elections.

Political parties in the third republic Nigeria

General Ibrahim Babangida promulgated the transition to civil rule decree through which two political parties where registered in accordance with the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1989. The two parties; the Social Democratic Party(SDP) and the National Republican Convention(NRC), were established by the government. The registration of SDP was approved by the Armed Forces Ruling Council with Chief Tony Anenih as it’s national chairman. The NRC in the other hand, was registered through the approval of the Armed Forces Ruling Council with Chief Tom Ikimi as the national chairman.

Political parties in the 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 registration as political parties and the names of these parties are; the Alliance for Democracy(AD), All Peoples Party(APP),which in 2002 changed to All Nigeria People’s Party(ANPP) and the People’s Democratic Party( PDP). They contested in the 1998 and 1999 general elections.

Political parties in the Fifth Republic

Since the inception of the fourth republic, however, other political parties have been registered by INEC. So Nigeria now has plenty of political parties.These include; Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party(ANRP), Accord(A), Action Alliance(AA), Action Democratic Party(ADP), Action Peoples Party(APP),Advanced Allied Party(AAP), Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD), All Grassroots Alliance(AGA), All Progressives Congress(APC), All Progressives Grand Alliance(APGA), Alliance for Social Democrats(ASD), Alliance for a United Nigeria(AUN), Alliance for Democracy(AD), Alliance for New Nigeria(ANN), Alliance National Party(ANP), Grassroots Development Party of Nigeria(GDPN), Green Party of Nigeria(GPN), Hope Democratic Party(HDP), Independent Democrats(ID), Justice Must Prevail Party(JMPP), People’s Trust(PT), Peoples Coalition Party(OCP), Peoples Democratic Movement(PDM), Peoples Democratic Party(PDP), Peoples Party of Nigeria(PPN), Peoples Progressive Party(PPP),etc.