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International relations and diplomacy

SMS

Chapter 7

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

Political parties are essential features or part of today's politics. Political parties stand as a bridge between the people and the government. It was first developed in the nineteenth century in the response to the appearance in election involving large number of votes. The first modern electoral democracy was the United State of America and it was here that the first political parties developed. Similarly, all over Europe whenever a reasonably large and varied electorate was established with the coming of democracy, the political parties appeared. Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of national consciousness and sentiments and nationalists movement in the 1920s.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION OF THE IDEA OF POLITICAL PARTIES

There are many definitions of political parties as the political thinkers. According to R. G Gettel, " a political party is a group of citizens more or less organised, who acts as a political unit and who by the use of political power aim at controlling the government and carrying out its general policies." Herman Finer, on his part defined political party as " an organised body with voluntary membership, its converted energy being employed in the pursuit of political power." A political party is a group of officials or would be officials who are linked with sizeable group of citizens into an organisation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICAL PARTY

1. To capture governmental power through constitutional means.
2. Broad principle of public policy

3. Political parties must be national minded
4. Political parties have manifestoes to guide their conducts
5. It should be an organised body
6. They must be guided by party constitution

TYPES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

1. The elitist/cadre parties
2. Mass parties
3. Ideological parties
4. Broker parties
5. Charismatic or personality party

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

1. Political education
2. Political representation
3. Political stability
4. Conflict management and political integration
5. Organisation of government

EARLY POLITICAL PARTIES 1920-1950

The Nigerian National Democratic Party was known to be the first political party in Nigeria in 1923 and it was formed by Herbert Macaulay who is regarded as the father of Nigerian nationalism.

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA 1950-1966

There were two major political parties emerged between 1950 and 1951. These were the Action group (AG) and Northern Peoples Congress (NPC).

POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE SECOND REPUBLIC IN NIGERIA

There were five registered political parties by the Federal Electoral Commission and these are; National Party of Nigeria, The Great Nigeria People Party, The Peoples Redemption Party, The Nigerians Peoples Party and the Unity Party of Nigeria.

POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE THIRD REPUBLIC

General Ibrahim Babangida promulgated the transition to civil rule

degree through which two political parties were registered in Nigeria. The parties are The Social Democratic Party and the National Republican Convention.

POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

Since the inception of this last republic, however, other political parties have been registered by INEC. Right now Nigeria has over 50 political parties but the two main parties that top during the presidential election are; All Progressive Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).