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Two page review of chapter 7, "Political parties in Nigeria"

In the modern age, political parties are an important part of politics. In liberal-democratic system, they help to keep government accountable to public opinions which shows that political parties are an important link between the government and the general public. The political party crops up in all aspects of politics. It was invented in the nineteenth century due to the involvement of a high amount of voters.

The first modern electoral democracy was the United state of America where the first political parties developed. In Britain in 1867 was when there was a reasonable widespread extension of the votes.

Political parties in Nigeria developed after the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalist' movements in the 1920s.

Conceptual clarification of the idea of political party

According to R.G Gettel, "political party is a group of citizens who are more or less organised, who acts as a political unit and who by its use of political power aim at controlling the government and carrying out its general policies.

There are other definitions by Herman finer, Agbaje, Edmund Burke etc who all emphasise on body of men or associations whose main purpose is to ensure that it's party attain or maintain power.

A political party performs so many tasks in the political process so it is difficult to establish a single definition.

Characteristics of a political party

To capture governmental power through constitutional means

Political parties always have a broad principle public policy adopted by its organisation

Every political parties must be national minded

Political party should be an organised body

Political party has party manifestoes which guides their conduct during and after elections

Types of political parties

Elitist/Cadre parties: A political party that draws its membership from the highest position of social hierarchy eg doctors, lawyers, business tycoons etc

Mass parties: A political party that draws its membership from all areas of the society and has a wide membership. They can be called Labour, workers or people's party. Their manifestoes are aimed at uplifting people from poverty

Ideological parties: A political party formed with political ideology or benefits.

Broker party: A political party formed or led by an individuals with charisma

Functions of political parties

Political mobilisation and recruitment

Political education

Political aggregation

Political representation

Political stability

Political parties in Nigeria

1920-1950

Political parties in Nigeria developed after the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalist' movements in the 1920s. The national congress of British West Africa Territories was formed in 1920, the West African Students Union in 1925 and the Lagos Youth Movement in 1934. Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Ernest Ikoli etc are precursors of political parties in Nigeria.

The Nigerian National Development party (NNDP) was regarded as the first political party that was formed in Nigeria. The elective principle introduced by Cliffords constitution gave rise to to the formation of NNPD in 1923, which was led by Herbert Macaulay.

The Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) was formed in 1934 was formed by a group of young Nigerians led by Ernest Ikoli, Samuel Akinsanya.

National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon (NCNC) was formed in 1944 but was later renamed the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens in 1960. NCNC was the firs political party to seek total independence for Nigeria.

1950-1966

Two major parties emerged between 1950-1951 due to cultural associations because of the prospects of the 1951 elections. The Action Group (AG) emerged from egbe omo oduduwa, which was formed in 1945 as a pan Yoruba cultural society. Its leader was Obafemi Awolowo

The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) emerged from Jam'iyya Mutanein Arewa. It is a cultural association that was formed in 1949.

Problems that confronted Pre-independence political parties

The political parties were without national outlook

They placed more emphasis on personalities rather than issues

Presence of intra-party and inter-party conflicts, which polarised parties

Political parties in the second Republic in Nigeria: The ban on politics was lifted in September 1978, in which about 53 political associations sought to contest the general elections. Five of these associations were registered by the Federal Electoral Commission and they are NPN, NNP, GNPP, PRP, UPN, NAP

Political parties in the third Republic in Nigeria: There was a transition to civil rule decree in which two political parties were registered in accordance to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. These parties were SDP and NRC.

Political parties in the fourth Republic in Nigeria: Three political parties were registered in preparation for the fourth republic in 1988 by INEC. These registered parties are AD, APP, PDP and ANPP.