2-Group Theory

According to the group theory of politics, public policy is :

the product of the group struggle. What may be called public policy is the equilibrium reached in this group struggle at any given moment, and it represents a balance which the contending factions or groups constantly strive to win in their favour. Many public polices do reflect the activities of groups .This means that this theory attempts to analyse how each of the various groups in a society tries to influence public policy to its advantage at the policy formulation level.

In other words, the central practice of this model is that interaction among groups is a critical ingredient in politics. Public policy is thus a temporary point of compromise reached in the course of competition between mosaics of numerous interest groups with cross-cutting membership. The ability of the group that is favoured at one point to sustain its gain depends on its power to counteract the powers of other groups that would make efforts to tilt decisions to their favour. It is this type of competition between groups that determine pattern of allocation of societal resources . The locus of power in the society changes from time to time, depending upon the group that succeeds in exerting its own supremacy over the others. Accordingly, the power to determine policy direction changes with the changes in the fortunes of each or a combination of these groups. It is in appreciating the fluidity of power base in society that Latham contends that what we regard as public policy is in reality a temporary equilibrium reached in the course of the inter-group struggle . As soon as the equilibrium point is altered in the favour of new groups another policy will emerge or the old policy will be modified. Politics in essence entails a dynamic equilibrium created by the struggle between different groups. In Latham‟s opinion the legislature acts only as a referee to the inter-group struggle and it ratifies the victories of the successful coalitions, as well as record the terms of the surrender, compromises, and conquest in the form of statutes or Bills.