Belize’s Political Existence

Nation

- Nation is recognized as 'the' political community that ensures the legitimacy of the state over its territory. Transforms the state into the state of all its citizens; Ernest Renan: heroic past, large-scale solidarity, feeling of love and sacrifices.

- Nationalism was based on the cultural entity of a nation—ethnic genes. It created Symbolic Narratives of their origins and history. Symbols: flag, national tree, plants, bird, anthem, and prayer.

State

- A compulsory political organization with a centralized government that maintains a monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a certain territory. Administrative control: ministries, police, judges.

Origins of nationalism in the 18th century

- Dynastic Realm: centers of power, diverse people, had subjects, loyalty to kings

- Religious: Humanity united by ONE access to truth; belief system, faith and Love

Benedict Anderson and the Imagined community

- limited and sovereign; members cannot all know each other; strive for freedom; comradeship of equals; people are blinded by national issues due to love for the country.

Language

- Language roots a nation to a past because a language looms up from the past, and suggests a community between today and the ancestors. Poetry and songs, as national anthems create a simultaneous community of selfless voices.

- Feelings of patriotism are based on the positive values the country embraces—like freedom, justice, and equality. The patriot believes that both the system of government and the people of their country are inherently good and work together for a better quality of life. In contrast, feelings of nationalism are based on a belief that one’s country is superior to all others; uniting against a common enemy.

Sovereignty

- The supremacy of the will of the state as expressed by its laws over all the citizens within its boundaries and independence against all foreign control and intervention.

- Types: Internal Sovereignty: An group of persons in every independent state have the final legal authority to command and enforce obedience in a particular territory; External Sovereignty: the state is subject to no other authority.

Belize’s political system
electoral process: An electoral system in which a candidate or party is selected by achievement of a simple majority. The party winning 16 seats (representatives) wins the election and becomes government; The party leader becomes the prime minister.

The government/national assembly: The legislature is composed of the Senate and House of Representatives.

Three Branches

Executive
- Made up of Prime Minister + Cabinet (ministers)
- Cabinet can come from HOR or Senate

Legislative
- Making laws for the peace, and order of Belize
- HOR + Senate

Judiciary
- Legal System
- Independent from GDB
- Magistrate, Supreme court and court of Appeal

The constitution/supreme law: A body of fundamental principles or laws stating how a state or other organization is acknowledged to be governed. Laws of Belize. Procedures to run the country and ministries.

The legal system: Based on the common law of England and is adversarial in nature. Parliament is responsible for the law making process. The Attorney-general is responsible for the ministry. Police, Ombudsman.