

# DISCIPLINE IN THE ROYAL AMBASSADORS



## Entry Words.

Royal Ambassadors is a voluntary, mission-minded, disciplined and Bible-based organization for boys and young men within the Baptist faith the world over wherever you have the Baptist. As a uniform organization, rules are guiding the operations of the organization in the name of ethics. That means, there are dos and don'ts thus pointing to the existence of discipline and ethics within the rank and file of the organization. The order of seniority that exists is also suggestive of discipline. For instance, a junior officer is expected to first give compliments to a senior officer. That means the place of discipline can not be ignored within the organization. Apart from the spiritual growth of an Ambassador, a typical RA boy is expected to be obedient as he obeys the last order without complaint. This is a pointer to the existence of paramilitary discipline within the Royal Ambassadors system.

## What is Discipline?

Discipline is key to the organization. The word discipline for this work is explained as a "control gained by enforcing obedience or order". It could also mean "orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior". Another definition of interest says discipline is any form of "training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties" or "a system of rules governing the conduct of activity". In a faith-based uniform organization like ours, discipline

helps in the spiritual and physical maturity of members and sustains the integrity of the organization. The "commanding" nature of the organization has helped to entrench the culture of obedience, loyalty, and has possibly, among other factors guaranteed the growth of the organization within the last hundred years. In the words of the former President of America, George Washington, "discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak and esteem to all". No wonder the Bible at different times talks on the relevance of discipline. Proverbs 10: 17 says "whoever heeds discipline shows the way of life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray" while Psalm 94: 12-13 says "blessed is the one you disciplined, Lord, the one you teach from your law". Hence, it is wrong for boys and young men of the Order of Royal Ambassadors of Nigeria not to be disciplined not subject themselves to discipline.

## A Review of some Aspects of Discipline in the Organization.

Let me say that discipline runs through the life of the organization from the first rank to the last, from chapter Director to the office of the RA Marshal. In all we do, a lifestyle of discipline is encouraged. One popular lifestyle every RA should develop is the "on mission lifestyle" and this is realizable through a more disciplined life. Virtually in all we do, discipline

key. Consider the following.

- 1. Spirituality and Soul Winning.** To live a life of holiness or to be consecrated is to be spiritually alive and this calls for discipline. Through simple discipline and biblical obedience, discipline is emphasized. This, in turn, will not only make an RA boy grow spiritually but help him to help others in Jesus name as a potential missionary cum Christ Ambassador. The white RA color speaks of purity or holiness. Only a disciplined person could put on the armor of faith as we have in Ephesians 6, which of course, is the biblical text for the RA Emblem or Shield.
- 2. Uniform Wearing.** Generally speaking, uniform-wearing has



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some simple implications of which discipline is one. Ours is a uniform-wearing organization though founded on biblical principles and denominational values. This accounts for why our organization is regarded as a uniform or disciplined organization. Orders are involved. Complements ( salutations ) are involved. Seniority is also involved and respect for rank, appointment and of course age has its pride of place in the disciplinary structure of the organization. The discipline here is much that there are dos and don'ts attached to uniform wearing. There are rules guiding salutation (complementation) and there are also eating ethics while in uniform. All these are markers of discipline

**3. Ranking System.** Our ranking System has ethics that are based on rules of discipline. For instance, an Extra-Ordinary Officer is not expected to send a Plenipotentiary Officer on an errand. To rise to some leadership post, you must have attained certain ranks. This operational system provides for seniority by rank, by year and by appointment which is all premised on discipline. Some of the reasons for punishment or de-ranking of an officer in the organization are gross misconduct, disobedience, insubordination, rudeness,

falsification ( etc ) and all these are pointers to indiscipline.

**4. Drills.** This refers to the physical or paramilitary training of the organization. The drill is built on the concept of discipline and nothing else. It teaches orderliness, obedience, teamwork, readiness, neatness among others. Here, you obey the last word of command and this is discipline. Most Ambassadors who subject themselves to the rigors of drills are often free of insubordination or disobedience either in their homes or offices.

**5. The thrust of the Anti-Social Vices Club is on discipline as the club promotes virtues and holiness at the expense of vices and wrongdoings.** Wrongdoings are bye products of indiscipline and Royal Ambassadors are trained to be disciplined. This is why molding and remolding of lives are important in the training of the organization.

**Summarily, below are some habits or actions regarded as acts of indiscipline within the organization :**

- \* insubordination to a senior officer.
- \* nonconformity with organization rules and regulations
- \* Improper use of the uniform

- \* Poor dressing / wrong dressing
  - \* Using unauthorized material
  - \* jumping of ranks
  - \* keeping of beards and bushy hair or poor air cut/style
  - \* use of vulgar words
  - \* fighting
  - \* exhibition of immoral acts
  - \* public or indiscriminate eating
  - \* disloyalty: to the organization, the church of God and Jesus Christ.
- The blue color in the Royal Ambassadors teaches loyalty. The list is endless. One learns more and complies as he moves up in the ladder of leadership cum ranking system of the organization.

### Conclusion

Discipline in Royal Ambassadors is, therefore, a serious business. All offices and boys are expected to be disciplined. Anybody that undergoes the RA training as a child is a hundred percent sure to be disciplined. Again, discipline should go beyond uniform but within and out of uniform. Even in ' civilian dress ', the RA boy is expected to be disciplined. Thank you.

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# Fundamental Rights Of Citizens And The Administration Of Criminal Justice In Nigeria



Barr. Opubo West

**Introduction:** Fundamental rights are the inalienable rights of persons who ought to be protected from violation by other persons. These rights are usually recognized by the constitution and require protection from government encroachment or violation. In Nigeria, these rights which are contained in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, CFRN, 1999 (as amended) include the right to movement, life, liberty, association, etc. On the other hand, the administration of the criminal justice system in most countries of the world adheres to the principle of legality for the proper administration of criminal legislation and application. This principle envisages that no person shall be held liable for any offense and punishment that is not contained in the law. Thus, by the provisions of the various criminal legislation and the Constitution, only persons that have contravened known laws are liable to be punished. Besides, such persons must go through the entire process of the criminal administration of arrest, detention, investigation, prosecution/trial in court and conviction/sentence. We shall, therefore, examine the fundamental rights of citizens and its limitations in criminal proceedings in Nigeria. Thus, one fundamental provision that must be complied with for purposes of the arrest of any person is contained in section 36 (12) of the constitution. The section provides that "subject as otherwise provided by this constitution, a person will not be convicted for a criminal offense unless that offense is defined and the penalty, therefore, is prescribed in a written law" Thus, The Nigerian criminal process is guided by this constitutional provision and the courts have made

landmark pronouncements on this provision. It is against this backdrop that the courts cannot create any offense not already provided for and in respect of which there is no prescribed punishment in our law. **What are the Fundamental Rights?** For purposes of this paper, the fundamental rights as guaranteed by the constitution include the right to life, right to dignity of human person, right to personal liberty, right to fair hearing, right to private life, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression, right to peaceful assembly and association, freedom of movement, discrimination and right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria and are contained from Sections 33 – 46 of the Constitution. However, these rights also have corresponding limitations and circumstances under which they may be derogated from and the right denied the person seeking the same.

**1. Presumption of innocence:** By section 36 (5) every person that is charged with a criminal offense is presumed innocent until he is proved guilty. Besides, when such a person is arrested or detained, he shall have a right to remain silent or avoid answering any question until after consultation with a legal practitioner or any person of his choice. The law also enjoins the authority to inform the person in writing within 24 hours (in a language he understands) of the facts and grounds for his arrest or detention. Unfortunately, a perusal of this constitutional provision of circumstances when the right of a person to life may be denied appears to contradict the essence of the provision itself. This is because the constitution provides that a person shall not be regarded as having been

deprived of his life if he dies as a result of a lawful arrest or while preventing his escape from lawful detention or to suppress a riot or insurrection or mutiny. In addition to the above, the Criminal Code empowers the police to kill a person who resists arrest or while escaping from custody where the punishment, for the offense is more than 7 years imprisonment. These provisions constitute a breach of a person's fundamental right particularly the right to innocence which is presumed until proved otherwise. Thus, to deprive an innocent person of his life is grievous and it should not be acceptable by the people of this country. Moreover, our Nigerian society cannot be said to have very enlightened persons in the lower ranks of the law enforcement agencies and to allow these persons who may be barely literate to undertake such decisions in the use of firearms by which to determine when a person is escaping from custody may not be for the good of our society. I contend that for purpose of effecting an arrest of a fleeing suspect or to suppress riot as contained in the constitution, law enforcement agents must be compelled (by law) to use rubber bullets or other preventive mechanisms rather than the use of brute force. This is because the intention is to paralyze and arrest the person(s) and not kill them or deprive them of life. Moreover, the person so arrested or detained shall be quickly brought to court, within a reasonable time: The constitution further explains a reasonable time to mean;

a. In the case of an arrest or detention in any place where there is no court of competent jurisdiction within a radius of 40 kilometers, a

period of one day and

b. In any other case, a period of 2 days or such longer period as in the circumstances may be considered by the court to be reasonable.

However, where any person is unlawfully arrested or detained he shall be entitled to compensation and public apology from the appropriate authority or person.

In the same vein, where the person is duly charged in court, the charge against him must be read and interpreted to him in a language that he understands and the due process must be followed. While he is entitled to cross-examine his accusers, he is also entitled to be represented by a lawyer of his own choice. Whereat the end of the trial, the person is convicted he is entitled to appeal his conviction and must be afforded a fair hearing. Another dangerous practice that has gained acceptance by law enforcement agents in the practice of arresting another person to induce or compel the person wanted to surrender to the law enforcement agency. This practice offends the administration of criminal justice law which provides that "No person shall be arrested in place of a suspect". However, situations like this occur more in practice than is reported in the media.

On the other hand, the right to a speedy arraignment and quick trial as contained in the constitution appears more only on paper than in practice. This is against the number of awaiting suspects incarcerated in our various prisons.

This is maybe due to the filing of improper charges before the court without the court having jurisdiction. Most times, this is intentional to enable the law-enforcement agents to

continue to detain the suspect or to remand the person in prison custody sine dies. This is done despite the constitutional provision to this effect. At the end of the day, a number of persons will be detained without proper charges while awaiting trial or advice from the Department of Public Prosecution, D.P.P.

Sadly, the conditions in our various prisons are not healthy. This is because most of these prisons are overcrowded with mostly awaiting trial inmates coupled with poor medical facilities and broken down or dysfunctional amenities. The change of name from prison service to correctional center has not improved the situation on the ground in these facilities either.

However, it is has been argued that the constitutional time frame provided to charge criminal matters is too short to enable law enforcement agents to conclude the investigation and charge the suspects in court. This argument is premised on the fact that a number of holding charges are filed to enable the police to keep suspects in custody without proper arraignment and defective/improper charges. It is my considered opinion that this may not be far from the truth. Thus, while the right to personal liberty is guaranteed by the constitution, it may continue to be an imaginary right on paper. It is submitted that a middle course approach must be fashioned to cater for a prolonged stay of suspects in custody while providing funds to law enforcement agents to speed up the investigation and to prefer charges accordingly. This position is supported by section 36(4) of the constitution when it provides that:

"Whenever any person is charged with a criminal offense, he shall, unless the

charge is withdrawn, be entitled to a fair hearing in public within a reasonable time by a court or tribunal" Another fundamental right that seems to have been largely eroded by our cultural values and sentiments is provided in section 42 of the constitution.

The section envisages that citizens of Nigeria shall not be deprived of any restrictions or restricted to access any advantage merely because of the circumstances of his birth. The law goes further to invalidate any law that imposes restrictions with respect to the appointment of persons to public office as well.

However, in practice, there is the erroneous understanding that a woman born in a different place from her place of marriage cannot serve in the judiciary or any other position of authority as if she hails from her husband's place. This understanding and/or practice is not only erroneous and discriminatory but is against the provisions of section 42 of the constitution.

### Conclusion

The rights of persons and citizens of Nigeria are rightly provided for under the criminal law of the country. However, whether or not these rights are enjoyed is a different matter. It is submitted that there is a need for a review of some of these fundamental rights and the abridgment of certain obligations by law enforcement agents to reflect modern realities and be abreast with international standards of practice on criminal prosecution and the rights accruable to persons and citizens of the country.

