

TRIBUTE TO A FELLOW REGENTINIAN: (No.4547) THE HON. JUSTICE
ROLAND HUBERT OMODEYINDE ROBBIN-COKER By Mr Israel Ojekeh Parper.

Lives of great men all remind us;
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us,
Footprints, on the sands of time.

{Verse 2- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: 1807-
1882}



Let me first of all extend my personal condolences (and that of The Old Boys Association UK,) to the family of the Hon. Justice Roland Hubert Omodeyinde Robbin-Coker, a fellow Regentonian and TRUE! (Roll number: 4547: 1950)

The Hon. R H O Robbin- Coker commonly known as "DEYINDE", entered the CMS GRAMMAR SCHOOL in 1950 from the Holy Trinity Primary School. As an achieving pupil, (big and strong) he passed through the vicissitudes, brinkmanship and machinations of boyishness experienced by all a True Regentonian and left the stage with a distinguished and successful result in the terminal School Certificate examinations in 1955.

DEYINDE was a revered, venerated and respected pupil, an image he portrayed and maintained throughout his school careers and in later life. He was greatly loved by his peers, his teachers and in particular, by his Principal, Mr Frank B Wood (MA Oxon.).

He was a man of great stature and his popularity cut across all sections of the Grammar School Society, regardless of 'cattle, creed or religion'- a starting platform for his interest in Human Rights in later life. This character, sustained through each class in his school years, culminated in his being selected first, as a Prefect, and later as a Senior Prefect. By dint of a compromised 'adjustment' between the Principal Frank Wood and the Vice Principal Mr S E E Taylor, (KAMAH TAYLOR), Deyinde was elevated to be JOINT HEAD BOY, together with his colleague and class mate, Godfrey Coker in 1955.

This twined position of Head Boy and Senior Prefect, in combination with his shrewdness, size and quaint style, appears to be the foundation stone for his starting point for authority and defence of the vulnerable. [Prefects in those days had great authority more so than some teachers; and junior pupils do not dear challenge the authority of a Prefect, let alone, the Head Boy].

With this background, discipline, and refined intellect and calibre, Deyinde, after leaving the Grammar school, naturally found a place in the Sierra Leone Police Force as a Cadet, trained in the once famous Police Academy at Hastings and later rose to the Rank of an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP). [He had surgeon for a short while in the fields of Teaching and Commerce prior to this Police engagement].



After spending sometime in the Police, he opted for the Legal Profession and studied for the Bachelors of Laws (LLB) in the University Of London, later called to the Bar first, in 1969 and later in 1973, to the Ultra Bar, at the Middle Temple Inns of Court.

He was an effective practitioner and a revered and respected long term Human Rights Lawyer in his time having also practiced Law in The Gambia which prudently lead to his appointment as a High Court Judge of The Gambia.

As every Regentonian would testify, the culture of belonging is somewhat inculcated and compulsory at the Grammar School. Even at it's minimum, one must 'belong' to a House: Primus, Secundus, Tertius, Quartus, or Quintus! Deyinde belonged to QUINTUS HOUSE, (with Yellow Colours)!

This attachment develops one's dynamism for competition and the value and determination to pursue and win; thus effectively implementing the "διώκω" mentality. The opportunity to take part in the various Inter-House Sporting activities (particularly football, cricket, track and field athletics), Literary and Debating Society (L & D S), The Student Christian Movement (SCM) Inter-House Quizzes, Indoor games like Chess etc. - all part of the developmental system: Deyinde played his part in mostly all of these extracurricular activities especially, cricket.

One cannot escape (in those days) the compulsion of hardline Sports Teachers/ Masters like Mr. Ambrose Ogunade. Other Teachers who influenced and impacted on Deyinde's school life and intellectual development included Miss Northway (Latin), The Hon. Mr H E B John, Prof. Nicholas Balanta (Music), Mr J A Reffell (Maths), Mr Freddy John (History & Politics & British Constitution), Vice Principal S E E Taylor ((KAMAH), The Rev. J T Anderson and Rev. H J B Davies (Classics Master).

Deyinde's classmates included men of stature - like Ade Palmer, Arthur Wright, Sylvanus Davies (Spoddy), Godfrey Coker- (Joint Head Boy), John Peters, SAM Gbonda - (Bishop, ARITO" and "ALIKEH"(nicknames). Senior friends

include: Seme Weekes, Francis Edmondson and Magnus Cole (Snr), to name a few!

Junior friends who gained influence from Deyinde included: Ransford Clemens, Tada Aitkins, David Cyprian, Emile Macaulay (The Flying Dutchman), Augustus McCormack, Ahovi Kponou, Gipu Felix George, Cyril Rogers Wright and The Anderson Brothers- J T and Johannes.

Deyinde impacted greatly on all his friends and classmates. His popularity cut across every sections of the Regentonian community.

In His final years here in the United Kingdom, Deyinde played his quiet role as a member of The Old Boys Association (UK Branch), paying his yearly subscriptions and attending it's functions and activities whenever possible!

Let us then be up and doing

With a heart for any fate

Still achieving, still pursuing

[and "διώκως"- Let us] learn to Labour and to wait

For the time will come, when we shall be NO MORE!!

(Verse 4- Longfellow; adapted)

THE HON. JUSTICE ROLAND HUBERT OMODEYINDE ROBBIN-COKER HAS LEFT HIS FOOTPRINTS; LET US MORN HIM WITH DELIGENCE AND PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY GOD THAT HIS SOUL RESTS IN PERFECT PEACE!!