

EULOGY FOR THE LATE  
MICHAEL CLARENCE EDWARD YOUNG

The words of the poet Robert Burns best epitomized my friend MICHAEL CLARENCE EDWARD YOUNG, MCEY or SQUIRE or MIKE as he was affectionately called, when he said:

*“An honest man here lies at rest, the friend of man,  
the friend of truth;  
The friend of age, and guide of youth;  
few hearts like his, with virtue warmed,  
few heads with knowledge so informed;  
if there’s another world, he lies in bliss;  
if there is none, he made the best of this.”*

Your humble servant thanks the family of MCEY for inviting me to eulogize our dear friend, it is at once, both a humbling and distinct honor, but I hasten to confessed, and yet a tremendous undertaking, in light of the shocking and unspeakable mystery of Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

To have demure would have been an abdication of my duty to his family, friends, our society, my personal sense of responsibility and most of all it is an opportunity to stand in his defense and declare the amazing and phenomenal strength, conviction and fortitude of MCEY who lived not merely by words, but by his deeds.

When someone you love passes away, there is a strong temptation to remember him or her, perhaps a little too well. Misdeeds are forgotten, offences are forgiven, and only the most shining characteristics of our loved one’s make it into the version of them we want to keep with us when they depart. That is how it should be.

Although many of us came to associate MCEY with the law, perhaps he may not have seen the law as a vocation, as I came to discover to my surprise, over the course of many years and discussions with him and other close friends, that philosophy may have, in fact, been his first love.

One of his most shining characteristic was his acute intellectual acumen, grasp of logic and rational sense of reason; he was without doubt an

AGNOSTIC, and to the end. Even though His Excellency Sir Colville Young called him a “staunch Methodist and rightly so, not necessarily by way of his attendance, but more likely, by way of tradition and most certainly by way of his Deeds.

He was a renaissance man. His worldview was that of an Enlightenment Humanist.

Michael Shermer in his book, “THE MORAL ARC“ said:

*“Reason is the cognitive capacity to establish and verify facts through the application of logic and rationality, and to make judgments and form beliefs based on those facts. Rationality is the application of reason to form beliefs based on facts and evidence, instead of guesswork, opinions, and feelings. That is to say, the rational thinker wants to know what is really true and not just what he or she would like to be true.”*

Therein lies the mystery, strength and fortitude of our dear beloved friend, he was no wimp, he was not weak, he was a tower of strength and fortitude, who as an AGNOSTIC, dared to apply abstract reasoning and moral intelligence. He was a man not merely of words, but of deeds, and he dared to say and do what he reasoned, evidencing to us that in spite of our common denominator, as mere humans, he was strong enough towering over us, and by might of reason and faith to prosecute his own conviction.

I humbly ask and invite the question, how many of us have the strength, and fortitude to dear to prosecute the conviction of our mind? How many would even dear to think it? My friend’s only principle was principle itself.

MCEY philosophical starting point was the French philosopher Rene Descartes, who first used the concept: “COGITO, ERGO SUM“, translated “*I think, therefore I am,*” at the end of his search conducted for a statement that could not be doubted. He found that he could not doubt that he himself existed, as he was the one doing the doubting in the first place.

Around the middle of the First Century of the Common Era, James, a servant of GOD and of the Lord Jesus Christ, wrote an instructive letter to the twelve tribes scattered among the nations as follows:

*“Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.... you foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor, Abraham, considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the alter? You see that his faith was made complete by what he did.”*

[James, Chapter 2, verses 18 to 22]

Dear members of the Clergy, I do not seek to presume to enter upon your exclusive province, in DECLARING that I am satisfied that my friend MCEY, like James, are of one and the same mind and strength on this weighty matter of “Faith and Works“, and rightly so.

He is my unsung hero, because he lived and died on the strength of his own conviction.

I am also compelled to recall the words of Luke, Chapter 22: verses 38 to 44 describing the human agony and strength of our Lord Jesus Christ on the mount of Olives, saying:

“And being in agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

“Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”

And then refusing to save himself and to die a humiliating death upon a wooden cross. That is the ultimate demonstration of faith and works.

Who among us would dear to throw the first stone!

And yet the greatest mystery or irony was the man himself. ...Where he had come from, where he was going, why he did what he did. And in so far as anything was sacred to the AGNOSTIC MCEY, it was man himself.

He credited C. B. Hyde with the notion that GOD must be a great GOD, because if he created anything more beautiful than woman he must have kept it for himself.

I am confident many of you do recall MCEY to be the gentleman's gentleman, caring, compassionate, generous almost to a fault. The unselfish man he was, will surely be missed. But greater than the sorrow from his death is the joy that he spread in his life. His death leaves a heartache no one can heal, but our love for him leaves a memory no one can steal, let's hold dearly on to it.

MCEY was brave and unflinchingly so, he never shy away from dealing with difficult and sensitive matters, or engaging authority. He spoke truth to power. He was always prepared to take on any initiative, whether as honest broker or sacrificial lamb, in order to get things done.

I recall many of his initiatives regarding the due administration of justice in approaching and engaging with the judiciary at its highest levels, whether at the Supreme Court or Court of Appeal, to ensure the upholding of strong ideals and traditions especially on matters which an errant BAR, was disqualified to speak. And yet unlike others, he remained a member of the BAR in the hope of inviting change.

As the second son of the late Horace W. Young, Q.C., C.B.E., himself a legal luminary, for a while MCEY had a ringside seat, as observer, in the legal world. At age 22 years, he was at the time, the youngest person admitted to the BAR. In time, I observed the development of his own methods in the courtroom, to be calm and simple, but quietly explosive.

From day to day, he would imagine crossing to the other side of the mirror to enter his client's world, whether peasant, businessman, or politician, brainbox or idiot. To empathize with someone ...who, after all, had two hands, two eyes like himself, who played and enjoyed music, who love and was loved, who work hard and played hard, and asked whether he himself, given the circumstances, might have done the same. He was a gentle and compassionate soul.

MCEY enjoyed trial hugely. The unpredictable "magic" of each trial fascinated him, the chase after the truth, and the exhilaration of his defense or assertion of his claim, all seeking after integrity and truth energize him as nothing else could. He was the lawyer's lawyer, his word was his bond. He distinguished himself and was admitted to the Inner Bar in 1996, as Senior Counsel.

His skills at research was legendary and only recently he reminded me that over his 39 years of practice, he never lost a defamation claim, and I quietly recalled that it was his research that found a rear nugget that mandated trial by jury to be the law of the land in civil defamation cases, to the chagrin of many a claimant, prompting the legislature to intervene. He held firmly to the view that once the mind is made up to do something always do so to the best of your ability, with commitment and be true to your conviction.

He was involved in several seminal cases that went up to the highest court in the land including BOCONGO at the JCPC and more recently, BCB Holdings & Belize Bank v. The Attorney General of Belize at the CCJ.

MCEY was a true nationalist and patriot, he always participated in all National Day Celebration parades, even after knee surgery, you can see him hobbling along to the festive music in his distinctive red and white party colours.

On the lighter side, I recall his great sense of humor. I am sure many of you recall his version of the story how the Village of “Cock Laugh” got its name, and his usual refrain “this the read” when enjoying a sumptuous dish or assessing the quality of a performance, and that his favorite meal was fry chicken, but do not even mention pig tail that was anathema. Although he declared that he was not keen on oxtail, a second or third helping, he quipped, was only for deserving oxtail by Glenville Stuart. I am sure his spouse and children will recall the weekends in San Ignacio or in Miramar, when their Daddy cooked up all those sumptuous eggs and bacon, the savory smell of which permeated throughout the neighborhood.

In earlier times, when the “Bellevue Club and Hotel” was his favourite watering hole and many a spouse conspired to do it in, MCEY and company including Stanley Longworth, Anthony Thurston, Trevor Roberts and the likes of the late Jack Longworth and Doc. Freneau, decided to dub it “Church” when sending out meeting time and place to colleagues every Friday evening.

He was the energizer man, love to fete, and would dance from beginning to end. Many of us recall him dancing at the last Cancer Society Gala, with every one and any one, and by himself, I guess celebrating his own remission from prostate cancer.

MCEY was also an accomplished student athlete, a sprinter, at that, but his most famous claim and crowning achievement in sport was on the tennis court, when he and David Hoy won the national men's double championship, defeating the legendary Billy Musa and Sonny Meaghan, and he showed me his trophy to prove it.

Although he issued me a challenge at table tennis, on learning of my involvement with that sport, to be played at his home in San Ignacio, regrettable, we never had time for that match.

MCEY had many other accolades, distinctions, awards and achievements, including: city counselor, deputy Mayor of Belize City, Chairman of the Crimes Commission, he contributed to many noble and civic causes including Restore Belize and to the Belize Police Department in addressing crime and violence and policing in Belize. He quietly sponsored and supported a community center in Port Loyola. On the occasion of Her Majesty's birthday on New Year's day 2015, he was made a C.B.E.

MCEY was born the 7<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1955 in Southampton England to the late Horace W. Young and Norma Young, he crossed over Jordan on Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 leaving on the other bank of that river to mourn him, his dear wife Denise of 38 years, sons Michael Devin and Myron David and daughter Dr. Marilee Young McCarthy, his mother Mrs. Norma Young, brothers Sandy and Nigel, sisters: Kitty, Lavern, Cislyn and Sandra, two grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

So good bye my friend, you will be greatly missed, but we are consoled in the knowledge that you lived a good life which we now celebrate and thank GOD for, so the void we are confronted with will be replaced by your amazing life and the wealth of contribution you made to our community.

### **SO GO AND RUN FREE**

So go and run free with the angels  
Dance around the golden clouds  
For the Lord has chosen you to be with him  
And we should feel nothing but proud  
Although he had taken you from us  
And our pain a lifetime will last  
Your memory will never escape us

But make us glad for the time we did have  
Your face will always be hidden  
Deep inside our hearts  
Each precious moment you gave us  
Shall never , ever depart  
So go and run free with the angels  
As they sing so tenderly  
And please be sure to tell them  
To take care of you for us.

*Author unknown*

October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

By: Rodwell Williams