

The Clergy Speak Out

Tension in the Christian life

W.G. Onions
Tension is bad. There seems to be general agreement on that. Tension leads to nervous breakdowns and heart attacks. Nevertheless life needs some kind of tension or it goes flat and stale, like food without salt, and as useless as a rubber band without zip or a spring without snap. The prophets of old Israel described such people as "settled upon their lees" and referred scornfully to those who took their "ease in Zion". (Jeremiah 48:11, Amos 6:1) Creative tension is a condition of moral and spiritual growth. It is important that Christians realize this.

For the Christian, tension arises from the limitations and uncertainties of our mortal life. We don't know much and we can't see far ahead. We walk by faith. But faith is necessarily engaged in a continuing

struggle with doubt, constantly seeking a better and fuller understanding of itself. And in the same way the Church lives by a process of self-criticism as it strives to hear the word of God and reform itself accordingly.

Jesus describes a Christian as being "in the world" but not "of it". (See John 17:14-18) That means tension. We can escape it only by withdrawing completely from the world or by conformity to the world. But Jesus rules out any escape, so we must try to live with it.

In the past many Christians have worked out a kind of compromise, by making a partial withdrawal from "worldly" ways. They have shunned "worldly pleasures", giving up many things that others regard as harmless amusements such as card playing, theatre

going, dancing, drinking, sex. But they have rarely given up the pursuit of power, privilege and position. They have been as sharp as any worldlying in business affairs and as devoted to making money. In political life a Christian will usually think and act the same way as other members of his party.

Too many of us seem to assume that life should be all sweetness and light and that dispute and conflict are necessarily bad. The Bible should have taught us otherwise: Jesus was in conflict throughout his public ministry. Our rest we shall have hereafter, said Oliver Cromwell, and that will be eternal. To be in the world but not of it, means to march to the beat of a distant drum and not to mind being out of step with the crowd. It means not only to prech the Gospel but to translate it into action. Our allegiance belongs elsewhere and that spells conflict. But then faith is not faith unless it is on trial and that means in a state of creative tension. The Christian is the unassimilable stranger in the world.

Hill to meet Dept. heads

Department heads of Halton Hills will have bossman Mayor Tom Hill at all their meetings, committee of the whole decided Monday night. The vote to have the mayor at the meeting was six to four with Councillor Ern Hyde strongly opposed.

He claimed the presence of the mayor would stifle a lot of exchange between the department heads, and stated it would nullify any good the meetings might do. Councillor Joe Hurst agreed with Hyde. He said if the department heads want to get together and discuss town affairs they shouldn't have to have the mayor present. "They will do it anyway only in secret, if this is passed," he added.

Hurst pointed out the mayor could call a meeting anytime he wanted with

department heads. Councillor Roy Booth said there was a fairly close relationship now between department heads and council, and it should be preserved by having the mayor present. "If we don't, we are shutting the door," he added. Councillor Ernie Sykes said it should be the mayor's privilege and responsibility to call meetings of department heads. He contended the mayor could explain how council felt about certain matters.

Br-r-r!

It's supposed to be spring, but is it? Snow flurries were seen early Monday morning and also late Monday evening. Hopefully that will be the last of winter's leftovers.

Obituary William Dolmer dies suddenly April 27

Funeral service was held Tues., Apr. 30 at the Humbley-Shoemaker Funeral Home for William Thomas Dolmer of 157 Beaubien St., Parry Sound, who died suddenly on Apr. 27. The son of Mrs. Stella Dolmer, Everton, and the late Harvey Dolmer, the deceased is survived by his wife and three children, Jimmy, Ronnie, and Tony all living at home. He is also survived by brothers Wayne, John of Everton, Ron of Menford, and sister Evelyn (Mrs. Mel McCallum) of Brampton. Born in Dundalk on Oct. 23, 1939, William Dolmer was

married Mar. 28, 1964, to Mary Lou Morden in Kitchener. A baker by trade he was an avid sportsman.

Interment was at the Everton Cemetery with Rev. D. Whitehead officiating. Pallbearers were Dale McWhirter, Jack Sheehy, Ralph Reid, Melvin McCallum, William Morden, and Dave Flewelling.

Next public holiday is the Victoria Day observance, May 20.

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