

Religion

Restructured Witness to Yesterday

By JIM RYAN
 Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday
 Mark 11:1-10; Mark 14:1-15:47
 March 24, 1991



Religion and Reality
 by Jim Ryan

Announcer Voice-over: Welcome to the new and restructured Witness to Yesterday. Our host is the chairman-designate of the C.B.C., Patrick Watson. (Applause.) (P. Watson, seated.) Watson: Thank you.

The C.B.C. is beginning to look like the forests of Temagami after ten years of clear-cutting.

However, we're doing the best we can to bring about new growth. Unfortunately, in the cutting we slashed our creative programming department.

So we've taken a half measure. We've resurrected my old T.V. series, Witness to Yesterday.

This is perhaps a first step toward replanting a new and trimmer C.B.C.

So let's get started.

In the old format, I interviewed historical characters, who appeared in period costume, and make-up. I asked them about their lives and their impact on history. Sometimes they squirmed; and sometimes something interesting, perhaps even truthful, was said.

We've kept that format; we've kept the old set; we've even chosen to film in black and white, just like on the original series.

What is new is that in these thirteen new shows, Gerard Veilleux, president of C.B.C., will

play every one of the historical guests.

We promise you an exciting series with all-new historical guests.

Our first guest, a role that should be easy for Mr. Veilleux to play, is Judas.

(Laugh track. Some technicians boo.)

(Camera switches to Gerard Veilleux dressed as himself, seated, looking uncomfortable.)

(Camera back to Watson.)

Watson: What's wrong, did we cut the costuming department too?

Veilleux: No. This is an example of creative programming on a shoe-string. If you remember, Judas Iscariot held the purse for the apostles. He controlled the funds. That sounds to me like an accountant, so I came in my own suit.

(A grunt of disgust off-camera from Watson.)

Watson: Very well. Let's begin.

Judas, do you realize that your name has become synonymous in our culture for anyone who betrays his friend or his associates?

Veilleux: Well Mr. Watson, I had to learn to be ruthless. My job was to cut costs.

(Off-camera whisper from Watson, "Just read the cue-cards.")

Veilleux: That's not fair. I didn't betray anyone. We just had different visions of the future. Unfortunately, it took me a few years to realize how different we were.

In fact, I feel betrayed. I wasted some good years with him.

I wanted a Palestine free of the Romans. I thought Jesus was the man to do it. But he wimped out.

I wanted to take an axe to the roots of the Roman Empire. I wanted to set it ablaze.

(Off-camera, "Would you just read. You've got axe on the brain.")

Watson: If you didn't betray your friend, where did the thirty pieces of silver come from?

Veilleux: That was seed money

for an arms deal that I was working on.

Watson: An arms deal?

Veilleux: Yeah. Jesus' way wasn't going to work, so I was going to try it my way. I was offered a shipment of Patriot missiles real cheap. The thirty pieces of silver were the first installment to guarantee delivery.

Watson: So you betrayed Jesus to make a downpayment on some weapons.

Veilleux: Look. I believe in results. Talking doesn't do it. Praying doesn't do it. Even the odd miracle doesn't do it.

Veilleux: I believe in cutting to the bone. I believe in radical action.

Watson: I know.

Veilleux: Jesus had his head in the clouds. Look around today. Did his way work? Of course not. That's why I went for the missiles.

My cuts will save Canada, watch and see. My vision is of a new C.B.C. rising out of the ashes of...

(Offscreen, "Cut.")

(Cut to credits and theme music.)

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United Church commends Senate

From the United Church of Canada

"The United Church of Canada has been strongly opposed to Bill C-43 ever since it was introduced in Parliament," says the Reverend Jean Ward, program consultant for family ministries with the Division of Mission in Canada.

That is why she says the United Church commends the Senate for its refusal to approve the bill.

"Putting abortion back in the Criminal Code violates a woman's rights to responsible

choice and further reduces access to abortion services," explains Ward.

She adds, "Now that Bill C-43 has been turned down by the Senate, and only approved by a narrow majority in the House of Commons, the Government should heed the criticism of the bill, and not introduce further criminal legislation on abortion."

Prior to the vote in the Senate, The United Church of Canada presented briefs opposing the proposed legislation to both the Parliamentary and the Senate Committees reviewing Bill C-43.

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