

Veterans and veterans' organizations, led initially by A.J. (Tony) Little, President of the RCAF Prisoners of War Association (Ottawa Branch), began to turn to the Senate Sub-Committee on Veterans Affairs for redress and a public forum from which to respond to the films when it became known that the CBC intended to respond to their complaints and critiques by airing the series again beginning in late March. This decision was interpreted by veterans as being arrogant and insensitive to their legitimate concerns. They were especially upset by the threat that the series would be distributed to schools across Canada as a National Film Board/CBC approved teaching aid on Canadian participation in the Second World War.

The Senate Sub-Committee did not decide lightly to undertake a study of the authenticity of *The Valour and the Horror*. It had just completed its long-awaited report on the merchant seamen and was poised to launch its in-depth investigation of the Veterans Health Care Regulations. But as the veterans' complaints about *The Valour and the Horror* grew louder, the Sub-Committee felt it had no alternative but to change its plans. The Sub-Committee's mandate, to examine and report on all matters concerning veterans affairs "which may arise from time to time," gave clear authority to examine a publicly-funded television series which had seriously offended a substantial portion of Canada's veterans, not to mention ordinary Canadian citizens who had some understanding of the subject material.

The announcement in the Senate that the Sub-Committee intended to study and report on *The Valour and the Horror* at once became almost as controversial as the film series itself. Critics said the investigation represented an attack on freedom of expression which offended the principle of the arms-length relationship which exists between the Government and cultural agencies. The members of the Sub-Committee considered these protests carefully in determining the objectives of their study, and agreed that these should be:

to give veterans and veterans' organizations a public forum in which to respond to what they consider to have been a public, unfair and malicious slander of their conduct, and the conduct of their leadership in the Second World War;

to hear from a number of specialists in the history of Canadian participation in the Second World War and to learn their opinions about the historical methodology and merit of *The Valour and the Horror* series;

to inquire into the roles played by two public bodies, the National Film Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, in the conception, production, financing and decision to air as a documentary, a highly interpretive film series on a historical subject; and