

"appalled, disgusted and insulted by this so-called documentary."⁽⁴⁾ One veteran argued that the film was an "entire misconception of what the war was about. I found the characterizations appalling...(T)he film was a caricature of who we were, what we were doing and the context in which we were doing it."⁽⁵⁾ Bob Ford, Dominion Chairman of the Royal Canadian Legion, representing 600,000 members including 230,000 veterans across Canada, told the Sub-Committee that *Death by Moonlight* (not to mention *In Desperate Battle*) had "seriously, perhaps irreparably, damaged viewers' understanding of Canada's participation in World War II." He concluded that the film was so distorted that "were it used as a sole source of information about the events depicted, unsophisticated viewers would have no alternative but to regard Canada as a nation of incompetents and murderers which, in concert with her equally bloodthirsty allies, waged relentless war on the valiant people of Germany."⁽⁶⁾

The essential grievance of veterans is that any evidence which supports the legitimacy of the bomber offensive has been omitted, resulting in a gravely distorted picture. Not only is the complexity of the bomber offensive nowhere evident, but the context of the war as a whole is missing. As Professor (ret'd) William Rodney, DFC, who flew with 78 (RAF) Squadron during the war, stated: "By not accurately setting the bombing of Germany into its wartime context, and through serious - and what would appear to be deliberate - historical omissions, *The Valour and the Horror* grossly distorted Bomber Command's role and contribution to the Allied victory."⁽⁷⁾ As a result, many Bomber Command veterans feel they have been portrayed as naive, misguided murderers of women and children, who risked their lives and watched their comrades die to no apparent purpose. They also allege that numerous errors based on superficial research and a "propensity to dwell upon the banal in order to arouse emotion,"⁽⁸⁾ especially in the dramatic scenes, made matters worse.

Most of the military historians appearing before the Sub-Committee agreed. Professor William Carter of Royal Military College, who has written extensively on 6 Group, labelled *Death by Moonlight* a "sub-standard work. The context was not set; there were many inaccuracies and sweeping generalizations; in places, there was no sense of chronology; information was offered with no evidence to back it up, and there were major errors of comprehension."⁽⁹⁾ Hugh Halliday of the Canadian War Museum, a prolific writer on the

(4) William DuBois, Vice-President and Director of Bomber Command Association of Canada, Proceedings, 5:43.

(5) Ray Silver, Proceedings, 7:15.

(6) Proceedings, 6:81-82.

(7) Proceedings, 6:25.

(8) Professor (ret'd) Rodney, Proceedings, 6:34.

(9) Proceedings, 3:13.