

Bomber Command veterans watched the film carefully for technical details. Many were disappointed. Airmen and members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, for example, would never have convened in the mess.⁽⁶⁹⁾ "Mission," used extensively in *Death by Moonlight*, was an American term - Bomber Command spoke of "ops," "trips" or "sorties." Likewise, the British never used the American clock system to point out enemy aircraft; they would say, for example, "starboard beam." The suggestion that Bomber Command hid survival rates from aircrews also raised eyebrows. While no Command documents were ever circulated to the squadrons, aircrew could learn losses by doing a simple head count, listening to the BBC or asking the intelligence officer. The removal of a friend's personal gear had a more profound impact than any statistical reminder.

There was also a feeling that *Death by Moonlight* did not always accurately capture the mood of the times. The statement that French Canadians were "often angry about the poor treatment they received from their English speaking countrymen" seemed gratuitous to many. Several French-Canadian veterans who appeared before the Sub-Committee stated that they had never witnessed any discrimination or friction between French and English aircrew, and felt the dramatic scene involving Joseph Favreau was over-played.⁽⁷⁰⁾

CONCLUSIONS

In his appearance before the Sub-Committee, Brian McKenna referred to the investigation into the authenticity of *The Valour and the Horror* as an exercise "designed to shelter a politically correct view of history and to put a chill in the creative air."⁽⁷¹⁾ He argued that it was time to stop making nostalgic films about Canada's role in the Second World War and take a harder, more critical look at our war-time experience. *The Valour and the Horror*, he insisted, did just that. Defending his films as "accurate," he engaged in lively debate with Sub-Committee members over some of the contentious issues surrounding the series.

The Sub-Committee, and no doubt the public at large, welcomes any critical examination of Canada's war-time history. However, Mr. McKenna's testimony notwithstanding, the Sub-Committee could only conclude that, based upon the evidence placed before it, *Death by Moonlight* was a seriously flawed assessment of the bomber offensive in the Second World War. While not challenging the concept that history is open to interpretation, the Sub-Committee could not ignore a considerable body of evidence which suggested that the film-makers had broken several fundamental rules of historical research. Even taking into account the restrictions imposed by television, these rules must still be meticulously followed if the final product is to meet acceptable standards.

(69) Proceedings, 5:46 and 5:52.

(70) See the testimony of Jacques Côté, Proceedings, 5:59, and Leonard Tremblay, 7:99-100.

(71) Proceedings, 9:61.