

performance of the Canadian army was not always consistent, they found *In Desperate Battle* to be imbalanced and poorly researched. Professor Roy complained that the film-makers "selected only those parts of the evidence that would tend to prove their preconceived ideas. I would say that their use of implication and innuendo, their failure to double- and triple-check their information, their failure to seek information that might contradict their thesis - all this has led to a one-sided and warped view."⁽⁶⁾ Professor Terry Copp of Sir Wilfrid Laurier University, author of several works dealing with the Normandy campaign, argued that "the script writers omitted any references to events which cast a favourable light on the leadership, training and performance of the Canadian army."⁽⁷⁾ Even Colonel John English of the National Defence Staff College in Kingston, author of *The Canadian Army and the Normandy Campaign: A Study of Failure in High Command* (1991), was less than complimentary: "(I)t is riddled with throw-away lines that contain half-truths and blatant inaccuracies. A staff officer would consider it sloppy. It also lacks depth of understanding as well as balance."⁽⁸⁾ The Sub-Committee could not find a qualified expert on the Normandy campaign to support the film-makers.

The controversy over the accuracy and balance of the final episode of *The Valour and the Horror* extends over a number of issues. Indeed, the Sub-Committee was taken aback by the full range of the debate. This chapter highlights some of the points of contention.

THE CANADIAN SOLDIER IN NORMANDY

Unpatriotic and Untrained?

It was the opinion of many witnesses appearing before the Sub-Committee that *In Desperate Battle*, whether intentionally or unintentionally, denigrated the common soldier in Normandy. Again and again, the Sub-Committee heard examples of distorted evidence aimed, so it seemed, at portraying the ordinary soldier in less than flattering terms. The film-makers insisted that *In Desperate Battle* was a testimony to the courage and perseverance of the Canadian fighting man, but repeated references to his restrained patriotism and inferior training struck a sensitive chord with veterans and historians alike.

For example, several witnesses took issue with the statement that many Canadians joined the army not for patriotism or adventure but to escape the ravages of the Depression. Professor Roy acknowledged that thousands may have joined the army in 1939 for a steady paycheque, but the economy quickly recovered after war broke out and full employment soon followed. Over the course of the war, the percentage of Canadians who joined up to avoid the dole was

(6) Proceedings, 3:73.

(7) Proceedings, 8:13-14.

(8) Proceedings, 3:75-76.