

the judgement of the National Film Board in agreeing to the revised concept and objectives of the film.

Appearing before the Committee, Mr. François Macerola, the Government Film Commissioner, stressed that at every stage of production from original concept to release of a film, the film producer, the executive producer and the vice-president responsible for English or French programming are questioned. Before release of the film, the Government Film Commissioner must view and approve it. The original objective of the film was not controversial; the revised concept was bound to cause intense controversy. In these circumstances, common prudence, in the opinion of your Committee, should have raised serious questions about whether making such a film was in the public interest, and if so, what precautions should be taken to ensure historical accuracy, particularly since the film would be released as a documentary.

Several Honourable Senators challenged the idea that it was part of the National Film Board's mandate to question the need for national heroes. The history of men and women of notable achievement provide young and old alike with inspiration and role models. It is a Canadian dilemma that the stories of so many of our heroes serve to underscore our differences — the fact that the European exploration and settlement of the country is inevitably associated with the eclipse of the indigenous civilizations and the rival successes of French and British colonial heroes are just two examples.

Whatever the abstract validity of a film's questioning our need for heroes, members of the Committee and other Honourable Senators who attended our meetings were upset because the elaboration of this theme involved casting doubt, not on a fictional character or characters, but on the personal integrity and service records of an individual veteran and war hero, one of the few whom all Canadians could admire. This concern does not mean that we feel that the NFB should help to create, prop up, or fail to disclose fraudulent heroes. It does mean, however, that we were surprised to discover that no technical experts or professional historians were retained to assist in the production of the film. Mr. Cowan may have had an understandable urge to exercise the fullest possible creative control, but at least when the film took a "revisionist" slant, there was an obligation on the part of the National Film Board to ensure absolute historical accuracy and probability as much about details as about major themes.

Although a "Dominique Parent" is listed on the film credits as being responsible for historical research, this person was not heard