

The True Glory and the Failure of Anglo-American Film Propaganda in the Second World War
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The True Glory was the last great combat documentary made during the second world war. The film, which won an Oscar for the best documentary of 1945, was produced and released under the auspices of the Joint Anglo-American Film Planning Committee (JAAFPC). Introduced by Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, Dwight D. Eisenhower, the film tells the story of the last year of the war in Europe, beginning with the Normandy invasion and ending with the fall of Berlin. Animated maps along with scenes of combat help provide a visual dimension to the film's lyrical narration, which describes the inexorable march of the Allied Expeditionary Force towards the final destruction of Hitler's Third Reich. The film is a stirring tribute to the soldiers of the Anglo-American alliance who fought during that bloody time.¹

Although an artistic and popular success, *The True Glory* is actually the story of a failure concealed behind the façade of an award-winning documentary, for the Joint Anglo-American Film Planning Committee was not formed to make an award-winning film. Indeed, the JAAFPC was created in March 1944 for the express purpose of producing a series of 'official films for world distribution showing Allied operations from a truly integrated viewpoint'.² Ironically, therefore, although it produced *The True Glory*, the actual mission of the JAAFPC was a failure. The story of its work, and ultimate end, also provides historians with an interesting case-study of inter-Allied tension during the last year of the war in Europe.

Prior to the formation of the JAAFPC, the only attempt at making a joint Anglo-American film occurred in 1943-4, when Frank Capra, then serving in the US Army Signal Corps, was sent to London. Capra's assignment was to co-produce a joint documentary on the North African campaign, incorporating footage from a British account of the campaign, entitled *Africa Freed*, with an American version of the film. What was supposed to be a co-operative effort, however, developed into a major crisis in inter-Allied propaganda between Capra and the British Army Film Unit. This crisis was caused by differences in personality and film-making techniques, as well as the cinematic presentation of the role of each nation in the campaign. The resultant tensions were in no way calmed by the completion and positive reception of the film *Tunisian Victory* in 1944.³

Although tension continued to exist between Allied propaganda agencies after the completion of *Tunisian Victory*, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff argued that the resumption of unilateral film projects would give 'the world an entirely false impression' about Allied unity. In early 1944, the Joint Chiefs felt that this appearance of Allied disunity was in 'urgent need of correction'. That perception was the major impetus behind the creation of the JAAFPC.⁴

It was hoped that the JAAFPC would eliminate, or at least reduce, the number of problems that plagued the making of *Tunisian Victory*. As with the previous attempt at a joint film project, however, the JAAFPC became bogged down in inter-service and inter-Allied rivalry that characterized much of Anglo-American relations during the last year and a half of the war.⁵

The JAAFPC was created in March 1944, when the War Department in Washington requested that George Stevens, the head of the Special Coverage Unit assigned to photograph combat operations for the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF), prepare a plan for cinematic coverage of the coming invasion of France.⁶ Stevens proposed that film coverage be divided into two parts. The first would be a series of short films, approximately two reels in length, covering specific sections of the coming invasion and subsequent campaign. Stevens divided the potential coverage into eight topics:

- (a) Plan and Preparation
- (b) D-Day
- (c) 'The First Thousand Yards'
- (d) Phase one
- (e) Phase two
- (f) Phase three
- (g) Phase four
- (h) Capitulation⁷

Pursuant to War Department desires, the first of these short films, *Plan and Preparation*, was scheduled to be finished and available for release in the USA on D-Day. Stevens's draft script emphasized the importance of Anglo-American co-operation, the 'Single Instrument' as Eisenhower called it, with which the total destruction of the enemy would be achieved.⁸

In addition to the short films, Stevens also planned a larger project, tentatively entitled *Assault on the Continent*, compiled from the existing subjects 'and/or other topics as the campaign develops'. Since the invasion was a combined Allied operation, Stevens concluded his report by asking his superiors if he should proceed alone, or 'in any form of joint Anglo-American collaboration as may be directed by SHAEF'. Stevens's enquiry was not simply a desire to promote Allied unity, but came shortly after the Special Coverage Unit discovered that the British Army Film Unit was planning a similar series of films about the coming invasion and thus was made in the hopes of avoiding a potentially embarrassing diplomatic incident.⁹

Stevens's request for guidance came at a time when the lessons, and the production problems, of *Tunisian Victory* were still fresh in the propagandists' minds. The fiascos that resulted from Frank Capra's visit to London and the confusion and tension over the first Joint Anglo-American film project were lost on few. Robert Riskin, Chief of the Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information's (OWI) Motion Picture Bureau, argued that it was 'manifestly absurd, in view of the carefully-conceived plans for joint British-American execution of military campaigns, that the story of those campaigns should be told individually...'. Riskin contended that Allied propaganda efforts should mirror general military strategy and that propaganda films should be planned like any other joint campaign. Joint planning served two important purposes. The first was the appearance of Allied unity. Individually-produced films gave the impression that each nation was fighting the war alone. This was unsatisfactory because 'in neutral and allied countries, where we are striving to impress everyone with our complete unity, we fail miserably because the American and British newsreels tell individual stories'. The second and more immediate purpose involved soldier morale. Riskin believed that 'an American soldier in the United Kingdom, seeing a newsreel in which the British are winning the war singlehandedly, is ready to start a brawl with every English soldier he meets'.¹⁰

Riskin's implicit criticism of American volatility reveals several attitudes about Anglo-American relations. Even in early 1944, when it was obvious that the Allies were winning the war, concerns about Anglo-American tensions, which used to be an exclusively British occupation, had now become an issue for the Americans as well. Inherent in Riskin's remark, however, was not only a concern for the continuation of cordial Anglo-American relations, but also American jealousy that Britain might be getting more than its fair share of credit for winning the war. In order to avoid such problems and ensure fair and balanced coverage, Riskin, in conjunction with the Public Relations Office of SHAEF, ordered George Stevens to convene the first meeting of the Joint Anglo-American Film Planning Committee (JAAFPC) on 8 March 1944.¹¹

Since the JAAFPC was supposed to represent Anglo-American interests, it contained an equal number of representatives from each nation and service organization concerned with publicity. The chairmanship was held jointly by Robert Patterson, head of the OWI's London Branch, and Jack Beddington, of the British Ministry of Information's Films Division. Representatives of the Public Relations Divisions of all Allied military organizations - army, navy, and air force - were also included, as were members of the film industry. Rounding off the membership were representatives from both the United States Army Signal Corps and British Army Film Unit. The actual number of the Committee's membership was never fully determined but was certainly well over two dozen.¹²

Not surprisingly, the JAAFPC recommended that the first joint Anglo-American film should be about the coming invasion. Pursuant to this, it named George Stevens and David MacDonald, of the British Army Film Unit, co-producers of the joint film project.¹³ The two were ordered to meet and plan how best to combine the personnel from both film units 'into working teams ... for practical production'. The JAAFPC decided to discard Stevens's existing plans and begin a new co-operative project. On an ominous note, Stevens and MacDonald were told neither how long the joint film was to be, nor 'what stage of events it should conclude' in its coverage. This lack of decisive guidance from the JAAFPC's leadership set the stage for a clash of ideas between the co-producers.¹⁴

Stevens argued that a short film on the preparations necessary for the invasion, similar to his initial plan for the War Department, should be the subject of the first joint project sponsored by the JAAFPC. Later, a longer film along the lines of a *Desert Victory* or *Tunisian Victory* could be made. MacDonald, however, favoured immediately moving to production of a feature-length film that would cover events to the conclusion of the 'first phase of operations', although he did not define exactly what chronological or topical events this would cover. MacDonald apparently saw less of a need for immediate propaganda and was concerned with maintaining the high quality of film propaganda set by previous British productions.¹⁵ This initial conflict over the extent of coverage for the first of the joint film projects did not bode well for the future. As in almost all previous Anglo-American clashes, however, the Americans won, and a short film tentatively entitled *Preparation for Invasion* was again begun in late March 1944.

In addition to the Stevens-MacDonald controversy, inter-service rivalry, according to Ronald Tritton, the Committee's Secretary, also dominated the JAAFPC from the very beginning of its existence.¹⁶ During the JAAFPC's first meeting, Tritton remarked that, as usual, the British Air Ministry 'was [being] unco-operative'. The Air Ministry argued that previous official films 'slighted' the role of the Royal Air Force in every other major campaign.¹⁷

The Air Ministry was also apparently jealous that army film personnel always seemed to dominate official productions. Indeed, upon learning the identities of the co-producers of the first joint films, both members of army film units, the Air Ministry demanded that a 'neutral producer' be named. It apparently believed that a 'neutral producer' would be less likely to ignore the role of the Air Force in the coming invasion. Although the JAAFPC held fast to its initial appointment, the infighting over such a trivial matter seemed to characterize the Committee's work.¹⁸ In an even gloomier tone, Tritton also noticed that within a month of its formation the JAAFPC already had several sub-committees meeting to discuss problems, further confusing issues that needed to be addressed quickly.¹⁹

The situation in London was rapidly deteriorating into inter-service infighting. It became even more intense when, in May 1944, the JAAFPC found that it had problems with Washington as well. The War Department had somehow reached the conclusion that the creation of the JAAFPC had removed all editorial control of campaign films from the American military, a situation not at all to the liking of America's military leaders. In response to this perceived threat, the War Department refused to accept finished films emanating from London until it had a chance to approve of their cinematic content.

The War Department justified its stance by arguing that 'the Committee *UAAFPC*, predominantly British, proposes to dictate the use of film material and personnel furnished by the United States and to dictate what combat pictures may be shown to the American public'. The War Department was obviously worried, as Riskin was earlier, that official films made under British domination would present a lopsided view of events and exaggerate the importance of the British military contribution. Washington continued to object, arguing that it was 'the function of the War Department to decide the best use of combat films and the function of SHAEF to see that proper films are taken'.²⁰ Somehow the War Department had reached the conclusion that the JAAFPC was under 'foreign' control and accordingly was a threat to the impartial coverage of the coming invasion.

Shortly after the initial War Department memorandum, the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, George Marshall, wrote directly to Eisenhower to voice his displeasure over the JAAFPC. Marshall accused Eisenhower of relinquishing editorial control of Allied film production to a committee dominated by the British. Marshall was also offended to discover that the British would apparently 'receive all combat footage, screen it, and select what they think should be released' to both Britain and the USA. Marshall informed Eisenhower that were this situation to become known it would 'have [the] most undesirable repercussions in this country'. In order to prevent this, Marshall insisted that 'no film covering the operation of American troops be released in London until your headquarters has been notified that it has been released in the United States'. He ended his harangue by noting that the first of the joint films, *Preparation for Invasion*, was apparently already far behind schedule, a sad commentary on the Committee's effectiveness.²¹

Eisenhower's response to Marshall incorporated a defense not only of the JAAFPC but of the very importance of Anglo-American film projects in general. His first objective was to disabuse the American Chief of Staff of the idea that the Committee was 'dominated' by the British. Indeed, Eisenhower provided Marshall with a breakdown of the membership of the JAAFPC, demonstrating to him that each Ally and service department was equally represented. The SHAEF Commander also argued that 'prior to the committee's formation, motion pictures had been produced showing only British or only American participation'. The primary reason for establishing the JAAFPC was to ensure that a properly balanced pictorial reflection 'of each Ally's contribution would be told in a fair and proper perspective to the whole'. Eisenhower continued:

The harmony necessary for successful military operations would thus be brought home to the peoples of our respective nations through the medium of joint films. It has always been my policy to emphasize this teamwork, and I feel that great harm can come from independent pictures of exclusive British participation shown in Britain, or in America of exclusively American participation.²²

As to Marshall's second point, Eisenhower noted that *Preparation for Invasion* was behind schedule not because of the vagaries of the JAAFPC, but because of structural problems inherent in combat film production. A full accounting of these difficulties was forwarded to Marshall in a separate memorandum.

The memorandum on the production problems of *Preparation for Invasion* cited four major factors delaying the film's completion. The first two were simply structural problems. Production on the film was stopped for four weeks by the Public Relations Office of the European Theatre of Operations while the advisability of establishing the JAAFPC was debated. Time was also lost in establishing a working liaison with the British to begin actual co-production. However, the major factor delaying production was the discussion between the co-producers and the JAAFPC to 'determine [the] length and subject matter that the committee desired to control'. In addition to the structural constraints, the problem was compounded by the War Department in Washington which withheld the necessary technicians and material needed to improve the speed of production.²³

Eisenhower and his staff assured Marshall that most of these problems were solved and that the film would be ready by the end of May. He concluded with a plea for the continuation of the joint film project by arguing that 'any evidence of disunity at this point might go further than the subject of films'.²⁴

Following the Marshall-Eisenhower exchange, members of the Signal Corps and Special Coverage Unit worked out a compromise with Washington on the major points of conflict. Colonel Curtis Mitchell, representing Eisenhower and the JAAFPC, negotiated an agreement with General Surles, head of the Signal Corps Photographic Section, by 'phone on 19 May. Mitchell promised Surles that the JAAFPC would serve as an 'advisory' body, making recommendations about film coverage, such as the pre-invasion film currently under production. When a film topic was agreed upon, the JAAFPC would first relay its decision to Washington and London for approval. Only after receiving the necessary approval would the Special Coverage Unit and British Army Film Unit appoint the necessary personnel to begin production. Mitchell claimed that this system was just the same as when 'Capra started ... and when you worked out the arrangement with Brendan Bracken'. Unlike then, however, the Allies were not attempting to combine existing films but to start afresh on a joint project. This arrangement did not prevent either the War Department or London from producing a similar picture unilaterally. Mitchell told Surles: 'We are completely free to act without them, but we can act with them, and thereby insure ourselves of all the film and all the co-operation that we could possibly expect out of the friendliest sort of relationship.'²⁵

As for Washington's concern about loss of editorial control, Mitchell assured Surles that the Committee's decision to make a film did not automatically bind either side to accepting the finished product. The Signal Corps representative, who, after Mitchell left, would be J.B.L. Lawrence, would not commit the War Department to distribute any future joint project in the USA until after the Signal Corps High Command had been consulted. As for the nearly completed *Preparation for Invasion*, the JAAFPC promised to send the finished film to Washington on two separate reels, one containing the film and the other the soundtrack. The material forwarded to the War Department would be the already-approved British release print of the film. The War Department could then review the film in order to make the changes it felt necessary for American release.²⁶

Although the compromise satisfied the War Department, it had, in one quick stroke, destroyed the major purpose behind the formation of the JAAFPC. The release of separate American and British prints of the film directly contravened the aim of the Committee to show Allied campaigns from a truly integrated perspective. After only two months of operation, the JAAFPC was stripped of its sovereignty, that is, its ability to act independently of interference from either Washington or London. Any future film projects would have to be approved not only by the JAAFPC, but by all the service organizations.

Despite the lack of co-operation from Washington, the JAAFPC was able to finish and release what it hoped would be the first of its series of short campaign films. *Eve of Battle*, the release title of *Preparation for Invasion*, was a 19-minute film detailing the preparations leading up to the actual landings in France. Although it was not available for release on D-Day itself, it was previewed in both America and Britain in late June 1944. The film contained some 'especially fine material of the air offensive', perhaps making the Air Ministry happy, as well as detailed scenes of troop training.²⁷ An ironic twist was the listing of David MacDonald as the primary producer, even though initially he had been against the making of this film.²⁸

In the aftermath of D-Day, the JAAFPC was still committed to the continuation of joint film projects. Indeed, on the day before the Normandy landings it had proposed, and received approval for, the making of '1 feature-length picture of the joint operation now in preparation'. This film would be along the lines of that proposed by MacDonald back in March 1944. In making its recommendations, the JAAFPC urged that 'speed is of vital importance, facilities and direction and production must be

superlative to measure up to the historical importance of the assignment'.²⁹ The JAAFPC asked Washington to refrain from the production of any films that might overlap with the joint film project. The War Department, not surprisingly, refused to agree, citing the enormous number of short films and newsreels that would contain information about the invasion and the campaign.³⁰ In the matter of the proposed feature-length film, however, the JAAFPC did agree to abide by the existing agreement with Washington. The system of communication that was established was so complex that it almost certainly guaranteed that the one thing that could not be achieved was speed of production.³¹

By the time the JAAFPC had worked out its difficulties with Washington, the summer was well advanced and D-Day was fast becoming a memory. As British and American cameramen continued their work, the JAAFPC continued its deliberations on the nature of future joint Anglo-American film projects. R.E. Dupuy suggested that a joint Anglo-American film must show the steps leading to the creation of the Allied Expeditionary Force, the creation of an Allied command, as well as its planning, preparation, assault and ultimate victory over the enemy. Dupuy argued that the fact that the joint film was a historical document 'to be shown to the Allied and neutral peoples ... makes it essential that it should stress, in broad and balanced outline, the joint efforts of the Allied nations'.³² Obviously many officials in SHAEF still had high hopes and expectations of the JAAFPC.

Some time in the early autumn, the Committee concluded that a film exclusively about the invasion was no longer a valid subject for propaganda and, therefore, decided to expand the scope of its coverage. It seems that initially the JAAFPC hoped to extend the coverage to keep pace with campaign developments. This would, however, place the film-makers in an impossible situation. The increase in the scope of coverage meant that the joint film project constantly required further updates. As the battle for France developed and Allied operations spread out, the film-makers found it virtually impossible to complete their work.

In late October 1944, therefore, the JAAFPC decided to change the course of joint film propaganda radically. The making of a series of short campaign films along the lines of *Eve of Battle* was abandoned. The Committee also discarded the idea of making several feature-length films on specific sections of the campaign against Nazi Germany. Instead, in October 1944, the JAAFPC decided to concentrate on the making of a single joint film covering everything from D-Day to the eventual fall of Germany. Two representatives of the Committee, Lt-Col. Newman and Captain Fox, travelled to Washington to secure War Department approval of the decision. Once Washington and London had agreed to the new direction for joint film propaganda, all that was necessary was to name the co-producers.³³ In November, the British named Carol Reed, who had just finished his feature film *The Way Ahead*, to represent its interests, while the Americans appointed Garson Kanin.³⁴

From the beginning of this final phase of the joint film project, which lasted from November 1944 to July 1945, American officials interfered continuously. Although General Surles of the Signal Corps concurred with the JAAFPC that the film should begin with D-Day and end with the fall of Germany, he expected that at least one third of the picture would describe the actual process of invasion, breakthrough and the subsequent campaign through Brittany. He demanded this format rather than the Committee's plan to devote the first third of the picture to the preparation and mobilization for D-Day. Washington also felt that it was more important that the film should 'tell the public how the Army operates, rather than merely showing its operations or explaining, for the hundredth time, why we are in the war'.³⁵

Surles felt that these conditions were necessary because 'these things happened so rapidly that even the splendid coverage provided by the American press did not fully tell the story'. He apparently saw the joint picture more as a vehicle for bringing the American military achievement before the American public than as a means of showing Allied unity. In order to ensure what he considered 'proper' coverage, and incidentally to maintain War Department influence on the JAAFPC, Surles argued that a Signal Corps

Official should be dispatched to London. He felt that a SHAEF officer would be unsuitable to represent the War Department because SHAEF represented 'the entire Allied Expeditionary Forces' and not the War Department.³⁶

Filming for the joint project continued even as the deliberations about its editorial content raged. The major technical problem continued to be the lack of permanent personnel. Throughout November-December 1944, key technical personnel were reassigned at critical moments of operation. The JAAFPC, lobbying for a continuance of the services of skilled technicians, promised to have a rough cut of the film finished by 1 February 1945 if only these technicians and film-makers would not be reassigned.³⁷ This promise was made when it was believed that the end of the war in Europe was only several weeks away. Naturally, this optimistic assessment, both of the time to completion of the film as well as of the war itself, was altered after the last great German counter-offensive of the war. In the early months of 1945, after the Battle of the Bulge had been won, the JAAFPC revised its tentative date of completion.

In February 1945, the JAAFPC promised to have a rough cut of the film completed by 19 March, in order to screen it for the 'representatives of the War Office, War Department and Supreme Headquarters'.³⁸ It fulfilled its promise. By the middle of March, the basic material of the joint picture, less the final stages of the campaign, was finished. The most difficult stage was therefore to follow, as the JAAFPC attempted to mould the final cut into a form that was suitable for the three masters - Washington, London and SHAEF - it served. The problem was even more acute because the JAAFPC was attempting to make a film 'from an entirely new angle'. Instead of producing 'a chronological, historical documentary', the JAAFPC planned to make a film about 'the soldiers themselves'.³⁹ Although no paper trail apparently exists to document the processes that led to this decision, it marks a fundamental change from joint films focusing on the strategic nature of the alliance to a film that concentrates on human interest.

After the rough cut of the joint film was previewed by service representatives in March, the actual revisions to the film began. The final months of production were filled with inter-service squabbles over the amount of coverage each branch, and each nation, would receive. For example, the Air Ministry continued to make an issue about the extent to which its activities were included in the joint picture.⁴⁰ In addition, the War Department expressed concern about the balance of coverage. Curtis Mitchell, speaking for that department, wondered 'just how far the Committee will go in balancing the National interests'. He noted, however, that at the present moment, the joint film showed American activities 'to such advantage that there may be considerable criticism from the British public'. This bias, however, did not seem to concern Mitchell greatly.⁴¹

The major problem facing the JAAFPC in the last months of production was, ironically, the War Department's relentless quest to correct small factual inaccuracies in the joint film. Although the position might seem a repetition of the Air Ministry's attitude towards *Eagle Squadron* three years earlier, in fact it was radically different. Mitchell argued that

... in producing a motion picture to be shown to the citizens who supported and financed that effort, it is of the utmost importance that accuracy, complete and total, be the guiding star of the producers. It is not enough to be brilliant, or to be well-intentioned, or even partly right. One must be completely right, in fact and symbol. Only a film that is completely right can hope to contribute to Allied unity.⁴²

Mitchell and the War Department actually used the issue of factual accuracy as a means of dominating the editorial content of the joint picture.

For example, Mitchell found that the section of the film describing the industrial build-up necessary for the invasion was 'almost exclusively British'. This was unacceptable, due to the 'great industrial achievement of the United States in manufacturing material for use by our armies in France and Germany'. Mitchell argued that since the USA had supplied most of the material, the greater part of this section of the film should be devoted to American industry.⁴³

In a purely quantitative sense Mitchell was correct; American might did predominate. Yet if quantitative guidelines were the controlling factor, over 70 per cent of the film would have to be devoted to American arms, hardly qualifying it as a joint picture. Although Mitchell did cite several instances where the British military's role was greater than that of the Americans, they usually covered such activities as reconnaissance, an area not likely to be considered threatening to America's image as the dominant military partner.⁴⁴

In these circumstances it was truly a credit to their combined talents that Kanin and Reed were able to produce such a coherent and brilliantly edited film as *The True Glory*. The final rough cut of the film was scheduled to be previewed by the JAAFPC on 18 May at the Ministry of Information headquarters in London. It included a hurried addition of scenes from Buchenwald and Bergen Belsen, as well as ruined Berlin. True to form, the JAAFPC squabbled over the title, settling on *The True Glory* only after prolonged and bitter debate.⁴⁵

The True Glory follows the story of the Allied armies from the Normandy invasion to the fall of Berlin. General Eisenhower introduces the film, claiming it is a tribute to the men of the Grand Alliance who fought in the great battles during the last year of the war. Much of the footage is stirring, and frightening, in its intensity. Unlike previous campaign films that sanitized war, *The True Glory* contains scenes of Allied tragedy, such as a C-47 transport plane crashing as it disgorged paratroopers, to demonstrate to the viewer the human tragedy of war. Perhaps some of the most powerful scenes were the liberation of two of the death camps, Buchenwald and Bergen Belsen. The images of the emaciated survivors were sure to convince the audience of the justness of the Allied cause. As with *Tunisian Victory*, the narration was supposedly spoken by 'common soldiers'; however, prominent actors were used. The animated maps show the ever-widening extent of Allied conquest, each nation represented by a flag, as the final, inexorable defeat of Germany comes ever closer.

The film was pronounced completed in early June 1945. The finished copy was scheduled to arrive in Washington in early July, where Columbia Pictures was selected to distribute the film in the USA, Canada and South America.⁴⁶ Before the film arrived, however, a final problem, or perhaps commentary on Anglo-American affairs, developed. In July 1945, the War Department directed that the title cards of the film, which read 'The Governments of Great Britain and the United States Present', should be reversed before the film was cleared for release in America.⁴⁷ A compromise was apparently reached, as the next title sequence read 'Distributed by the US Office of War Information and the Ministry of Information'. That this last bit of pettiness was solved in this way was likely due more to exhaustion rather than any noble feelings of Allied unity.

The True Glory was finally released to audiences in Britain and the USA in August 1945. It went on to win an Oscar for the best documentary of the year and received critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. Yet, ultimately, the joint film project must be regarded as a failure. Not only did it take the Joint Anglo-American Film Planning Committee more than 17 months to complete its masterpiece, but it must also be recognized that the path that eventually led to the making of *The True Glory* did not reflect any great vision on the part of the JAAFPC, or indeed, of any of the publicity organizations from which it

drew its membership.

Instead of making policy and holding to it, as Eisenhower and SHAEF managed to do, the JAAFPC allowed itself to be bullied by the various Allied governments. If SHAEF represented the combined military interests of the Allies, then the JAAFPC should have served the same purpose in propaganda. Instead it became a political football, bounced and kicked around by Allied governments. That it still produced a brilliant film was a tribute to Kanin and Reed.

Washington's domination of the JAAFPC, primarily its ability to maintain editorial control, was indicative of the state of Anglo-American relations during the final year and a half of the war. The sheer extent of America's industrial might, combined with the total of American troops, made the final victory over Nazi Germany possible. British interests rapidly became dependent upon American goodwill. Joint film propaganda, committed to making films about the Allied war effort from an integrated viewpoint, depended upon Allied selflessness. Unfortunately, by the beginning of 1944, once it was obvious that the Allies would win the war, American propagandists became intensely jealous of their British allies. The result was an ironic denouement for the British who, as in the case of *Tunisian Victory*, feared that they would receive no credit for their accomplishments. As the final victory approached, American propagandists became less willing to share the glory and triumph with Britain, a sad commentary on Anglo-American relations at the end of the second world war.

NOTES

1. Copies of *The True Glory* can be found in the Motion Picture Branch of the National Archives, Washington, DC. It can also be viewed at the Imperial War Museum's Department of Film.
2. Memorandum to Assistant Chief of Staff from General Frank A. Allen, Jr, 15 December 1944. Special Staff, Public Relations Division, SHAEF, Joint Anglo-American Film Planning Committee (hereafter JAAFPC) File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, National Archives, Washington, DC (hereafter NA).
3. See Frederic Krome, 'Tunisian Victory and Anglo-American Film Propaganda in World War II', *The Historian*, 58, 3 (Spring 1996), 517-29; for another version see Tony Aldgate, 'Mr Capra Goes to War: Frank Capra, the British Army Film Unit, and Anglo-American travails in the production of *Tunisian Victory*', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television*, 11, 1 (1991).
4. Memorandum to Assistant Chief of Staff from General Frank A. Allen, Jr, 15 December 1944. JAAFPC, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
5. Krome, 'Tunisian Victory', op. cit., passim.
6. Memorandum to General Davis on Film Production, 17 May 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA. George Stevens (1904-75) worked as a cameraman on the Laurel and Hardy comedies before directing *Gunga Din*. He joined the Signal Corps in 1942 and eventually was made head of SHAEF's Special Coverage Unit, which was responsible for producing combat documentaries of Allied operations in Europe.
7. Major George C. Stevens to Lt-Col. J.B.L. Lawrence, 3 March 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.

10. Robert Riskin to General Robert A. McClure (Chief of Publicity and Political Warfare, SHAEF), 31 March 1944. SHAEF, Special Coverage Unit File, RG 331, Decimal 062.2, Box 3, NA.
11. Memorandum on Organization of Joint Anglo-American Film Project as a Separate Unit, 15 December 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
12. Memorandum to Assistant Chief of Staff, SHAEF, Organization of the Joint Anglo-American Film Project as a Separate Unit, 15 December 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
13. David MacDonald (born 1904 in Helensburgh, Scotland), worked in Hollywood with Cecil B. De Mille from 1929 to 1936. He was a Major in the British Army Film Unit during the war and was the primary producer of *Desert Victory*.
14. Memorandum by George Stevens, March 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
15. Memorandum by Stevens to Lawrence, March 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
16. Tritton, a civilian, was named Publicity Director by the War Office in 1940. In this capacity he was responsible for serving as liaison between the military and the newsreel companies. He was named Joint Secretary to the JAAFPC on 8 March 1944. The American Secretary was not named for several weeks. See Clive Coultass, *Images for Battle: British Films during the Second World War* (Delaware 1990), 60.
17. See Entry for 8 March 1944, Ronald Tritton Diary, Department of Documents, Imperial War Museum (hereafter referred to as Tritton Diary). His diary provides the only major British source on the JAAFPC.
18. Ibid. Upon hearing the Air Ministry request for a neutral producer, a committee member remarked, 'What do they mean, a Swiss?'. In all likelihood what they meant was someone not affiliated with the British or American army.
19. Entries for 8-10 May 1944, Tritton Diary, IWM.
20. Memorandum for the Chief of Staff by Major-General H.C. Ingles, Chief Signal Officer, 11 May 1944. Records of the Chief of Staff, RG 165, Decimal 062.2, Box 133, NA.
21. George Marshall to Eisenhower, 12 May 1944. Records of the Joint Chief of Staff, RG 165, Decimal 062.2, Box 133, NA.
22. Eisenhower to Marshall, May 1944?, SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
23. Memorandum to General Davis, 17 May 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
24. Eisenhower to Marshall, May 1944?, SHAEF, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.
25. Colonel Curtis Mitchell to General A.D. Surles, Record of a Telephone Conversation on 19 May 1944 at 2304 hrs British Time. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA, 1-3.
26. Ibid., 3-5. In order to allow easy re-editing, one reel did not have a soundtrack.

27 Coultass, *Images for Battle*, op. cit., 164. I am unable to discover why the working title of the film was changed for its release.

28 See the catalogue entry in Nicholas Pronay and Francis Thorpe, *British Official Films in the Second World War: A Descriptive Catalogue* (Los Angeles 1980), 155.

29. Eisenhower and the JAAFPC to Surles, 5 June 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.

30. Surles to Mitchell, 8 June 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA. Specifically, Washington claimed that it was concerned that if they agreed to the JAAFPC request then the Army-Navy Screen Magazine, a bi-weekly newsreel, would not be able to show any of the events.

31. JAAFPC to Surles, 5 June 1944. On the complexity of the communication system, see 'Notification of War Department of US Aspects of Joint Anglo-American Film Committee and other Similar Activities', 15 May 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.

32. Memorandum for Brigadier Turner by Colonel R. Ernest Dupuy, 26 July 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA. Dupuy was the Acting Chief of the Public Relations Division.

33. Allen to Lord Burnham (Director of Public Relations, War Office), 24 October 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.

34. Carol Reed (born 1906), had worked as an actor/screenwriter before moving to directing. During the war he was assigned to the British Army Film Unit. Garson Kanin (born 1912), worked as a producer in Hollywood in the 1930s. During the war he made several films for the Office of Emergency Management. See JAAFPC File, Correspondence of 14 December 1944, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA. Although Nicholas Wapshott argues that Reed and Kanin were appointed joint producers before D-Day, JAAFPC records do not contain any reference to either man before November 1944. See Nicholas Wapshott, *The Man Between: A Biography of Carol Reed* (New York 1994).

35. Surles to General Frank Allen, 24 November 1944; and Memorandum to General Frank A. Allen, Jr (director, Public Relations Division), 7 December 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.

36. Surles to General Frank Allen, 24 November 1944. SHAEF, JAAFPC, RG331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.

37. Memorandum from Public Relations Division by Edward M. Strode, SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.

38. Memorandum by Edward M. Strode, 15 February 1945. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.

39. Colonel Newman to Colonel Curtis Mitchell, 15 February 1945. SHAEF, JAAFPC File, RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA.

40. Willoughby de Broke (Air Ministry) to Group Captain G.W. Houghton (SHAEF, Air Staff), 4 April 1945. RG 111, M1211 File, Motion Picture Branch, NA.

41. 41, 30 March 1945. RG 111, M1211 File, Motion Picture Branch, NA.

42. Mitchell to the Joint Anglo-American Film Committee, 30 March 1945. RG 111, M1211 File, Motion Picture Branch, NA, 1.

43. Ibid., 1.

44. Ibid., 2. Another example was the assault on Holland, which was made by two American and one British Divisions. The film, according to Mitchell, seemed to show the British predominating.

45. See the correspondence in the JAAFPC File for 23 April, 9 May, and 12 May 1945. RG 331, Decimal 334, Box 11, NA. For information on the fighting over the title, see Coultass, *Images for Battle*, op. cit., 183-4. *The True Glory* was part of a prayer Drake supposedly wrote before the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

O Lord God, when Thou givest to thy servants to endeavour any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning, but continuing of the same, until it be thoroughly finished, which yieldeth the true glory.

46. Taylor Mills (Chief, Bureau of Motion Pictures, OWI) to Thomas Baird (British Library of Information), 18 June 1945. Entry 265, Box 1447, British Information Services File, RG 208, Office of War Information, Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland.

47. Gordon Swarthout (Pictorial Branch) to Ralph Nelson, 18 July 1945. RG 111, Motion Picture Branch, File M1211, NA. Complaints were also voiced about the 'hells' and 'damns' in the film. See Memorandum to Chief Pictorial Branch, Bureau of Public Relations, 20 July 1945. RG 111, Motion Picture Branch, M 1211 File, NA.