

Italian Campaign

THE WAR

ITALIAN CAMPAIGN—PENETRATION BY THE
CANADIAN CORPS OF HITLER LINE

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. L. RALSTON (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I may be permitted to make reference to-day to something which is, I am sure, in the minds of every Canadian, and that is the spectacular advance which has been made by Canadian troops on the western flank of the 8th Army drive.

Hon. members will recall that, after crossing the Rapido river, very stiff resistance was encountered, and a cessation occurred in the advance for something like two days. In the last thirty-six hours there has been what is regarded, I believe, as a brilliant advance of something like six miles, in which the Canadian troops have aided in the capture of Pontecorvo, which had proved of considerable difficulty for some time. As a matter of fact Pontecorvo is one of the important communication points in the Hitler line. Instead of making a frontal attack, the Canadians cut in behind Pontecorvo and breached the line on a five-mile front. I cannot as yet say anything with regard to casualties. I know there has been severe resistance; many temporary obstacles, mines and the like, have been encountered, and quite a number of prisoners have been taken. The advance is still continuing and is well across the Melfa river, six miles from the start thirty-six hours ago, and about twelve miles from the Rapido. At the present time Canadian troops are spearheading the advance up the Liri valley.

Members of this house and Canadians all across the dominion will unite in pride and satisfaction at this fine achievement of the Canadian corps in Italy. I am sure it is of more than passing significance that the operation took place on Empire day and Victoria day.

I have word just now with regard to operations between the Anzio beachhead and the left flank of the 5th Army. Word has come in—although not yet confirmed, I think it is authentic—that the Anzio beachhead troops and the 5th Army have joined forces, and that on the Adriatic side there are signs that the enemy is moving back on the right flank.

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Leader of the Opposition): May I join the minister in expressing the pride which I think everyone in Canada has in the splendid achievement of our Canadian forces in Italy. May I say also to the minister that we in parliament

[Mr. Howe.]

hope that from time to time he or the Prime Minister will see his way clear to giving us reports on such important engagements as those which have just been mentioned by the minister. I think it is proper that parliament should have such information; for we in this chamber are of course extremely interested in the progress of these developments.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

CONSIDERATION OF PRIVATE BILLS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. GROTE STIRLING (Yale): May I ask the government whether it will give consideration to the taking up of private bills to-morrow evening from eight to nine? There is standing in my name a bill which is most important and which should be proceeded with if possible.

Hon. T. A. CRERAR (Minister of Mines and Ressources): I am informed that it is the intention to have these bills considered on Monday evening.

MOUNTED POLICE

ARRESTS IN CONNECTION WITH DEATH OF
GEORGE GUÉNETTE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. LIGUORI LACOMBE (Laval-Two-Mountains): Mr. Speaker, I gave notice to the Minister of Justice that I would ask this afternoon the three following questions. First:

(Translation): Has the Department of Justice been informed that members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have been arrested on the order of the attorney general of Quebec, and charged with manslaughter in connection with the death of young Georges Guénette, of St. Lambert de Lévis?

Hon. LOUIS S. ST. LAURENT (Minister of Justice) (Translation): I have been advised by the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, on Friday last, May 19, that a complaint had been lodged against a constable of the mounted police and against a special constable employed by that body since December, 1943. The complaint was lodged by a member of the provincial police. We have no official information to the effect that he was acting on the instructions of the attorney general of the province of Quebec, but we have reason to believe that such is the case. The preliminary hearing had first been postponed till to-day and I understand that it has been further adjourned to June 1.