

Note this:

They were not failures to fight courageously to the death on the part of the rank and file and the officers in charge of the attacks—

Is that General Roberts or not?

—but they were due to incompetent leadership in the high command.

My hon. friend said that he did not mean the high command at all. I leave the house and this country to decide what he meant when he made that reference. I submit it was a loose and irresponsible statement, a statement which should not have been made, in view of the gravity of the subject which he was discussing.

Mr. BRUCE: I should like to say a word or two in regard to what the minister has said.

The CHAIRMAN: Order. The hon. member for Fort William yielded his place to the hon. member for York-Sunbury, and I believe that the hon. member for Fort William should now have the right to speak.

Mr. McIVOR: Mr. Chairman, we are having a fine time to-night; it has been a real battle. I have a request to make of the Minister of National Defence, but before making it, I wish to pay my tribute to the outstanding qualities of the minister. He has more grace in his heart than I could possibly have, because when a man will point his finger and shake his fist, I expect he means business. I would say to these people who find fault with our cabinet ministers that they should throw down their hammer and take up a horn, and they would get farther.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The hon. member would like us to quit on the job.

Mr. McIVOR: Let me remind His Majesty's Loyal Opposition that when they were seeking for the best brains of all Canada to lead a national government, the Minister of National Defence was the man they thought best suited for the position. I have found in all my relations with him that he acts as a real gentleman, and back of it all he was a soldier and does not need to take a back seat to anybody.

The only thing I wish to ask is a request which comes from a few folks who are neither wives nor mothers, in homes that lost boys who made the supreme sacrifice. It is this, that an aunt who was a guardian, or an older sister, the father, or the nearest of kin in the home, should receive the silver cross when the mother or the wife is not there. I suggest that when a boy goes overseas and does not return, the father, or even the brother or

[Mr. Ralston.]

sister, would like to have that little silver cross in remembrance of the son or brother who will not come back. I make this request on behalf of a number of people who asked me to do so, and I hope the minister responsible for supplying these decorations will give it favourable consideration.

Mr. BRUCE: The minister stated a moment ago, on the strength of the references which he read, that I could not have meant what is called the commander of the military force, who, I assume, is the man in charge of operations. What I made clear, and what I thought was clear, is that when I said, "they were not failures to fight courageously to the death on the part of the rank and file and the officers in charge of the attacks" was "those in charge of the attacks on shore." These men were fighting on shore; the commander was on his ship in the sea, some little distance from shore. I think it is quite clear that my reference was to the men fighting on shore and trying to get into Dieppe.

Mr. RALSTON: Why not say so?

Mr. BRUCE: The minister made another reference, namely, to my quotation of Mr. Blair Fraser, whom he spoke of as a reporter on the *Gazette*. As a matter of fact, it was not Mr. Blair Fraser's own opinion I was quoting; it was his opinion after revising the very book from which the minister himself quoted. After reading that book Mr. Fraser reviewed it, and his opinion was as indicated in the remarks I made a few moments ago.

I do not wish to prolong this. I would just say this in conclusion, that I would never have thought of bringing up the question of Dieppe had it not been that the Minister of National Defence spoke of it as the turning point in the war. I thought that was an extravagant statement—

Mr. RALSTON: I did not say anything of the kind.

Mr. BRUCE: —and the statements he made would appear to try to interpret a failure as a victory.

Mr. KNOWLES: I hope I shall not be out of order if I refer to something under the heading of "pay and allowances," since that is the item before us. I would like to direct the attention of the Minister of National Defence to article 102, paragraph (c) of the assigned pay and dependents' allowance regulations. This paragraph deals with