

he was talking about. As I see it, he certainly took in a lot of territory just to mention General Roberts when he used the term "high command".

May I deal just for a moment with what my hon. friend has read. He has quoted a correspondent or some newspaper man on the *Montreal Gazette* as the basis for his conclusion that Dieppe was a failure. I prefer to quote the book on which he has relied, namely, "Combined Operations" and on Mr. Churchill, in the passage which I read and which appears on pages 3009 and 3010 of *Hansard*. He will not find there any indication that Dieppe was a failure. I think I was frank with the committee and with the house when I stated that from the point of view of strategic reconnaissance and strategic objectives, the report showed unmistakably that Dieppe had achieved its objectives. On the other hand, I said just as clearly that I did not claim that tactically Dieppe was a success from the point of local operations. My hon. friend still adheres to his conclusion, and apparently he does not take back the words "tragic failure". He treats the whole operation as being accurately described as a tragic failure. I shall not take up the time of the committee to read again what I have already placed on *Hansard*, but I commend those passages to the committee and to the people of this country as showing just exactly what Dieppe accomplished.

Not the least of those accomplishments was something which I did not mention, something which I think up to that time in the war had not been accomplished or had not been demonstrated. I refer to the absolute cooperation and coordination between the three arms of the service, the navy, the army and the air force. Up to that time no operation in the war had demonstrated that such cooperation was possible. That feature of Dieppe, apart from the matters which I mention, it seems to me is of the greatest importance and will have the greatest attention by those who are planning operations of this kind in the future.

With regard to General Roberts, the hon. member cites page 135 and takes that as his foundation for his charge of incompetent leadership. The passage he read was:

By half-past six in the morning, the force commanders on H.M.S. *Calpe* . . .

Mind you, that was not General Roberts alone. With him were the naval commander and a representative of the air commander. The three of them were together on the same ship. I quote again:

By half-past six in the morning, the force commanders on H.M.S. *Calpe* were well aware that the situation was not developing as well

[Mr. Ralston.]

as had been hoped. No word had come from the Royal Regiment at Puits or from No. 3 Commando at Berneval. On the other hand—

Here I pause to say this, that in military operations, as I think my hon. friend knows, the man on the ground has to make decisions quickly and on the best information he can get, and he is not chargeable with negligence if he makes such decisions as a reasonable man would make having regard to the knowledge which he had. I continue:

On the other hand the situation at Pourville, where the South Saskatchewan Regiment and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada were engaged, appeared not unfavourable. It was known, too, that No. 4 Commando had landed successfully at Vasterival. The military force commander decided that the time had come to make use of his reserves. They consisted, in the first place, of the Fusiliers Mont-Royal, a famous French-Canadian regiment. At that moment, the fire on the eastern half of the main beach in front of Dieppe had slackened somewhat. It seemed to Major-General Roberts that if the Essex Scottish could be reinforced, they would be able to capture the vital eastern headland, especially now that they had tanks to help them, for he had just received a message to say that they were ashore.

It was under these circumstances that General Roberts did what any commander would generally do who finds the operation is not going completely to his satisfaction. He called upon his reserves. The committee will realize that that is exactly what reserves are for. If the job can be done with the task forces allotted, that is one thing. The reserves are there for the very purpose of assisting in a situation where the operation is not going entirely according to plan, and General Roberts accordingly sent in his reserves, the Fusiliers Mont-Royal. It says later:

Like everyone else on board the ships, he could see but little. Dieppe was shrouded in smoke behind which the battle spluttered and rumbled. It seemed to the military force commander that, now the Casino was captured—

That was on the front.

—and the tanks were over the esplanade, there was still a good chance that he might seize the town. At that time, he did not know that the Essex Scottish and the Fusiliers Mont-Royal had been unable to subdue the eastern headland, but he knew that it was being attacked. There was a reasonable prospect, or so it appeared, that the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, if reinforced, would be able to capture the western headland. The Royal Marine Commando was accordingly sent in to help them to do so.

Does the hon. member or the committee find anything in that which indicates incompetent leadership? Is my hon. friend prepared to put himself in the place of General Roberts on that ship, in consultation with the other two commanders of the force, and say