

that the country, as well as labour and this house would expect, at a session of parliament dealing with labour questions, that there should be in the House of Commons the minister who, above all other ministers, ought to be responsible for the policies which are to be brought down, the minister who would be in a position to answer all questions respecting these policies that might be addressed to him. Already this afternoon I have had occasion to ask the government an important question bearing on the very purpose for which this session has been called, and we have been told by the Prime Minister that he regrets that he has not the knowledge, but that he will try to give the information at some other time. I say that is not treating parliament fairly, and it is not treating the country fairly, that we should not have in this house at this time, when we are dealing with labour questions, a Minister of Labour sitting immediately opposite.

I take no exception to the fact that my hon. friend chooses some, or at least one, of his ministers from the other house; it is entirely within his right so to do, but I would draw his attention to the fact that the gentleman whom he selected to fill the position of Minister of Labour never has been elected by popular vote to any legislative assembly, and that being a member of the Senate he will not be expected to appear before the electorate to answer with respect to labour policies in the manner in which ministers of the crown who hold seats in this house will be expected to answer.

There is another omission, I must say, which is equally singular in connection with a session of parliament which has been called to deal with large expenditures of public moneys and especially with the tariff. I refer to the omission of a Minister of Finance, except as that minister is represented in the person of the Prime Minister himself. If there were need at any time for a minister of finance holding that portfolio on his own account, surely that moment is the present. My hon. friend has on his shoulders as Prime Minister and leader of the government just about as much as any man could wish to carry. I am not at all surprised that he evidently was taken by surprise at the time he was called upon to form an administration, but I do say that when he was asked by His Excellency the Governor General to form a government he owed it to those who were to be his colleagues, to this parliament and to the country to have selected

someone other than himself for the position of Minister of Finance. As I have said, the portfolio of finance is an all-important position in the government at any and every time, but it is particularly important at this present time when in order to make good a deluge of promises showered like manna from the skies, we may expect a perfect orgy of expenditures and consequent depletion of the treasury.

My hon. friend holds at the present time the positions of Prime Minister, President of the Council, Secretary of State for External Affairs and Minister of Finance. He is the leader of the House of Commons, and as the leader of the government, he has as well other duties to perform. I say to him that he will find that any attempt at monopolizing the offices of the crown, or for that matter monopoly in any form, whether it relates to finance, business administration or affairs of state, is something which will not be congenial to the people of this country however congenial it may be to himself. May I say further that the Mussolini touch in matters of politics may be all very well, but even though our climate is a little more rigorous than that of Italy, he will discover it is neither good for his own health nor for the health of the people he represents.

If the matter were not serious, Mr. Speaker, there would be a Gilbertian element of comedy about it. It reminds one of the Mikado, where the great Pooh-Bah held all the offices of state and had his conscience continually torn between his duty as secretary to the Mikado, as to what he could do in a generous and elaborate way, and, on the other hand, his duty as chancellor of the exchequer, as to how he might guard the public treasury. May I say to my hon. friend, and I say it in all seriousness, that the business of cabinet government was devised as a means of giving to the country the benefit of many minds, of freeing it from the tyranny of a single mind; it was never intended that the business of government should be carried on by the help of the Almighty and the will of one other, but it was intended that safety was to be found only in a multitude of counsellors. I believe that to be very necessary at this moment, particularly when we have before us a speech from the throne which, if it signifies anything, signifies that we are to have as a consequence of this session more in the way of borrowing, more in the way of debt and more in the way of taxation. The sooner my hon. friend makes good that particular omission, especially as he and his colleagues should be concentrating