

or of a new Prime Minister being asked to assume the responsibility of a Government; but we have a Government, and I am unable, I may add, to conceive why this long delay should be asked for, the Government having every office filled, either by a Minister or an acting Minister, and being able to carry on the affairs of the country, I am bound to say, more efficiently than has been done during the last thirteen months. So far as I can understand there has been more done in the last two or three days than has been done in the last thirteen months; and the very delay and the very difficulty which, we are told, induced these seven gentlemen to withdraw their confidence in their leader, seems, so far as I can judge by the result, to be caused by their presence in the Administration. While they were in, the Government could not go on, they were evidently blocking the way, nothing could be accomplished. So I would suggest to my hon. friend that, as we meet to-morrow, he intimate to the gentleman who is to move the reply to the Address, that he go on with his speech. It has been bottled up now so long that possibly it will have to be recast. I do not see why we should not at once go on with our business, and let this House discharge the duties which it has been called upon to discharge. I can certainly see no necessity on the part of the Government asking for any prolonged adjournment. I am quite satisfied that there is no independent member of the House, there is no member on the opposite side, so far as I learned from the language of the leader and of the hon. gentleman who followed him, disposed to throw any obstacle in the way of the Government. So far as I know the feelings of the House, it is prepared to give to the Administration every possible facility; and how they can be hampered, or how they can be prejudiced in any way by allowing the constitutional rule to prevail, is what for my part I cannot conceive.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I think that the request of the hon. leader of the House is an unreasonable request under the circumstances. This House is the great council of the nation, it is the most important body to advise His Excellency, known to our constitution. Under the circumstances it seems to me, when the Administration experiences a crisis such as that which has overtaken the present Government, it is of the first consequence that this House should sit from day to day. Now, Sir, the hon. gentleman asks us not to meet to-morrow. Why not? If the Government are not prepared to go on with the public business because all the portfolios in the Government are not filled, that may be a reason for a further adjournment. I am sure that this House has no intention of interfering with the Government, or with the Prime Minister, in filling up the vacancies in the Adminis-

Mr. McCARTHY.

tration; but this House ought not to abdicate its functions. It has important functions to discharge. The events which have happened since Parliament has been called together, and since the Speech from the Throne has been delivered, are of such a character as to make the House suspicious. The House does not know what may transpire next, and as we can only advise His Excellency in our capacity as members of the House collectively, it is of first consequence that we should meet from day to day whenever the sittings of the House, under our rules, come about. That being so, I think the leader of the House ought not to press his motion. He should consent to the House meeting to-morrow, and if the Government then requires further time to fill up the various vacancies in the Cabinet, further time will no doubt be given by the House. No one would put obstacles in the way. But events have been transpiring every day since we have met which are of very great consequence. We have seen three or four members taken from this House and translated to the other Chamber. We have had the announcement made that several hon. members who have seats in this House have been appointed to fill positions in the public service. I do not know whether those appointments have been confirmed or not. We may have information on that subject within the next twenty-four hours, and if we do not obtain such information, I think what has taken place calls for an expression of opinion on the part of this House. We are, Mr. Speaker, we know not what—whether this House is composed of members representing the constituencies whose electors sent us here, or whether it is composed of place-men of the Administration, or of that part of the Administration that still continues in office. Under the circumstances the leader of the House should not ask us to adjourn beyond to-morrow, and if then the Government have made progress in filling the vacancies, perhaps we may be able to go on with public business and answer the Speech from the Throne. But if the hon. gentleman is not, it may be that Parliament will require to consider other matters. The hon. gentleman knows right well that if a member has been promised an office and has agreed to accept that office, his seat becomes vacant whether he has been actually appointed to the office or not. We know that an hon. member sitting in the House of Commons years ago was named as Chancellor of the Exchequer; that he agreed to accept the office; that before the acceptance actually took place, His Majesty was unable to make the appointment; but nevertheless it was held that by his agreement to accept office his seat had become vacant, and he was obliged to retire and be re-elected, although he was elected as nothing more than a private member. The