

Sir Arthur Warner be members of the Select Committee on the Standing Orders of the House; three to be the quorum.

The motion was agreed to.

HOUSE COMMITTEE.

Sir ARTHUR WARNER (Minister of Transport).—By leave, I move—

That the Honorables C. S. Gawith, Buckley Machin, R. W. May, G. J. O'Connell, and D. J. Walters be members of the House Committee.

The motion was agreed to.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

Sir ARTHUR WARNER (Minister of Transport).—By leave, I move—

That the Honorables the President, W. O. Fulton, A. J. Hunt, Samuel Merrifield, and J. M. Walton be members of the Joint Committee to manage the Library.

The motion was agreed to.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

Sir ARTHUR WARNER (Minister of Transport).—By leave, I move—

That the Honorables the President, A. K. Bradbury, T. H. Grigg, Buckley Machin, A. R. Mansell, G. W. Thom, and Archibald Todd be members of the Printing Committee; three to be the quorum.

The motion was agreed to.

ADMINISTRATOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Gordon McArthur).—I have to report that His Excellency the Administrator of the Government of the State of Victoria attended the House this day and was pleased to make a Speech, of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy.

As the Speech is printed, I take it that honorable members do not desire that I should read it to them.

The Hon. A. J. HUNT (South-Eastern Province).—I move—

That the following Address, in reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Administrator to both Houses of Parliament, be agreed to by this House:—

May it please Your Excellency:—

We, the Legislative Council of Victoria, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the gracious Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I am deeply conscious of the important functions of this motion, and of the honour conferred upon me and upon the people of the province I represent in having the privilege of moving it. First and foremost, the motion expresses our loyalty to our Sovereign. Our loyalty, I think, has never been in question, but it is often worth while to reaffirm things we may tend to take for granted. Nothing but good can come from this House freely and clearly reaffirming—for itself, for its members, and for the people it represents—our loyalty to our Sovereign. That reaffirmation strengthens the ties that bind us to the Homeland and serves to remind us that we are members of one Commonwealth of Nations under the Crown.

Secondly, the motion expresses thanks to Her Majesty's representatives in Victoria, and I think it fitting at this stage to go perhaps even further than usual in expressing our thanks to the Administrator of the State of Victoria. In 1953—almost eight years ago—the Honorable Sir Charles Lowe was called to the Bar of the House in another place, a rare and signal honour, to receive its grateful thanks for his services in the twin offices of Administrator of the State and of Acting Chief Justice. Those were two onerous and responsible duties, either one of which represents perhaps the greatest height to which any man could wish to aspire. On that occasion in another place, appreciation was expressed of the valuable services rendered by him in those twin duties; the House expressed its deep sense of the special knowledge, ability, and devotion which had enabled Sir Charles so successfully to carry out those tasks.

During recent months, eight years later, we have seen that same gentleman, distinguished and venerable, again occupying those two important offices and carrying out his onerous duties, with the same ability, the same dignity, and the same profound sense of public duty as he previously displayed. We have been privileged to have as Administrator of this State one who has so long, so effectively and so

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wisely served the people of this State—a man who is one of Victoria's most distinguished sons.

We noted in the Administrator's Speech that His Excellency Sir Dallas Brooks has returned to Victoria. We learned with regret of his recent illness, and I am sure that I shall be expressing the sentiments of this House when I say that we all wish him complete and speedy recovery from his indisposition and a return to full health to enable him to carry out his duties as Governor of the State, in which capacity he has earned the respect of all Victorians during his twelve years of office.

We heard to-day that Lord De L'Isle is to arrive in this fair city to-morrow morning, shortly to take up his appointment as Governor-General of the Commonwealth. I believe that I shall again be expressing the sentiments of this House in offering with the Administrator our congratulations to Lord De L'Isle upon his appointment and our good wishes for a successful term of office. I believe that his appointment will further strengthen those ties with the Motherland which I mentioned earlier. It is interesting to note that Sir Edmund Herring is returning to Melbourne by the same ship. To-morrow Sir Edmund will resume his duties as Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Justice of this State.

The third function of the motion before the House, as I understand it, is to provide a forum for the discussion of the Government's legislative and administrative programme. The time that has elapsed since the elections has been short, and for that reason we have not on this occasion heard in the Administrator's Speech the full programme of the Government's proposals. I should like, however, to foreshadow and discuss a function that seems to me to be of great importance, namely, education. Probably there is no more important function of Government in the State. In the past six years we have seen tremendous development in the field of education. The rate of class-room building has almost doubled, the rate of teacher recruitment has doubled, and funds spent on education have more than doubled. Despite this

development, which has existed from kindergarten to university level, Government supporters would be the first to admit that much remains to be done. There are still many problems for the Government, including those of class-room shortages and temporary accommodation which must and certainly will be tackled.

There is one further problem associated with this subject of which, I believe the Government is deeply conscious, and which I would like to see tackled at the earliest possible time. I refer to the provision, particularly in secondary schools, of the fourth stage, which includes assembly halls. That I believe to be of very great importance.

It is only when the assembly hall is provided that a school ceases to be a conglomeration of class-rooms and starts really to become a school. In the assembly hall the school exists *in toto*; the work of character building can proceed; and cultural activities vital to the development of students can take place. I think honorable members on both sides of the House recognize that this is a need and a responsibility which must be met at the earliest possible moment. I know that there are more urgent priorities at this moment, but I trust that the day is not far distant when we can proceed to the erection of assembly halls, in view of the multifarious benefits that will accrue to our system of education and to our students.

It is worthy of mention that under the Government's £1 for £1 subsidy scheme, 22 schools have already been granted funds for the building of assembly halls, and half of these have now been erected or are in the course of erection. This means that by co-operation between the Government and the public, these vital halls are being provided. In addition, there are others in the course of negotiation on the £1 for £1 subsidy basis. I look forward to continued co-operation between the Government and the public in the building of further halls in this manner, until the day arrives when the Government can provide them for all new schools.

I should like now to make some brief remarks regarding the functions of this House. Some minutes ago I heard the Minister of Transport introduce a Bill in order to preserve the privileges of this House. I recognize that this Chamber has an important function in initiating legislation, and we are jealous of its rights as a House of initiative. I believe it has an equally great function as a House of review.

I do not propose to enter into the argument whether the House in its original conception was in fact originally intended as a House of review; but at least that is the universally accepted role of a second Chamber. Here in this House, with its different composition, with its smaller numbers, we can have fuller discussion, perhaps more reasonable discussion, after the tempest of party warfare in another place has subsided a little. We have a task to perform in ascertaining any weaknesses in proposed legislation and in setting them aright. We also have a task to perform in acting as a watchdog of the people to ensure that no one will suffer from administrative errors; from thoughtless, harsh or over hasty executive actions, or because of over hasty legislation. I trust that we shall always function as a House of initiative and review, and also as a guardian of the people's rights.

The Hon. G. J. NICOL (Monash Province).—I greatly appreciate this my first opportunity of supporting the motion for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply. I should like to compliment our new member, Mr. Hunt—one of my colleagues—on the way in which he has introduced himself to this House. I am certain that honorable members must be impressed with the capacity he has already shown and will look forward to the contributions that he will make to the future proceedings of the House.

Again, we join with His Excellency the Administrator in expressing a welcome to this country of our new Governor-General, Lord De L'Isle, and we look forward to an opportunity of more publicly giving a welcome to him. I am sure this House would also desire to express its appreciation to His Ex-

cellency the Administrator, Sir Charles Lowe, for the manner in which he has carried out the duties that were more or less thrust upon him during the past several months. We extend our sympathy to his Excellency the Governor and Lady Brooks, in the rather distressing illness which His Excellency has experienced. We do so, not only as members of the Legislative Council, but, I think we could almost say, as personal friends of His Excellency. I trust that His Excellency will be fit enough to attend the customary Christmas celebration tendered to the members of this House by you, Mr. President. In his Speech, the Administrator indicated a rather bright outlook for this State.

The Hon. P. T. BYRNES.—He referred to widespread rains.

The Hon. G. J. NICOL.—I appreciate that some honorable members think solely of rain. If they were more broad-minded, they would give some consideration to other aspects which affect the development and growth of the State. It is worth directing the attention of some of the members to whom I refer to certain aspects of development in this State during the past several years. More overseas capital is coming to Victoria than to any other State in the Commonwealth.

The Hon. J. M. TRIPOVICH.—That is not true.

The Hon. G. J. NICOL.—Honorable members opposite, who are now interjecting, will have the opportunity later in the debate to quote other figures and facts, if they can produce them.

The Hon. P. T. BYRNES.—The matter you raise is very interesting, but we would like to know how much overseas capital is coming to Victoria.

The Hon. G. J. NICOL.—At this stage, I do not propose to enter into a long discussion or to produce detailed figures, thereby delaying the proceedings of this House. However, if honorable members are desirous of ascertaining those figures, they can readily be supplied. I emphasize that the influx of capital into Victoria is probably as great as, if not greater than, in any other State of the Commonwealth.