

PARTY LEADERS.

Sir PERCY BYRNES (North-Western Province).—By leave, I wish to announce that I have been appointed Leader of the Country Party in this House and that the Honorable I. A. Swinburne has been appointed Deputy Leader.

The Hon. SAMUEL MERRIFIELD (Doutta Galla Province).—By leave, in the absence of Mr. Galbally, I inform the House that Mr. Galbally is again the Leader of the Labour Party in this House.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Gordon McArthur) laid on the table his warrant nominating the Honorables P. V. Feltham, T. H. Grigg, and Archibald Todd to act as Temporary Chairmen of Committees whenever requested to do so by the Chairman of Committees or whenever the Chairman of Committees is absent.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Gordon McArthur).—I have to report that His Excellency the Governor 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. F. J. GRANTER (Bendigo Province).—I move—

That the Council agree to the following Address to His Excellency the Governor in reply to His Excellency's Opening Speech:
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 importance of this motion and of the honour conferred upon me and the people of the province I represent in having the privilege of moving it.

First, the motion expresses loyalty to our Sovereign. Whilst I have no doubt that our loyalty has never been in question, it is right that we should reaffirm our loyalty to our Queen and so strengthen our ties to our Homeland and let us be reminded that we are members of the Commonwealth.

Our Queen, in company with Prince Philip, has already paid this State two visits, and I think this demonstrates Her Majesty's high regard for this State and for Australia as part of the Commonwealth.

I should like at this stage to say how much Sir Rohan and Lady Delacombe have endeared themselves to the people of Victoria. May His Excellency and Lady Delacombe have a long and enjoyable stay with us.

The first piece of legislation referred to by His Excellency is the proposed appointment of an additional Minister. As we know, this Minister will be the Assistant Minister of Education. In a State like Victoria, which is growing so rapidly, with the ever increasing number of children attending schools, and with the Government's outstanding achievements in education, I feel that the Minister of Education needs assistance. As this subject is to be developed further by one of my colleagues, I shall now make reference to two other measures to be brought down in this session of Parliament.

In his Speech, His Excellency also referred to the provision of loans for the establishment of pine plantations on farm properties. As a country member, I am delighted to know that the planting of softwoods will be accelerated by the Government. With this in mind, the Government now proposes to make available interest-free loans to private planters in order to encourage the growing of more timber locally. The Forests Commission will also increase its planting of softwoods.

I shall now refer to the purchase of houses from the Housing Commission on a purchase-lease basis.

As I understand it, this will by and large be available to country people. It will give the applicants the right to decide after eighteen months whether or not they wish to purchase their homes. This, I hope, will be a further inducement for people to move to country towns. It will give people a chance to decide for themselves on what I feel are the advantages of living and working in a country town. Most country towns now offer the amenities provided by their city counterparts. I trust that this legislation will in some way induce people to move to the attractive towns of this State. I know that the Government is very mindful of the need for more people to settle in country areas.

I do not propose to enter into the argument whether the Legislative Council has retained its original purpose as a house of review, but I know that members of all parties will debate legislation brought before them in a way that will benefit the State as a whole. If there should be any weaknesses in legislative proposals, then we will not hesitate to express ourselves in an attempt to right any wrong that may exist. I trust that we will function not only as a house of review but also as one of initiative, nevertheless acting as the guardian of the people's rights.

The Hon. W. M. CAMPBELL (East Yarra Province).—I was deeply moved when given the honour of seconding the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech because it reminded me of the responsibility shared by all members of this Chamber to Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, to her most able representative His Excellency Sir Rohan Delacombe, to the people of Victoria, and in my case, to the people of East Yarra Province.

Whilst I am highly delighted in now having as a colleague Mr. Granter, the newly elected member for Bendigo Province, who has already shown in moving the motion for the adoption of an

Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech that he will be a great asset to this Chamber, I must pay my respects to Mr. Smith, the former member for Bendigo Province. I feel it is fitting to mention him at this stage, because when any member of this Chamber does his best for the people of this State, he should not be forgotten. Therefore, I do wish to make reference to Mr. Smith.

His Excellency has outlined to us the programme of legislation ahead of this Parliament. One of the most important aspects, I feel, is the action now to be taken in the field of education. In a world such as we live in to-day, with its rapid industrial and scientific progress, it is vital to this State to place the education of our children in a high category of importance, because these children will one day become the leaders of our State, and, indeed, of our country. It is our duty as a Parliament to give them the maximum assistance that we can economically afford, so that they themselves will be better equipped for the years that lie ahead of them and the years that lie beyond you and me.

By the appointment of an Assistant Minister of Education, we shall be better able to efficiently co-ordinate the works programme which is ahead of us. In Mr. Rossiter, I feel we have made a good selection, because as well as being a university graduate, he has been most active as a member of high and technical school councils. I consider that this background will enable him to render valuable assistance in the setting up of the degree status system contemplated for our major technical colleges. The incorporating of degree status at these colleges will give the impetus required to increase the number of highly trained technicians so badly needed in this State. The foundation for this plan was laid by this Government when leaving standard was introduced as a prerequisite for the diploma courses at technical colleges. I feel that at this stage we should pay our respects to the members of the