

Thatcher received by parliament

LONDON (UPI) — Margaret Thatcher made a triumphant entry into parliament yesterday as Britain's first woman prime minister and was greeted by a riproaring ovation from the 339 Conservative party lawmakers she led to victory last Thursday.

Thatcher took her seat for the first time in the prime minister's place on the government front bench.

It was the seat that had been occupied for more than three years by former Labor Prime Minister James Callaghan, the man she ousted from power by her victory in last Thursday's general elections.

Facing her in the seat from which she had done battle with him as leader of the opposition, Callaghan sat among his depleted Labor Party ranks — only 268 Members of Parliament instead of the 307 when the last parliament was dissolved a month ago.

The Commons chamber was packed to suffocation, with many of the 635 lawmakers, including 120 newcomers, jammed into aisles between the green leather covered benches.

The purpose of the sitting was to elect a speaker for the coming parliamentary session. Real business will not start until after the state opening by Queen Elizabeth II Tuesday.



British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was received in Parliament yesterday. She is shown with her husband, Denis, the island kingdom's first "first gentleman."

As expected, Laborite George Thomas, 70, who presided over the last House of Commons, was re-elected unanimously.

Then, following time honored ritual, he was dragged with a show of resisting to the high backed Speaker's chair at one end of the chamber.

This show of reluctance goes back to times several hundred years ago when the Speaker often was in open conflict with the sovereign and in risk of his life.

In the past at least eight Commons speakers were executed — two in one year in the 14th century.

Gas rationing starts in California

By United Press International

The nation's first gasoline rationing plan since 1974 — a system based on odd and even license plate numbers — began in California yesterday. Lines at the pumps were long, but many motorists had only about half the wait of previous days.

At least 14 California counties instituted the rationing plan, which allows autos with license plates ending in odd numbers to buy gas on odd-numbered days, and likewise with even numbers. The plan was going into effect at various times through Monday in the various counties, and other counties were expected to join the list.

The gasoline shortage also was being felt in the East, where dwindling supplies were leading to closed stations. About 80 percent of New York stations were closing Sundays, except in resort areas, and others were cutting their hours on a day-to-day basis.

Stand-by rationing plans were being drawn up in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Across the nation, gasoline was going for prices in the upper 70-cent range to the 90-cent range.

Some Colorado service station owners said they wanted to join the 15,000-member California Service Station Association, which has asked for a nationwide shutdown of stations for four days to protest federal limits on gas profits.

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors had wanted to wait a week to

consider whether or not to join the odd-even rationing idea, but a flood of telephone calls convinced them to take up the idea today.

Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed the emergency order allowing the plan anytime after 12:01 a.m. yesterday in counties that requested it.

In Los Angeles, stations in suburban areas seemed to feel the change the most. But while some suburban stations appeared empty, an average of 50 autos waited in pump lines near downtown in the nation's third largest city.

In Los Angeles, a key provision of the rationing plan restricted a motorist to a maximum of 20 gallons and provided that his gas tank had to be at least half full for him to get any gas at all. This was to avoid a run on gasoline by motorists "topping off" nearly full tanks with small amounts.

"I come to this station frequently and the lines seem to be just as long today," said Paul Martin, who joined a line at a Shell station that began at 6 a.m.

"I don't think the odd-even distribution plan is going to change things too much," said Lung Xay. "It's very difficult for a person working 8-to-5 to find any stations open when they return from work."

"The only time they can get gas is in the morning because most stations close before 5, so the lines will probably be just as long in the morning."

Some motorists whose plates were even numbers tried to get gas anyway. "I was the second person in line and

the attendant said he couldn't give me any gas because I had the wrong number," said Iris Schafer. "I just wanted two gallons to get down the block. I forgot my license plate number was even."

Some station attendants said they would not act as policemen to enforce the "no topping off" provision of the plan, which in some places carried a \$500 fine and a six-month jail term.

"We'll peek in (the car at the gas gauge) but we wouldn't dare stick our heads in the window," said Nishi "Tom" Imagawa, owner of a Los Angeles station.

"I'm not getting paid by the city to enforce the laws," said Hal Butler, operator of a Beverly Hills station. "I'll never put my head in the window," he said, saying he feared being punished or sued for trespassing.

"This line is less than half of the line yesterday at this time," said Steve Kovacs, an attendant.

The limited supplies has led to a new crime — gas stealing. Between 800 and 1,000 gallons of unleaded gasoline were taken from underground storage tanks at the Leddy and Hall station in Hawthorne.

Police said an unmarked silver tanker truck pulled up to the station Tuesday afternoon, about three hours after a Texaco truck made a delivery. Witnesses said they saw the truck stick a hose into the tank, but everyone assumed it was making a deposit, not a withdrawal.

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