

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, April 27, 1960.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The PRESIDENT—I propose now to proceed to Government House for the purpose of presenting the Address in Reply, and I ask the mover and seconder and other honourable members to accompany me.

At 2.17 p.m. the President and honourable members proceeded to Government House. They returned at 2.42 p.m.

The PRESIDENT—I have to inform the Council that, accompanied by the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply to the Lieutenant-Governor's Opening Speech, and by other members, I proceeded to Government House and there presented to His Excellency the Address adopted by the Council on April 26, to which His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

I thank you for the Address in Reply to the Speech with which I opened the second session of the thirty-sixth Parliament. It will be my pleasure to convey to Her Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, your reaffirmation of allegiance, and to Her Royal Highness, Princess Margaret, your congratulations on her betrothal. I am confident that you will give your best attention to all matters placed before you.

QUESTIONS.**COUNTY BOARD INSPECTORS.**

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER—Does the Government intend to bring down regulations prescribing qualifications for inspectors employed by local and county boards? If so, when is it likely that these will be gazetted?

The Hon. Sir LYELL MCEWIN—The matter is under consideration.

SERVICE STATIONS' PRICES.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—The advent of one-brand service stations led to agreements between oil companies and others, such as rubber manufacturing companies, requiring service stations under the control of oil companies to stock specific lines of tyres, batteries and accessories, and for that service a commission was paid to the oil companies which became known as the "pay-back." As an example, an oil company would instruct the

proprietor or lessee of one service station to handle only one brand of goods, and the same company would instruct another service station proprietor further along the same road to handle only another rubber company's goods. Apparently something has gone wrong with this arrangement, for I noticed in last night's *News* that rubber companies have now notified service station proprietors of the prices they can charge for tyres, batteries and accessories, and have also indicated the marginal profit which will be allowed, which is reduced from 22 per cent to 15 per cent. If a service station proprietor fails to accept these conditions he is threatened with a cutting off of supplies and a cutting down of the rebate which, apparently, he is allowed. My information is that this practice is prevalent in South Australia. Will the Government investigate the matter and, if necessary, introduce legislation to prevent interference with free trade?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I shall be pleased to make some investigations regarding the matter with a view to seeing what action, if any, should be taken.

LAND SETTLEMENT.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked yesterday concerning land available in South Australia for settlement?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—The Minister of Lands advises that an area of 5,585,718 acres had been allotted by the Land Board and Pastoral Board during the period from July 1, 1958, to March 31, 1960. Much of this land had been held previously and reverted to the Crown by expiry of former leases or by other means, but approximately 1,362,532 acres was newly-opened land. These figures do not include land allotted under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme which totals some 655,003 acres, nor do they include an area of 97,720 acres in the Upper South-East which was allotted to the Australian Mutual Provident Society for development under that society's scheme. Since March 31, 1960, a further 26 blocks, totalling some 30,000 acres, have been allotted in the South-East and 10 blocks containing 22,151 acres are at present available for application on Eyre Peninsula. Four blocks containing approximately 10,000 acres were recently surveyed in the Hundred of Pinkawillinie, and these will be offered for allotment as soon as possible. During the past 12 months 33 district councils have been written and invited to advise of any undeveloped or

underdeveloped areas in their respective districts. Replies were received from all councils, but only nine suggested the possibility of any suitable land. In one of these cases a plan that was forwarded to the council to assist in identifying the areas referred to has not been returned. In some of the remaining eight cases the areas suggested by the councils were already under consideration and, in fact, 10 holdings, comprising 22,151 acres, which are

part of an area suggested on the West Coast, are at present open to application. The remaining areas are in course of investigation by the Land Board, but preliminary research has revealed that some of the land is already alienated.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 2.55 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, April 28, at 2.15 p.m.