The first week of the 23rd Parliament got off to an exciting and stimulating start.

On Tuesday the usual ceremonies for the Opening of Parliament were carried out in the traditional manner, the Members from the Lower House being summoned to the Senate to hear the Governor-General's Speech. This Speech, I think you will agree, did not contain any surprises but it did reveal steady progress being made, and it showed how Government efforts over ten years are being consolidated.

The Governor-General pointed out how production in almost every field is increasing, and he referred to efforts being made through the Department of Trade to maintain and expand our markets in all countries, particularly in those of South-East Asia. There are many who hope that in future years, Australia may build up substantial exports of secondary industries to those countries.

The Governor-General, amongst many other things, also mentioned the special Committee of Enquiry which will investigate problems of the dairy industry. I shall have more to say about this Committee in later talks.

There was a new innovation this year: the Opening of Parliament in the Senate was for the first time in Australian history televised, and thus more people than ever before actually witnessed the Opening of Parliament.

I would not for one moment be in favour of permanent televising of Parliamentary Sessions, but feel that on the Opening of Parliament, a useful purpose may be served.

When the Governor-General concluded his Speech, Members of the House of Representatives returned to their own Chamber, where the Address in Reply was moved by Peter Browne (who is nearly as young as myself). He represents the vast Western Australian electorate of Kalgoorlie. I think it was the first time in over 30 years that this seat has been held by a Liberal.

The Address in Reply was seconded by Mr. Bandidt, a Country Member for Wide Bay.
The second day of the Sitting provided some surprises. Jack McLeay from Adelaide had previously been re-elected to the Speakership, and for the first time for many years his appointment was not opposed by the Labour Party. Indeed, Dr. Evatt paid particular reference to his fairness. Nevertheless, during Question Time on Wednesday, the Speaker was forced to name Dan Curtin. In asking his question, Dan Curtin had in reality been making a speech, which is against the Standing Orders of the House, and when he was asked to come to order by the Speaker, he did not pay any attention to the Chair. When a Member is named, it means he is expelled from the Chamber for 24 hours. Mr. Curtin later apologised to the Chair and to the House and was re-admitted without serving his hours in exile.

The Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Casey, made a most important announcement on the extremely difficult question of Dutch New Guinea, and on our relations with Indonesia in general. I won't go into this in detail now, but I will talk about this matter next week. The questions involved in this issue are of the utmost importance to Australia's future security and also to the continuance of good relations with our neighbours in South-East Asia. This is vital and something that must be preserved.