

STEEL AND LORDS BATTLE OPENS

Preceded by the Household Cavalry, the Irish Coach sweeps through the wide gates of Buckingham Palace into the processional route to Westminster. For the first time in ten years Parliament opens with full ceremonial pageantry. Before the arrival of the King, the traditional search of the House is carried out by the Yeomen of the Guard. Gentlemen at arms stand by as the Crown is carried into the House of Lords.

Members of the House of Commons hurry to their places at the opening of the last pre-election session. In this, the first great controversy is steel. The Government intends to bring iron and steel under public ownership, claiming that as the backbone of British industrial prosperity it should not be in the hands of private enterprise. The Opposition argues that nationalisation will wreck the great undertaking which monthly sets new records, inevitably slowing down other great industries vital to Britain's export trade. The core of the Government's case is given by Ian Mikardo, M.P. for Reading.

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At the Lord's entrance distinguished guests jingle with the Peers. Through the passage of the Parliament Bill the Government will curtail the Lords vote authority, a move, which it declares is completely unrelated to the Steel Bill. On this ex-Chancellor, Viscount Simon says:

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The four greys swing the Royal Coach into Parliament Square. His Majesty bears a speech announcing the introduction of twenty bills during the session. Yet for those who watch, the atmosphere of an approaching election is intermingled with the pageantry.