

Reed reports on new House session

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HOUSE RECONVENES
Ontario's Lieutenant-Governor, John Black Aird, drove to Queen's Park in an open landau, escorted by the Governor-General's Horse Guards, on a cold but sunny April 21 to open the 32nd Parliament, amid the usual pomp and pageantry associated with these occasions. With the election of a number of new Members in the recent provincial election, it will be particularly interesting to watch developments, since many

Members in the new House have no previous experience of majority government.

THRONE SPEECH

The Throne Speech, read by the Lieutenant-Governor, is actually a statement of the government's intention for the forthcoming session. The short 17-page Speech did little more than restate promises made by the government during the election. In fact, most of it was outlined in January under the guise of a five-year economic blueprint known as the BILD program - BILD

being the initials of the Board of Industrial Leadership and Development.

Emphasis was given to the Premier's call for a first ministers' conference on the economy, because "the problem of inflation... must be faced in a comprehensive way, on a national front and without delay. Major opportunities for action lie in the key federal areas of monetary and fiscal policy planning. Inflation, economic growth, federal-provincial fiscal and tax-sharing arrangements, social policy and stability, energy pricing and supply, all consti-

tute matters which must be urgently addressed so that our nation does not falter."

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS
-Creation of an office to direct government purchasing toward Canadian products.
-Sale of waste steam from the Bruce Nuclear Development for industrial and agricultural purposes.
-An Ontario Hydro Loan program to aid homeowners wishing to convert their homes to electric heat.

-Establishment of a research institute to develop hydrogen as a fuel.
-Increased "initiatives" to expand technical training in

the province's community colleges.

-A counselling program to steer young people toward "worthwhile and productive jobs".

-A "multi-million" fund to finance "new" high technology firms, and creation of a Crown company to promote and finance new technology.

-Increased subsidies to municipal governments buying electric trolley buses.

-Increased investment in the Urban Transit Development Corporation, a Crown company specializing in public transportation equipment.

-A program to raise the capacity and standards of homes for the aged.

OPPOSITION REACTION
Both Opposition Leaders criticised the Speech for its failure to deal with the serious problems of unemployment, high interest rates and inflation. Liberal Leader Stuart Smith condemned it as "a few bland, reassuring words (containing) no recognition of the real problems" of a province in decline. "Inflation is aiding the rich and robbing the poor, but there's nothing here to help the people being hurt by

inflation...and there's not a single job". Despite tough economic times in Ontario, the government has "done absolutely nothing to bring together the haves and have-nots" of the province, he added.
RENT CONTROL
The Premier has hinted that, although he has "Today" no plans to change the increase in rent a landlord may charge without getting special permission, he's not married to the six per cent figure which has been law since 1975.
LABOR LAW AND SOCIAL REFORM
Ontario's Labor Minister has stated he expects to introduce severance pay legislation this spring, and intends to keep his promise that the benefits would be retroactive to last January 1. A few days earlier, the Premier had told a press conference that he hadn't "promised anything" in this connection. Commenting on the apparent inconsistency, newly appointed Liberal Labor Critic Sheila Copps said: "In opposition, we will be pushing for it. It's up to them to keep the promise." Her colleague, Ron Van Horne expressed confidence in the Labor Minister, as "a man of his word"

New book about cancer cures

In the midst of all the hysteria and hype that we are all doomed to cancer as a result of environment, parents or bad habits, there is still room for another book on the dread disease.

Although the thesis of *Toward the Conquest of Cancer* by Dr. Edward J. Beattie, Jr. (General Publishing, 273 pages; \$16.95) is not new - smoking is the killer - the author presents the material in a most readable form.

Arguing that the best plant is to keep cool in the midst of all the misinformation bombarding us about cancer's causes, he proceeds to examine what happens when a case of cancer of the lung is suspected. With this he follows a typical history of a person such as the late TV newsman Edward Murrow, who has had a chronic cough.

With painstaking detail, the patient's course is followed from the initial suspicion to the inevitable operation and post-operative care.

Along the way, Mr. Beattie answers many of the questions that would be put forward by the patient or the family.

This is not a nice story. But then it is not a nice disease. One of the things that isn't nice is the poor prognosis with some types of cancer - in some cases a cure rate of barely five to ten per cent of patients.

However, with early diagnosis and proper operative care, the cure rate can be raised to 60 per cent. The reasons for this wide swing are carefully detailed by Beattie.

By the time the patient is discharged, to be followed up in four months' time, the reader knows exactly what is in store for him if he is a smoker.

This naturally leads to a consideration of the tobacco industry and our government's

dilemma in doing something about this known cancer factor.

Pointing out that the U.S. tobacco companies have the most effective lobby in Washington, the doctor-author proceeds to list the recommendations that have been made by responsible organizations who want the smoking habit to be stopped, but without destroying a large agricultural and industrial community.

Mr. Beattie suggests that the tobacco industry be phased out, and other reasonable farming and industrial practices phased in.

Mr. Beattie's book also looks at other causes of cancer,

noting that members of the Mormon Church and the Seventh-Day Adventist have amazingly low incidences of cancer compared with other groups.

This may be not only because they do not smoke, but in many cases they do not take alcohol, coffee, tea or additive drugs.

The Seventh-Day Adventists eat eggs and milk products but do not eat meat, fish or poultry. Mr. Beattie thinks that this may be a strong factor in their low incidence of cancer.

Although he does not have specifics on the prevention of the various types of cancer,

the author does hold out the promise of preventive medicine based on diet, avoidance of exposure to known carcinogens, and general health measures.

Aside from avoidance of tobacco, he does not give any guarantees that this will prevent cancer - but it is a long step down the road.

The book ends with a listing of specialized cancer centres in the United States and Canada, and a timely chapter on how to stop smoking.

Dr. Charles M. Godfrey is professor of rehabilitative medicine at the University of Toronto.

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