

February 16

Legislation for Postwar Planning Forecast in Speech From Throne

Looking to the needs of the postwar, legislation to facilitate necessary planning in Ontario was forecast in the Speech from the Throne delivered by Lieutenant-Governor Albert Matthews at the opening of the second session of the 21st Legislature yesterday. Debate on the Throne Speech will begin Tuesday, Premier George Drew announced.

No mention was made of new or increased taxation. The 4,500-word Speech reviewed the steps taken by the Government since the Legislature last met, and indicated along broad lines the legislation to be brought down this session.

Measures dealing with conservation and flood control and town planning will be introduced. These will enable municipalities to plan for steps to curb river flooding, soil erosion and other problems, and to permit them to prepare for postwar housing. It will also permit municipalities to enter into a joint plan where they have coming planning problems.

Delay in calling a Dominion-Provincial conference was criticized. The Speech referred to the "great concern" of the Government over the delay in the calling of such a conference, for which it has been pressing for more than a year.

New Securities Act

A new Securities Act to tighten control of stock transactions, and a bill to give active service members the direct ballot, were forecast. Legislation will be introduced to permit replacing of county and city jails with modern institutions where the need is indicated. The Minimum Wage Act will be amended to give better remuneration for women, and reduce hours of work from 52 to 48 weekly. The Industry and Labor Board will adjust rates of pay, probably with an increase

to a \$15 minimum in cities of more than 10,000 population.

Speaking of education in Ontario, the Lieutenant-Governor said the Government's assumption of 50 per cent of the total cost of elementary and secondary education throughout the Province was "the most important single step which has been taken. This will make it possible to equalize educational opportunity as never before, and will enable the Department of Education to accelerate improvement of many of our less satisfactory schools. It will greatly relieve the burden of taxation on real estate for school purposes."

He mentioned also that much had been done already to improve rural education, and that 518 winners of Provincial scholarships and bursaries now are studying in universities, normal schools and other institutions of higher learning.

Refers to V.D. Campaign

Reviewing the work of the various Government departments, his Honor spoke of sustained efforts being made to reduce the incidence of social diseases, and said legislation would be introduced to further assist an effective control program. Overcrowding of mental hospitals, he said, caused great concern. This situation would be eased by the return of the Ontario Hospital at St. Thomas, an early possibility; the completion of an addition at the Orillia Hospital, and the inclusion of plans for new hospitals in other parts of the Province after the war.

The House was told that it is planned to extend community X-ray surveys to help control tuberculosis, and additional aid for municipalities in the care of indigents also was intimated.

"Investigation has shown that the present rate of payment for indigent patients in public hospitals is not sufficient to meet the mounting cost of hospital care at the public-

ward level," his Honor said. "Legislation will be introduced to deal with this subject. Hospital accommodation is under review, and it is hoped that the needs of those municipalities where it is at present insufficient may be met at an early date."

Broader W.C.A.

The Workmen's Compensation Act is to be broadened this session to protect additional classes of workers. It is intended ultimately to bring under the act every one who works for an employer, he said. Steps will be taken to co-ordinate administration of the Ontario Agricultural College, Macdonald Institute and the Ontario Veterinary College.

The Speech noted that heavy Dominion taxation, manpower shortage and wartime restrictions continue to depress the mining industry and said further recommendations of the Royal Ontario Mining Commission would come before the House in the form of legislation.

Highway capital expenditure will be confined this year, he said, to roads serving military camps, airports and war industries. Uniformity in vital statistics laws throughout the Dominion would be the aim of a new Vital Statistics Act. Highways and Public Works Departments both had prepared postwar programs that could be started on short notice to provide employment if necessary. Legislation is to be introduced to create a body of trained men to deal with questions of forest management. Acting on the report of a Royal Commission, the Government also will submit legislation to require public halls to maintain definite standards of safety.

"The Ontario Civil Service has been assured of greatly improved conditions of employment and amendments will be introduced to the Public Service Act," his Honor declared.